



House to House: An Epic Memoir of War

David Bellavia

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"Blood flows over my left hand and I lose my grip on his hair. His head snaps back against the floor. In an instant, his fists are pummeling me. I rock from his counterblows. He lands one on my injured jaw and the pain nearly blinds me. He connects with my nose, and blood and snot pour down my throat. I spit blood between my teeth and scream with him. The two of us sound like caged dogs locked in a death match. We are."

On the night of November 10, 2004, a U.S. Army infantry squad under Staff Sergeant David Bellavia entered the heart of the city of Fallujah and plunged into one of the most sustained and savage urban battles in the history of American men at arms.

With Third Platoon, Alpha Company, part of the Army's Task Force 2/2, Bellavia and his men confronted an enemy who had had weeks to prepare, booby-trapping houses, arranging ambushes, rigging entire city blocks as explosives-laden kill zones, and even stocking up on atropine, a steroid that pumps up fighters in the equivalent of a long-lasting crack high. Entering one house, alone, Bellavia faced the fight of his life against six insurgents, using every weapon at his disposal, including a knife. It is the stuff of legend and the chief reason he is one of the great heroes of the Iraq War.

Bringing to searing life the terrifying intimacy of hand-to-hand infantry combat, *House to House* is far more than just another war story. Populated by an indelibly drawn cast of characters, from a fearless corporal who happens to be a Bush-hating liberal to an inspirational sergeant-major who became the author's own lost father figure, it develops the intensely close relationships that form between soldiers under fire. Their friendships, tested in brutal combat, would never be quite the same. Not all of them would make it out of the city alive. What happened to them in their bloody embrace with America's most implacable enemy is a harrowing, unforgettable story of triumph, tragedy, and the resiliency of the human spirit.

A timeless portrait of the U.S. infantryman's courage, *House to House* is a soldier's memoir that is destined to rank with the finest personal accounts of men at war.

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