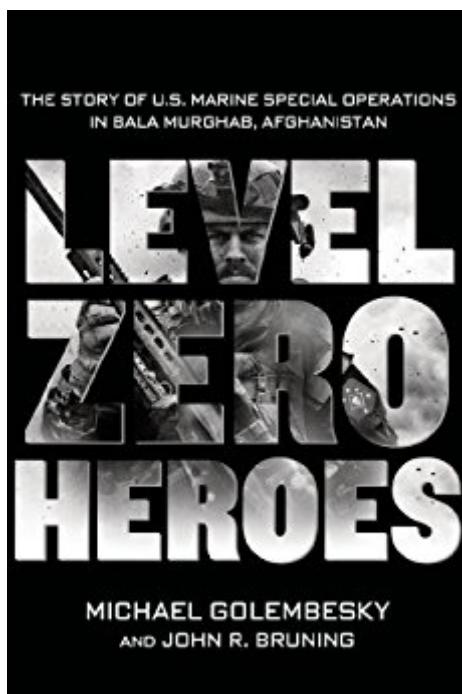


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# Level Zero Heroes: The Story Of U.S. Marine Special Operations In Bala Murghab, Afghanistan



## **Synopsis**

A New York Times Best seller! In Level Zero Heroes, Michael Golembesky follows the members of U.S. Marine Special Operations Team 8222 on their assignment to the remote and isolated Taliban stronghold known as Bala Murghab as they conduct special operations in an effort to break the Taliban's grip on the Valley. What started out as a routine mission changed when two 82nd Airborne Paratroopers tragically drowned in the Bala Murghab River while trying to retrieve vital supplies from an air drop that had gone terribly wrong. In this one moment, the focus and purpose of the friendly forces at Forward Operating Base Todd, where Team 8222 was assigned, was forever altered as a massive clearing operation was initiated to break the Taliban's stranglehold on the valley and recover the bodies. From close-quarters firefights in Afghan villages to capturing key-terrain from the Taliban in the unforgiving Afghan winter, this intense and personal story depicts the brave actions and sacrifices of MSOT 8222. Readers will understand the hopelessness of being pinned down under a hail of enemy gunfire and the quake of the earth as a 2000 lb. guided bomb levels a fortified Taliban fighting position. A powerful and moving story of Marine Operators doing what they do best, Level Zero Heroes brings to life the mission of these selected few that fought side-by-side in Afghanistan, in a narrative as action-packed and emotional as anything to emerge from the Special Operations community contribution to the Afghan War.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I had the opportunity to support this MSOT in the BMG area in early 2010. It's eye opening and amazing to hear the ground party perspective and a couple of the passages brought me back to flying in NW Afghanistan. I knew that the aircrew supporting these amazing men were frustrated by the ROE and Tactical Directive dictated by ISAF but I could not imagine it from the operator's perspective until I read this book. Ski's done himself and his brothers proud with this book. I will make this required reading for any of my aircrew transitioning into country.

I received this book yesterday on my Kindle and read the entire book. This is a real life story on the war in Afghanistan and allows the American People to understand what is actually taking place in this country. While it gives us the truth about how the political agenda is, it gives an even better account what our troops give to our Country. God Bless our Troops for their service. Thanks to Michael Golembesky for writing this account of his service to our country.

You feel as if you're on the battlefield with the Marines and Army, sharing the difficult times in a dangerous place. True heroism is common, but the politics of military brass, who may have been indirectly helping the enemy is atrocious, if not criminal. The battlefield was clearly described by the author who did an amazing job of calling in air strikes to protect his Brothers.

It is simply an excellent book. It is not just about war, it goes further. The book delves in the complexities of the war, what soldiers (marines) think, how the strong bonds of brotherhood are formed between members of Dagger 22, how the rules of engagement meant to protect the civilians and the soldiers, increments the possibilities to get themselves killed. Michael writes the book in a way where every reader can understand, you don't need to be a soldier to understand and comprehend the stories. He tells with naturalism what happened in Bala Mughrab Valley and the story evolves itself, involving the reader in the story. Es simplemente un excelente libro. No solamente se trata de guerra, es mas que eso. El libro se adentra en las complejidades de esta, en lo que piensan los soldados (marines), como se forman los fuertes lazos de hermandad entre los

miembros de Dagger 22, en como las mismas reglas de la guerra destinadas a la protección de civiles y de los mismos soldados incrementa la posibilidad de que ellos mueran. Michael redacta el libro de una forma en el cual todos los lectores la puedan entender, no se necesita haber sido soldado para entender y comprender las historias. Relata con naturalidad lo que pasó en el valle de Bala Mughrab y la historia va desenvolviendo por si misma, involucrando al lector en la historia.

First, as a former operator and Force Recon Marine, I am naturally attracted to this type of story. I found it authentic, fun, and exciting. I think US citizens should read this type of material to gain an understanding of the huge sacrifices, made on their behalf, in the ever expanding asymmetrical battlespace. More and more, boots on the ground will really be all about specially-trained, courageous, and committed special operations Marines, soldiers, airmen, and sailors. This is not the breed we have read about for so many years that have been lionized in stories. These brave souls can shape a battlespace that is profound, and through better senior leadership more meaningfully, than is possible with ordinary enlistees. Can you say, "more bang for the buck"? A statement like that draws ire from traditional "leg" command elements. Mostly from those who don't like the word "special" attached to the SPECIAL warriors or because this fundamental change shrinks their budgets and/or relevance. They are quick to criticize that which they don't have the ability to do nor the courage to attempt. I highly recommend this book.

Golembesky hit a home run with this one. In the beginning I enjoyed reading about his perspective coming into MARSOC and being thrown onto a team as an outsider (he was a JTAC, not an operator). Also how he navigated the very close-knit team dynamic he encountered during the work up, and how he had to prove himself worthy to the guys. The author strikes me as an introverted, reflective, deeply compassionate warrior who has a strong moral base and it showed in his writing. At times in the book it was all I could do but shake my head at the TYPICAL bone-headed officers who haven't a clue about combat and put people's lives at risk ignorantly. The WORST type of officer you can have leading a unit in combat is one worried about his next promotion. In all, an outstanding tribute to all the warriors we have lost in the Bala Murghab Valley. If it weren't for guys like Golembesky and his brothers doing such skilled work surely they would have taken a lot more casualties. Hey Ski, Semper Fi brother.

This book is well written and easy to read. The author is articulate and his account of the experience in BM is riveting. It paints a detailed picture of the extremes endured by our troops in theater as well

as a respectful but truthful account of the immense dangers burdened upon them by out-of-touch General staff. The same General Staff whom are more interested in their post-military political careers than they are with serving our country and leading the men and women whose lives they are entrusted with. I look forward to the follow on book by Mr. Golembksky

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