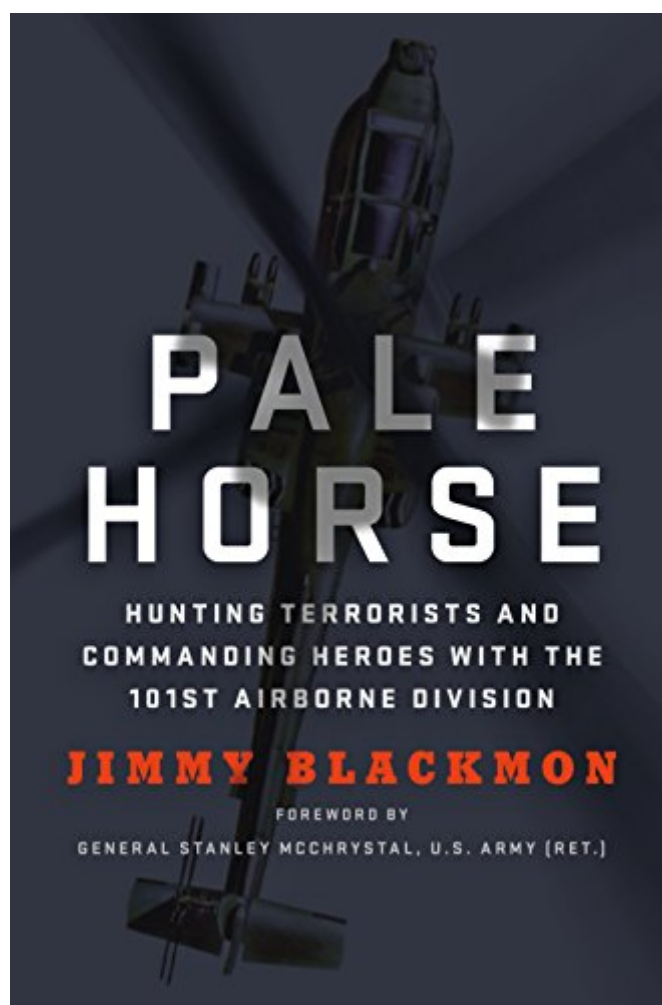


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# Pale Horse: Hunting Terrorists And Commanding Heroes With The 101st Airborne Division



## Synopsis

Pale Horse is the remarkable never-before-told true story of an army aviation task force during combat in the Afghan War, told by the commanding officer who was there. Set in the very valleys where the attacks of 9/11 were conceived, and where ten Medals of Honor have been earned since that fateful day the war began, the narrative races from ferocious firefights and bravery in battle to the quiet moments where the courageous men and women of Task Force Pale Horse catch their breath before they take to the skies again. Jimmy F. Blackmon writes with a power and hard-hitting honesty that leaps off the page. He has the respect of the men and women of his brigade, and a command of the narrative to tell their story. From pilots of lethal Apache attack helicopters who strike fear in their enemies to the medevac soldiers who risk their lives daily, these are warriors from a variety of backgrounds who learned selflessness and found the closest brotherhood they ever knew through the crucible of war. Pale Horse both honors and commemorates the service of this elite task force from the unique vantage point of the commander who led them in battle.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A great read for my trip to Afghanistan. Jimmy Blackmon knocked it out of the park with this one. Reading this mentally put me back into many similar situations from my prior combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan from both a Soldier and leader perspective on ground and in the air. A very well written unvarnished tribute to the men and women who step forward and serve our nation and a glimpse into the minds of our talented aviation leaders of all ranks in the most trying of times. I highly recommend it. After reading I personally passed it along to another former commander currently on the ground in Afghanistan.

This book struck me on multiple levels. Part story of tactical combat action, part story of the human element of combat, and part story of leadership in the most formidable of environments – all told with a clarity and prose which make you feel as if you are part of the action. Many of the battles and heroes described in the book (Wanat, Bari Ali, Watapur, Ganjgal, Shuryak, Keating and Lowell) have been covered in depth from the ground view many times over, but Pale Horse gives us the perspective of the Army aviators who flew those missions. Included throughout is the telling of the harsh realities of the things soldiers/leaders say, think and do in the midst of a fight and in the hours, days and weeks which follow. COL Blackmon tells the story in such a way that you feel like you are in the cockpit with the pilots while simultaneously also in his head whether he is flying the mission or in his command post. Regardless if you have served in the military – if you have ever been on a team, or if you are a student of leadership, or if you have ever truly been responsible for others in what are many times life and death situations this book is for you. If you are an American this book is for you! This book brings home the reality that the names of the men and women fighting halfway around the world which scroll across the bottom of the screen during the nightly news are real people with real friends and families and on the days when it really matters they are doing incredibly brave things for each other and the nation they love. Simply stated, Pale Horse is a must read.

This is a good read! In fact, this is a must read. Education is worthless if it is not shared. Jimmy shares his education as a young boy and how it contributed to what he needed during his war experience. He doesn't merely tell stories about his youth, but stories that lend to the overall success, and sometimes failure, of his war experience. Life experience is a cruel, but effective, teacher. It's been said that war is about killing people and breaking things. That sad thing will become reality in many ways as you experience this book. The scripture about the "pale horse" being death, with hell following, is appropriate indeed. In fact, that scripture becomes the reality of

his description of the air war. Jimmy sets out to lend a voice, and an understanding, to the air war in Afghanistan, and he succeeds. His writing style is easy to read, and informative. Throughout the book the word "enemy" sticks out. This book is about enemies. The perspective presented in the book is that there is a true enemy present here and now, striving to overcome our liberty and our culture and our society. It's objective is to force us, and our liberty and our culture and our society, to submit to its control and culture and society. Jimmy makes it clear that this force is fierce, focused, smart and patient. To that force WE are the enemy, and will be unless, and until, we submit. That force has but one objective. I am glad he wrote this book. I am glad I read this book. It helps educate us all to gain a better understanding of what we face. It is a must read.

An outstanding book about an Army Air Cavalry Squadron that supported the troops on the ground in Afghanistan told by the gifted storyteller who led them. Jimmy Blackmon's vivid descriptions put you in the helicopters and command center during times of some of the most active combat in the High Hindu Kush. Blackmon led these troops and trained them to have "A Cavalry State of Mind" that is to be the "eyes and ears of the commander" and "see things others might miss." So in addition to the direct air attacks on enemy combatants, the medevac flights saving soldiers' lives, and the logistics flights supplying everything the ground troops needed, Task Force Pale Horse pilots supplied reconnaissance intelligence for the highest levels of command in Afghanistan providing new insight about enemy activity. Blackmon also gives the reader a deep personal connection to those men and women in his command before, during, and after their war zone deployment. (Disclosure: Col Blackmon and I were classmates at the National War College, his assignment after the deployment described in his book).

Jimmy is a friend, thus this is a biased review, however, what truly stands out about this book...this war memoir...is that it isn't about Jimmy. This book is about the soldiers he led...it is the story of TF Pale Horse soldiers and the infantry units they supported. A great many war books are about the author or the author's experience solely. Jimmy writes the book like he obviously commanded...he writes this book with love and dedication to the heroes who served with him and he obviously understood the heavy mantle of command. This book shows the love that comrades have in combat, the dedication that true military leaders have their troops. It is an excellent book for anyone who wants to read about good leadership.

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