



# Minefields of the Heart: A Mother's Stories of a Son at War

*Sue Diaz*

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How do combat veterans and their loved ones bridge the divide that war, by its very nature, creates between them? How does someone who has fought in a war come home, especially after a tour of duty marked by near-daily mortar attacks, enemy fire, and roadside bombs? With a journalist's eye and a mother's warmth, Sue Diaz asks these questions as she chronicles the two deployments to Iraq of her son, Sgt. Roman Diaz, from the perspective of the home front.

Sergeant Diaz's second deployment put him south of Baghdad in the region aptly termed the Triangle of Death. There his platoon experienced extraordinarily heavy casualties during the height of the Iraqi insurgency. That unit has since become the focus of considerable media attention following events that made headlines in the summer of 2006: an insurgent attack at a remote outpost on three of their own—one killed at the scene, the other two kidnapped, their bodies found days later; and a terrible war crime committed against an Iraqi family by four soldiers from First Platoon.

*Minefields of the Heart* adds a very personal dimension to the larger story of this Bravo Company platoon from the 101st Airborne's 502nd Infantry Regiment, a unit known since World War II as the "Black Heart Brigade." Diaz recounts the emotional rollercoaster her family and other soldiers' families experience during and after deployment. She explores this terrain not only through stories of her son's and family's experiences connected to the Iraq War, but also by insights she's gained from other veterans' accounts—from what she calls "the box" that soldiers returning from any war carry within. This added layer gives her narrative broader meaning, bringing home the impact of war in general on those who fight and on those who love them.

*Minefields of the Heart* is a story of innocence lost, understanding gained, and hope reaffirmed. In addition to veterans and their families, this book will appeal to anyone who wants to understand war's impact on individuals as well as on the fabric of our society.

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