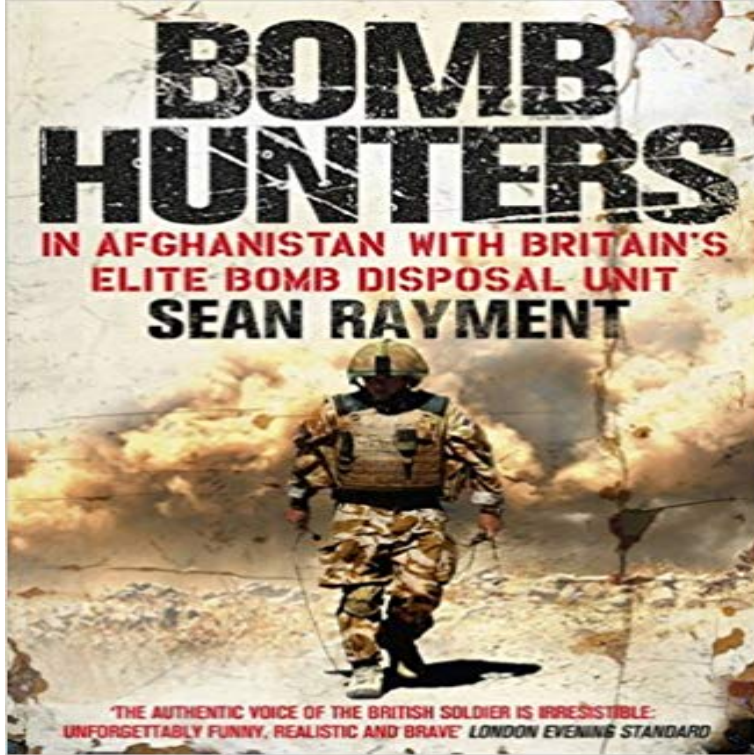


Bomb Hunters: In Afghanistan with Britain's Elite Bomb Disposal Unit



Afghanistan is just like Iraq hot, dusty and full of people who want to kill you, SSgt Simon Fuller, Royal Engineer Search Advisor Bomb Hunters tells the story of the British army's elite bomb disposal experts, men who face death every day in the most dangerous region of the most lethal country on earth Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Bomb Hunters are up against the Improvised Explosive Device the IED the deadly homemade bombs planted by the Taliban. Hard to detect and easy to trigger, an estimated 10 bombs for every one of the 10,000 British troops have been planted in the region. IEDs are now the main killer of British troops in Afghanistan and the ultimate psychological weapon. Bomb Hunters work in 50-degree heat as they take the long walk into the kill zone, defusing as many as 15 bombs a day. In the past year the casualty rate has soared as the troops have become locked into a deadly game of cat and mouse to locate and deactivate the deadly bombs before they maim and kill soldiers, police and civilians. Skill, cold courage and inevitably pure luck play a huge part in the survival of these men and as the British public have already seen a single lapse of concentration can result in instant death. Ex-paratrooper, now defence journalist, Sean Rayment, takes the reader on a journey into the heat and dust of Helmand Province as he meets these courageous soldiers while they put their lives at risk to prevent other British troops falling victim to the IED. He interviews the Bomb Hunters as they perform their duties on the frontline and paints a breathtaking picture of what life is like for the men who play poker with their own lives every day, who live knowing the enemy watches their every move, waiting for a weakness to show itself, a pattern in technique to be exploited, or an error to be made that triggers the device itself. This is as vivid and dramatic as war reporting gets, mixing

close to the bone narrative and dead-pan black humour from the Bomb Hunters themselves, some of whom were subsequently killed in action. No punches will be pulled on what these men feel about the war, their place in it, the politicians and generals who send them there, and how they deal with the relentless pressure of the job itself in the heart of the worlds most hostile combat environment.

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