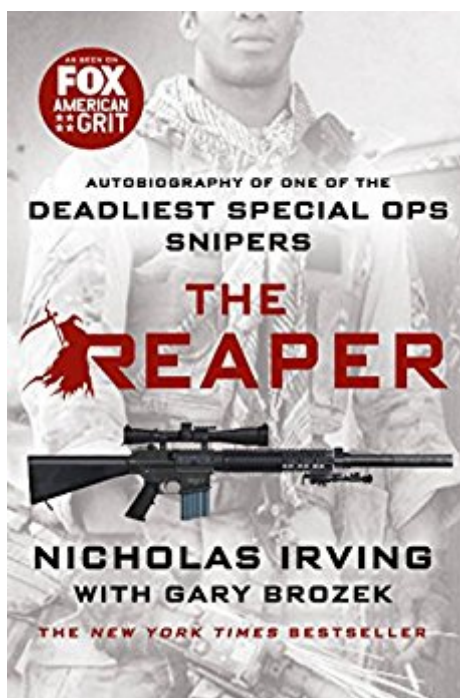


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# The Reaper: Autobiography Of One Of The Deadliest Special Ops Snipers



## Synopsis

Groundbreaking, thrilling and revealing, the New York Times bestseller *The Reaper* is the astonishing memoir of Special Operations Direct Action Sniper Nicholas Irving, the 3rd Ranger Battalion's deadliest sniper with 33 confirmed kills, though his remarkable career total, including probables, is unknown. Irving shares the true story of his extraordinary military career, including his deployment to Afghanistan in the summer of 2009, when he set another record, this time for enemy kills on a single deployment. His teammates and chain of command labeled him "The Reaper," and his actions on the battlefield became the stuff of legend, culminating in an extraordinary face-off against an enemy sniper known simply as The Chechnian. Irving's astonishing first-person account of his development into an expert assassin offers a fascinating and extremely rare view of special operations combat missions through the eyes of a Ranger sniper during the Global War on Terrorism. From the brotherhood and sacrifice of teammates in battle to the cold reality of taking a life to protect another, no other book dives so deep inside the life of an Army sniper on point.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book's subtitle is somewhat misleading. It reads: "Autobiography of one of the deadliest special ops snipers". The story that this book tells is the personal story of the deployment of a Ranger sniper during a 100 day deployment to Afghanistan, during which this sniper has 33 confirmed kills. The book is written like a series of war stories, but it flows very well. The author tells us of his feelings and his actions during the various encounters, and while he does not tell the story of each and every one of his kills, it is a gripping story of how the modern battlefield works in places like Afghanistan. Throughout the story of this one deployment, there are sprinklings of the author's early life as well as some anecdotes from his earlier career in the Army. The book weaves these anecdotes in to the storyline in a very compelling way to help explain why and how the author ended up where he did. During this deployment, the author was the sniper team lead with the rank of Sergeant and was already in his sixth year in the Army. This deployment turned out to be his last as he left the Army afterwards. As you read this book, you'll understand more about how and why a young American decided to join the military, the path that he took over the six and a half year contract that he signed, and why he decided to leave the Army. While not the meat of this book, this story arc is behind the individual stories in the book and tells the larger story in a very clear and compelling way. The book starts with his deployment to Afghanistan when he is expecting a boring 100 day deployment. An expectation that is shattered on his very first night when during the operation he ends up killing two Taliban gunmen. He tells the story of that night, and then the next, and then goes on to tell stories of the more complex operations that he ended up being involved with throughout the deployment. Each of the stories is told from a very personal point of view which is what makes this book work, and work very well. We are told of his feelings towards his comrades, his attitude and approach to the others, and those little anecdotes of daily life that are either humorous or poignant. He experiences his comrades deaths as well as various injuries and he also experiences plans that go awry and situations where nothing happens. I think that the author sat down with his co-author and relived each event in his own words. These recordings (probably) ended up being transcribed and then arranged and edited into this book. This approach works very well in this case. Because of the "war story" nature of the narratives and the naturalness of the writing, this book is a very quick read across its 310 pages. As a first person account of a short deployment, this book will help us all in understanding what took place in Afghanistan. It also helps in understanding why there appears to be no resolution to the conflict there and why there will be no resolution in the coming times. This is not to lay blame on either side, they are each so culturally different from each other that there is really no central meeting point outside of the battlefield and in

the battlefield there is only death. I found this book to be very easy to read yet disturbing at the same time. Here is a normal American kid who kills people regularly and manages to come home to his wife and continue on with his life. He is not unchanged by the experience; he is significantly changed, and his story shows us another price our society is paying by being in Afghanistan. This is a good read and is well worth your time.

Well written accounts of this soldier's experiences in combat. It is interesting to observe the transforming effect of the realities of war in a person who went from gung-ho 17 year old excitedly anticipating the action of battle to a wiser man who has realized the challenge and impact killing has on one's soul. Toward the end of the book Sgt Irving meets a young man who is excitedly preparing to go to the battle front. It seems that he sees a bit of his younger self in this "cherry new guy" who wants to break Irving's record. Irving wisely tells him that really he doesn't want that despite what it may seem from his inexperienced perspective. Overall, the book is a worthy read. Because most of us will not be in the battle situations as described, it is important for us to know the costs that are paid by so many men and women who give of themselves to preserve our freedom and protection as a people and a nation.

My Son-In-Law is an ex-Marine Sniper and is a Gunsmith as well, and I purchased the book to compare to American Sniper, Seal Team 6, Lone Survivor, and some others. While it was in fact interesting and spellbinding, it was not as well written as the others. Again, what Sergeant Irving and Sergeant Pemberton experienced along with their Brother Rangers and other supporting Team Members, their stories are well captured and portrayed, and as a US Air Force Retired Veteran, can only say Oohrah and Salute them in Respect and Honor!!!!

Not really an autobiography as much as a highly readable account of a single deployment in Afghanistan, but the author comes off as an intelligent, honest, and highly skilled soldier. I've often wondered how the members of our professional military can endure multiple combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan without becoming disillusioned by the futility of attempting to help liberate people who neither want nor appreciate that help, and, in fact, see them as both infidels and invaders. Irving describes that burgeoning disillusionment beautifully, with no rancor or bitterness, and Brozek does a fine job of capturing his feelings and giving his story flow and interest. The truth I took from this is that even the best soldiers, and Rangers are definitely some of the finest, most disciplined and skilled soldiers in the world, cannot liberate a people unready and unwilling to

liberate themselves. We may have accomplished some nebulous geopolitical goals in those wars, but liberating Iraq or Afghanistan were probably not among them. It makes me wonder whether our efforts were ever worth the life of even one Corporal Kopp, much less all the lives we sacrificed. While it makes me proud to read about men like Nicholas Irving and the men of his Ranger platoon, I can't help thinking that we owe them clearer goals and worthier causes if we're going to ask them to risk their lives for us. Such men are the backbone of this country, and their lives should never be squandered in uncertain wars and actions. There will come a day, after all, when our nation will truly need such men for its own survival, as it has in the past, and it would be a shame to discover at that point that we have used them up senselessly in wars fought for dubious reasons. That said, one can take nothing away from those men who stood and fought at their country's request. They did the jobs required of them selflessly and often heroically. If there is fault in their story it is solely ours who sat home safely while they went back and back and back again to war in far off hell holes. We should be careful what we ask of our best and bravest.

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