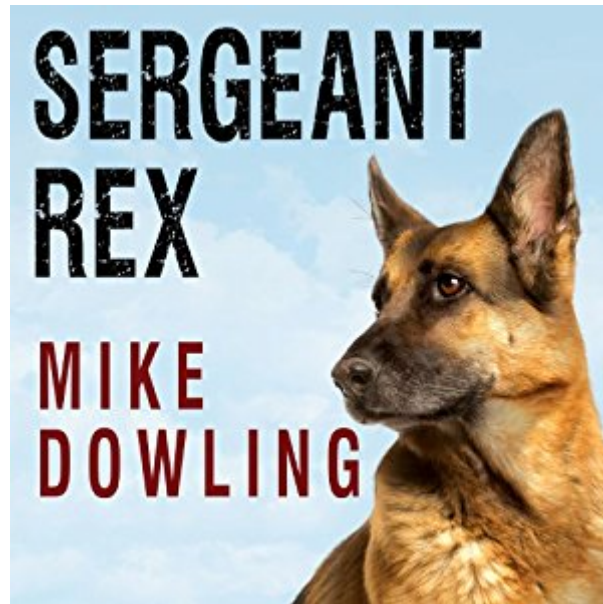


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Sergeant Rex: The Unbreakable Bond Between A Marine And His Military Working Dog



Synopsis

Deployed to Iraq's infamous Triangle of Death in 2004, Sergeant Mike Dowling and his military working dog Rex were part of the first Marine Corps military K9 teams sent to the front lines of combat since Vietnam. It was Rex's job to sniff out weapons caches, suicide bombers, and IEDs, the devastating explosives that wreaked havoc on troops and civilians alike. It was Mike's job to lead Rex into the heart of danger time and time again, always trusting Rex to bring them both back alive. Dowling had turned twenty-five and Rex three just after they arrived in Iraq. Neither of them had any idea what to expect, and no training could fully prepare them for this job. An animal lover since childhood, Dowling had fostered and trained dogs for Guide Dogs for the Blind, and he was determined to serve in the military's K9 unit after joining the Marines. On their first patrols in Iraq, Rex suffered a seemingly incurable fear of explosions and gunfire, but with Mike at the other end of his leash, Rex gained the courage to perform his duty. Dowling takes us into the searing 130-degree heat, the choking dust, and the ever-present threat of violent attack that seemed to permeate Iraq's streets. We experience Dowling's visceral fear of walking down an IED-laden alley where dismemberment or death can come with any footstep, only his trusted partner, Rex, by his side. Loyalty is one of the hallmarks of any good Marine, and nowhere is that quality more evident than in this astonishing account of Mike Dowling and Rex's wartime experiences. A moving story of how a man and a dog developed complete trust in each other in the face of terrible adversity, Sergeant Rex is an unforgettable tale of sacrifice, courage, and love.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 16 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Tantor Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 15, 2013

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00FM202RW

Best Sellers Rank: #53 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Lifestyle & Home > Animal Care & Pets #274 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Dogs > Breeds #848 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Personal Memoirs

Customer Reviews

I've read my share of dog as man's best friend books. Especially the books that show the powerful bonding between handlers and their military working dogs (MWD). I've watched videos of interviews with dog handlers that had to leave their dogs behind when they returned home, especially after Vietnam. Their stories of sacrifice by both dog and handler, shared affection and feelings of betrayal by the handler when he had to leave his dog behind are heart rending. This book is one of the best. In part because it has a happy ending for Rex in spite of the horrific experiences that they had sniffing out IEDs and waiting for a sniper to take either or both of them 'out.' What was surprising to me though was though I thought that I knew a fair amount about dogs I still learned more. Great book.

I picked up Sargeant Rex expecting it to be a story about one man and his dog. About friendship and loyalty and the occasional heart wrenching moment. Well a couple of chapters in I was very surprised, yes it is a story about a man, A marine and his dog, but its story about war and combat and how 2 soldiers worked side by side to protect a nation left in rubble after war. Mike talks about Rex like any other Marine, and as you read the book you feel that way too, stopping at times to think, whoa, this is a dog he is talking about. I have a new found respect for the working dog now. Don't pick up this book expecting it to be a war story, it's not! it's a friendship story set during war. What Mike goes through to protect his dog is nothing short of heroic and let's not forget about Rex here and what he goes through to protect the marines of company 2/2 is more than heroic it's inspirational. Great book, great read, great story..let's hope it makes a good movie.

The bond between a soldier and his dog is told in this amazing story. From the training as a puppy to the combat zone. You will feel every emotion possible as you pass each chapter and wait in eager anticipation for the next chapter. My props go out to Mike Dowling and not just his amazing candor and his relationship with his working dog Rex, but also for serving our country and the insight he provides with his comrades and the experiences they go through on a daily basis as they fight for our freedom. This is a MUST read for people young and old, everyone whether you like to read or not will love this story. Thanks again Mike and Rex.

Recently, we adopted a retired military working dog named MWD Fama H176. She is nine years old this month. She served two tours in Iraq. This wonderful book gives us an idea of what she must have gone through. Thankfully, she seems to have adjusted to civilian life without PTSD! Thank

you, Mike Dowling, for giving us your story.

I went to K9 School with Dowling and got to see first hand the potential that he had right from the start. It has been an honor to know him and continue our reminiscing of the days that have passed. Thank you for spreading the word to let those in on the bond we handlers have with our dogs. K9 for Life!

The book was entertaining, informative and well-written, but even more, it appealed to me emotionally since I love dogs. Dowling and his military working dog were at the heart of war zones, detecting explosives and weapons to help keep our troops (and also civilians) safe from the insurgents. It made for many interesting stories, which kept my interest throughout. I learned a lot about how the canines are trained and what they are capable of, something many of us are interested in since military dogs have been in the news with the capture of Osama Bin Laden last year. It was also nice getting to know Dowling: his thoughts, background and feelings as he faced these dangers in the book. My only disappointment was that after all of that bonding, many instances of cheating death, hours of training and so forth, he ended the book by simply saying he had decided against re-listing and that Rex had gone on to other deployments with other handlers. I would have liked to have known how he felt about leaving his dog in the hands of others, and whether or not Rex was available for adoption by any of the handlers he so loved and respected after he retired. I guess I am saying the story ended a bit abruptly. Still, I admittedly loved it.

Fabulous storytelling that captures the emotion of the experience, draws you into the scene, and makes you feel like Rex IS your pup. This is a very inspiring story about fear, courage, and above all, loyalty. Makes this cat lady want to get a dog. ;)

A terrific read about a Marine and his military working dog who braved it all in war-torn Iraq while deployed to the infamous Triangle of Death in 2004. If you like true accounts of war as told by the men who fight them and not outsiders who never carried a weapon or risked it all, you will love SERGEANT REX. Sgt. Mike Dowling provides an insider's view of a combat Marine who along with Rex, saved lives by performing a most dangerous mission...detecting the weapons of war including the terrorist's weapon of choice, the improvised explosive device. Well done, Marine!

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