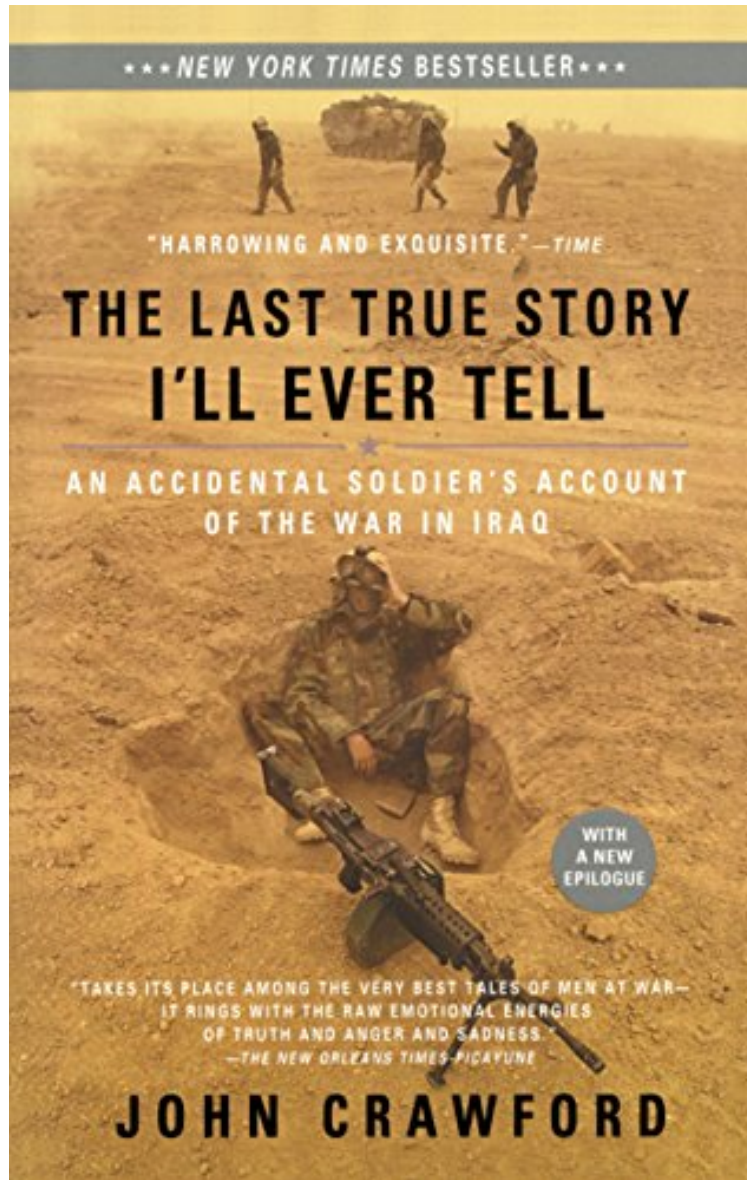


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The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell: An Accidental Soldier's Account of the War in Iraq

Von John Crawford

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Von John Crawford : The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell: An Accidental Soldier's Account of the War in Iraq before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell: An Accidental Soldier's Account of the War in Iraq:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Accidental soldierVon FrKurt MessickJohn Crawford's story might be something out of Hollywood (indeed, with the new FX series, 'Over There', now playing, Crawford's story seems almost as if it had been lifted for that drama). Crawford is like many others - he joined the National Guard for college money, not to go abroad and fight a war (whatever happened to the days when the National Guard stayed at home? but I digress...) He was nearing graduation, newly married, and suddenly thrust into the middle of a war that was controversial at the start, and increasingly unpopular at home as it dragged on.Crawford spent three years in the 101st Airborne division, and then enlisted in the National Guard as he entered college, primarily for the tuition assistance. In Fall 2002, he was activated and had to go. Like many, his expectation of a short tour of duty was frustrated - the promise of 'three months, six at most' turned into more than a year abroad.Crawford's tales are riveting and engrossing. Like many men and women abroad in the conflict, he had varying access to email and internet facilities, and was encouraged by an embedded journalist to submit his tales (those of his own experience, and his writing on the experiences of others who were also around him at the time) to places around the country.Some stories are now familiar to people in the States - problems with equipment, problems with personnel, problems with understanding their role vis--vis the locals. Crawford says that his unit was so underequipped that they even had to get vehicles from other units; at one point, they had a confiscated SUV from which they'd knocked the doors out, and mounted a machine gun on it. Not military issue at all. Their flak jackets were Vietnam-era technology, and their rifles were decades old. He also talks of the scavenging and improvising that took place, including digging through landfills for spare parts. Crawford even said that the only way to get replacement uniforms and boots was to order them online - soldiers then had to pay for these themselves, unreimbursed. Tough conditions, indeed.Through it all Crawford insists that he and his unit were good soldiers who were going to do their duty no matter what, even if they did feel at times like the poor step-child that nobody cared about.`Imagine a war in which you can call home at the end of the day,' Crawford says - he'd call his wife at home after a hard day; she'd talk about cleaning up dog doo in the house, and he'd talk about cleaning up dismembered people on the street. During the major operation of the war, there was no easy communication, but during the occupation time, it was much more available. Crawford sees this as a mixed blessing - instead of keep concentration focused, often soldiers would be worrying about things at home, and that could present a problem. It would also reinforce just how far away home really was.Crawford also writes about drug use - some were into steroids (he describes a few 'roid-rage' incident times), and some were onto antidepressants or valium. These were readily available from pharmacies. Crawford's own use included valium and sleeping pills, to make sure that when he was supposed to sleep, he could.Part of this was written while he was in country in Iraq and Kuwait, and it was finished when he returned to the United States. It is an important read, and fills in many of the gaps that one gets in coverage of the war from media outlets, both factual and fictitious.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Very powerful personal Story...Von Alexander M.John Crawford immediatly pulls you into his own lifes story by telling his story in a very simple but touching way. There is no way one can not feel a whole variety of emotions as he discribes the horrors, stupidity and tragic in the war he witnessed and was part of. This is, like he says in the beginning of the book, not a book by generals or state men but by a simple solider. So if you are looking for GRAND strategy and tactics this book will disappoint.If however you are looking for a book that gives you a "Grunt-eyes" perspicitive, you will hardly find a better book.1 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Accidental soldierVon FrKurt MessickJohn Crawford's story might be something out of Hollywood (indeed, with the new FX series, 'Over There', just concluded, Crawford's story seems almost as if it had been lifted for that drama). Crawford is like many others - he joined the National Guard for college money, not to go abroad and fight a war (whatever happened to the days when the National Guard stayed at home? but I digress...) He was nearing graduation, newly married, and suddenly thrust into the middle of a war that was controversial at the start, and increasingly unpopular at home as it dragged on.Crawford spent three years in the 101st Airborne division, and then enlisted in the National Guard as he entered college, primarily for the tuition assistance. In Fall 2002, he was activated and had to go. Like many, his expectation of a short tour of duty was frustrated - the promise of 'three months, six at most' turned into more than a year abroad.Crawford's tales are riveting and engrossing. 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Kurzbeschreibung In the tradition of Michael Herr's *Dispatches*, a National Guardsman's account of the war in Iraq. John Crawford joined the Florida National Guard to pay for his college tuition, willingly exchanging one weekend a month and two weeks a year for a free education. But in Autumn 2002, one semester short of graduating and newly married in fact, on his honeymoon he was called to active duty and sent to the front lines in Iraq. Crawford and his unit spent months upon months patrolling the streets of Baghdad, occupying a hostile city. During the breaks between patrols, Crawford began recording what he and his fellow soldiers witnessed and experienced. Those stories became *The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell* a haunting and powerful, compellingly honest book that imparts the on-the-ground reality of waging the war in Iraq, and marks as the introduction of a mighty literary voice forged in the most intense of circumstances. From Publishers Weekly Having joined the National Guard for the tuition benefits, Crawford, like many of his contemporaries, never expected to do any heavy lifting. Early on, he admits his is "the story of a group of college students... who wanted nothing to do with someone else's war." But when his Florida National Guard unit was activated, he was shipped to Kuwait shortly before the invasion of Iraq. Armed with shoddy equipment, led by incompetent officers and finding release in the occasional indulgence in pharmaceuticals, Crawford cared little for the mission and less for the Iraqis. "Mostly we were guarding gas stations and running patrols," he explains. As for Iraqi civilians, "I didn't give a shit what happened to any of them," he confesses after inadvertently saving an Iraqi boy from a mob beating. Crawford's disdain grows with each extension of his tour, and he leaves Iraq broke, rudderless and embittered. Unfortunately, Crawford dresses up his story in strained metaphors and tired clichés such as "truth engulfed me like a storm cloud" and "you can never go back home." Despite its pretensions, Crawford's story is not the classic foot soldier's memoir and should provide enough gristle to please military memoir fans. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. **Pressestimmen** Potent Crawford tells tales that bring human dimensions to his situation. The New York Times A National Guardsman who never expected to see battle writes a shattering account of the war that changed his life. People "Tremendous... An incredibly gripping book, and incredibly well-written. It's a remarkable story... I commend [Crawford] not only for his service, but for the account of it, which is really a wonderful read." Jon Stewart, The Daily Show with Jon Stewart "Harrowing and exquisite." Time "Takes its place among the very best tales of men at war it rings with the raw emotional energies of truth and anger and sadness." The New Orleans Times-Picayune It's f***ing dynamite Like Michael Herr in *Dispatches*, Crawford really has it down. Hes got it nailed. Thom Jones, author of *The Pugilist* at Rest Crawford is a wonderfully descriptive writer and reading this book feels like climbing into a Humvee to patrol Baghdad in 130-degree heat. Minneapolis Star Tribune