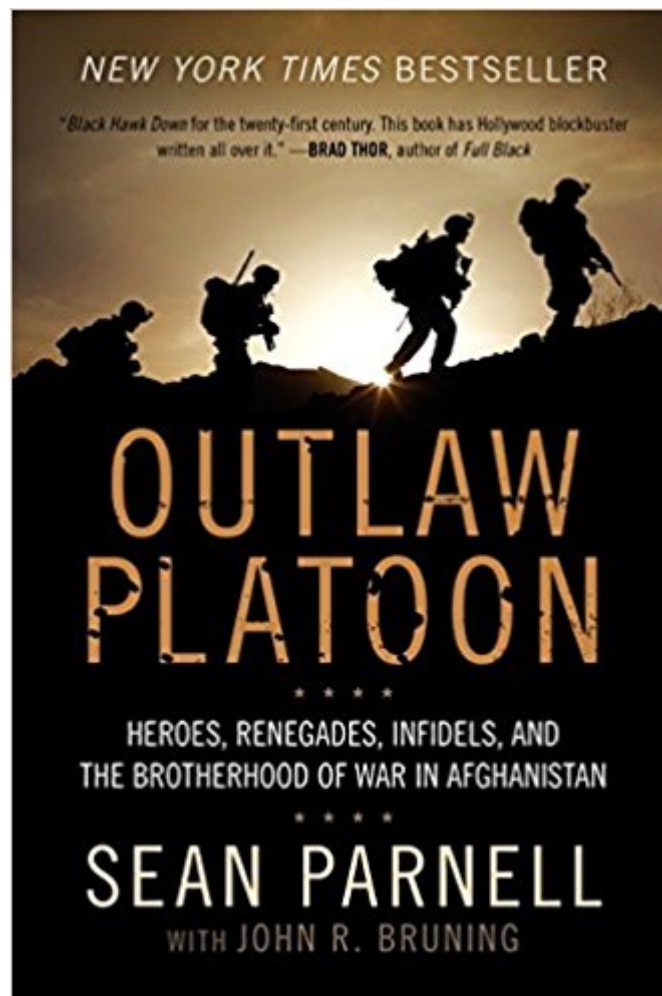




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# **Outlaw Platoon: Heroes, Renegades, Infidels, And The Brotherhood Of War In Afghanistan**



## Synopsis

A riveting story of American fighting men, *Outlaw Platoon* is Lieutenant Sean Parnell's stunning personal account of the legendary U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division's heroic stand in the mountains of Afghanistan. Acclaimed for its vivid, poignant, and honest recreation of sixteen brutal months of nearly continuous battle in the deadly Hindu Kush, *Outlaw Platoon* is a *Band of Brothers* or *We Were Soldiers Once and Young* for the early 21st century—an action-packed, highly emotional true story of enormous sacrifice and bravery. A magnificent account of heroes, renegades, infidels, and brothers, it stands with Sebastian Junger's *War* as one of the most important books to yet emerge from the heat, smoke, and fire of America's War in Afghanistan.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best-Selling Author Brad Thor Reviews *Outlaw Platoon* How close can we get to really knowing what it's like to succeed in combat? To fight, to survive—even thrive—while facing enemy fire every other day? To get on-the-job training in what it takes to be a strong, decisive commander? These are a few of the things that make *Outlaw Platoon* by Sean Parnell and John Bruning such a kick-ass read. Two of the grittiest, most intense tales of courage and camaraderie under fire that I own are *Black Hawk Down* and *Lone Survivor*. Now I have a third: *Outlaw Platoon*. It's the *Black Hawk Down* for the 21st Century. It is an absolutely gripping, edge-of-your-seat ride that follows these men when the fates foolishly attempt to stack the deck

against them. This book has Hollywood blockbuster written all over it. But there's much more than just the guns-blazing action. It is an epic tale of leadership, heroism, and the bond among warriors who ply their deadly trade with a deceptively simple mandate – to kill the enemy and return home together alive. It's an absolute must read!

**Brad Thor Interviews Sean Parnell**

**Brad Thor:** What was your first day like on the ground in Afghanistan's eastern frontier?

**Sean Parnell:** The moment I arrived at Forward Operating Base Bermel, the insurgents attacked the base with rocket fire. They missed the FOB, but hit a local village, killing and wounding a number of children. The villagers rushed their injured to our front gate, and I ran to help. Our troops wanted to help all of the children, but the Afghan fathers insisted the boys be treated first. I grabbed a little girl anyways and sprinted for the aid station. She bled out in my arms as I ran. That was my introduction to combat. All I was, all I had been, changed in that instant.

**Thor:** What surprised you about the enemy in Afghanistan?

**Parnell:** We found an enemy that wasn't a bunch of farmers with leftover weapons, but one of the finest light infantry forces in the world. These fighters were brilliantly led, seasoned warriors. Some had spent their entire lives in combat – stretching back to the Soviet War in the 1980's. They were elusive, heavily armed and extremely well equipped with the latest armor-piercing bullets, anti-tank weapons, body armor, and other gear essential to ground operations. They also had no mercy. None. Their objective was to overrun an American platoon, behead everyone and stick our heads on stakes. In battle, we heard them on the radio ordering their teams to do this, and we saw the huge knives they carried for the task. They did their best to overrun us three times. But we were better. Just barely.

**Thor:** Describe the bond forged in battle – the loyalty and bravery you saw and why you think that's vital to success.

**Parnell:** During my 16 months in combat I saw the noblest aspects of the human spirit, thanks to the bond that developed among the men. We realized that the only way we could survive this crucible was to remain committed to each other. Not for ourselves, but to ensure that we would survive to see our loved ones back home again.

**Thor:** How would you describe the men in your platoon?

**Parnell:** In a word: unique. Our army mirrors the country it's sworn to protect, and I think the Outlaws reflected America's greatest strength: diversity. My men came from all walks of life. They believed in American exceptionalism with every fiber of their being. And if they were similar in any way, it was in this ideal. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“The range of emotions that Sean Parnell summons in *Outlaw Platoon* [is] stunning. A nuanced, compelling memoir . . . Parnell shows he's a gifted, brave storyteller.”

(Pittsburgh Tribune) “Outlaw Platoon put me back on the battlefield again. It’s a heartfelt story that shows how very different people can be thrown together in combat and find a way to make it work. Parnell and the soldiers who fought beside him are all courageous heroes • real bad asses.” (Chris Kyle, author of *American Sniper*) “Two of the most intense tales of courage under fire I own are *Black Hawk Down* and *Lone Survivor*. I now have a third, *Outlaw Platoon*. It’s an absolutely gripping, edge-of-your-seat ride.” (Brad Thor, author of *Full Black*) “Outlaw Platoon is an utterly gripping account of what our soldiers endure on the front lines • the frustrations, the fear, the loneliness. . . Here, in these pages, are the on-the-ground realities of a war we so rarely witness on news broadcasts” (Tim O’Brien, author of *The Things They Carried*) “Outlaw Platoon is an exceptional look into the mind of a platoon leader in Afghanistan; Captain Parnell shares his experiences of leadership, loss, and aggressive military tactics. You can really feel the bonds forged between these brothers in arms as the battle plays out” (Marcus Luttrell, author of *Lone Survivor*) “At times, I forgot I was reading about a war as I was drawn up in the drama the same way you [are] when reading Krakauer’s *Into Thin Air* . . . This is a book of probing honesty, wrenching drama and courage.” (Doug Stanton, author of *Horse Soldiers*) “[A] soulful story of men at war . . . *Outlaw Platoon* shows us that the love and brotherhood forged in the fires of combat are the most formidable qualities a unit can possess.” (Steven Pressfield, author of *Gates of Fire*) “Outlaw Platoon is expertly told by a man who braved the heat of battle time and time again. An epic story as exacting as it is suspenseful, it reveals the bravery and dedication of our armed service men and women around the world.” (Clive Cussler) “This book is more than just a rip-roaring combat narrative: it is a profoundly moving exploration into the nature and evolution of the warrior bond forged in desperate, against-all-odds battles. A significant book, not to be missed.” (Jack Coughlin, author of *Shooter: The Autobiography of the Top-Ranked Marine Sniper*) “Outlaw Platoon is the real deal. It’s a terrific tale of combat leadership that deserves to be studied by all small-unit leaders. The narrative goes beyond the battlefield to depict the maddening nature of the war and the grit of those who selflessly protect us.” (Bing West, author of *No True Glory*) “Sean Parnell reaches past the band-of-brothers theme to a place of brutal self-awareness . . . [he] never flinches from a fight, nor the hard questions of a messy war.” (Kevin Sites, author of *In the Hot Zone: One Man, One Year, Twenty Wars*)

Having experienced war, I can say that *Outlaw Platoon* is the closest to reality of all the war books I

have read. It took guts to put down what actually happens and how it affects the mind and the body. I could almost feel and smell the fear, anxiety, love and hatred one experiences when their life is on the line. The bond these men formed in the midst of a deadly environment, so brutal, goes far beyond that of a mother and child. It is with us forever. This book should be mandatory reading for every politician. Maybe, just maybe they will not be so quick to send our troops into "fog of war."

As a member of Outlaw Platoon, I can not stress enough the importance of this book to our nation's forgotten infantry soldiers. Outlaw Platoon is an honest and compelling account of life and death in the trenches and does true justice to our combat experience. As you read this post, there are thousands of men on battlefields around the world killing and suffering for the preservation of American ideals. As a civilized society and beneficiaries of our nation's might, we must meet their sacrifices with unwavering support. It is not enough for us to adhere a yellow ribbon to our cars, to shake a soldier's hand, or even to send care packages to the front. More than anything, these men need our understanding. They need to know that we are aware of their plight, that we are invested in their success, and that we are willing to help shoulder the burdens of combat, just by listening and caring. Outlaw Platoon is a window into the world of America's infantry warriors. In the book, Sean puts you on the ground in Afghanistan, straps 100 pounds of gear on your back, and injects you into the fight. However, he also introduces you to the human side of the war, highlighting the exceptional diversity of the platoon and the strength that it generates, as well as the horrifying realities of life for Afghani civilians. Not only is Outlaw Platoon a thrilling, emotionally-charged read, it is a tool for healing the wounded souls of our discarded patriots and reuniting the American people with the guardians of our way of life. It is our undeniable duty as Americans to share the load of our foreign wars, and by simply reading Outlaw Platoon with a compassionate heart, we are doing our part for the men we put in harm's way.

Outlaw Platoon is one of the most outstanding books I have read. It combines the grit and detail of *The Outpost: An Untold Story of American Valor*, with the take-you-there and grab your heart memoir style of *Angela's Ashes*. Sean Parnell tells his story without sparing himself from the difficulty of remembering the hardships, the losses, and the shining moments that can never come again. This is more than a story of physical courage. It is a story of the kind of spiritual courage it takes for men to love one another without stinting, to give everything they have for one another and then dig down and find some more to give. The courage it takes to allow yourself to get close to people you might lose at any moment. No experience except perhaps parenthood can even

compare to the risks to the heart that these men faced, the wrenching losses the experienced and the courage it took not to face the next battle, but to know that people who mattered so much to you were facing it too. This story of a grueling deployment in the under-supplied, under-manned and unforgiving Afghanistan theater is told with amazing compassion and vivid language that is powerful without ever becoming overblown. For every American who did NOT serve, I think we almost owe it to those who did to read this story and appreciate what true valor looks like. The men of Outlaw Platoon meet the most exacting definition of "heroes." Thank you, Captain Parnell, for sharing this very personal journey with us.

Book is the best minute by minute accounts of firefights ever written. It is heart rendering, suspense filled, adrenalin pumping and tension filled recounting of firefights and bravery. A book that I could not put down because it is so exciting to read. It also recounts the type of experiences that I also had with the frustrating idiocy, and stupidity of the US ARMY command structure. I am retired Army Medical Corps and deeply frustrated that despite multiple requests I was never allowed to be deployed. In my experience, if there is an intelligent thought running around anywhere the Army then the command would stomp on it like a cockroach. I was fortunate enough to serve under a General who recounted his experience in the Army. He stated that when you start out that you are at the back of the bus and you assume that someone is driving the bus. Finally, when you get close enough to the front of the bus, you look at the front of the bus and realize that there is no one driving the bus. There are several instances in this book where the moral of the Outlaws was destroyed because of these idiot decisions. One of the worst was the execution of the dogs that were such a comfort to the troops when they returned to base between combat missions. This was done because of false accusations by the female "postal bitch" that she had been bitten by one of the dogs. Sean Parnell is a brilliant combat leader and one of the bravest, wise and caring combat commanding officers that has ever existed. I thank him for his service and for giving us this fantastic book. I will know that I will read it several times.

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