

# Redeployment

By Phil Klay

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## Redeployment By Phil Klay

**Winner of the 2014 National Book Award for Fiction · Winner of the John Leonard First Book Prize · Selected as one of the best books of the year by *The New York Times Book Review*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post Book World*, *Amazon*, and more**

Phil Klay's *Redeployment* takes readers to the frontlines of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, asking us to understand what happened there, and what happened to the soldiers who returned. Interwoven with themes of brutality and faith, guilt and fear, helplessness and survival, the characters in these stories struggle to make meaning out of chaos.

In "Redeployment", a soldier who has had to shoot dogs because they were eating human corpses must learn what it is like to return to domestic life in suburbia, surrounded by people "who have no idea where Fallujah is, where three members of your platoon died." In "After Action Report", a Lance Corporal seeks expiation for a killing he didn't commit, in order that his best friend will be unburdened. A Mortuary Affairs Marine tells about his experiences collecting remains—of U.S. and Iraqi soldiers both. A chaplain sees his understanding of Christianity, and his ability to provide solace through religion, tested by the actions of a ferocious Colonel. And in the darkly comic "Money as a Weapons System", a young Foreign Service Officer is given the absurd task of helping Iraqis improve their lives by teaching them to play baseball. These stories reveal the intricate combination of monotony, bureaucracy, comradeship and violence that make up a soldier's daily life at war, and the isolation, remorse, and despair that can accompany a soldier's homecoming.

*Redeployment* is poised to become a classic in the tradition of war writing. Across nations and continents, Klay sets in devastating relief the two worlds a soldier inhabits: one of extremes and one of loss. Written with a hard-eyed realism and stunning emotional depth, this work marks Phil Klay as one of the most talented new voices of his generation.

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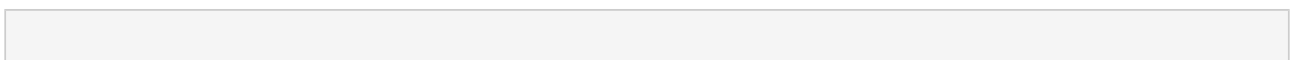
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## Redeployment By Phil Klay Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

### The Art of War

**Is Phil Klay's debut short story collection the best book about the Iraq War?** --Kevin Nguyen

“Success was a matter of perspective. In Iraq it had to be.” This opening line, from one of the stories in Phil Klay's impressive debut collection, *Redeployment*, encapsulates what the book does best: through the many viewpoints represented by his twelve stories, Klay gives us not just a gripping portrait of the Iraq War but a glimpse into the true human cost of war, abroad and at home.

Though the United States entered Afghanistan and Iraq over a decade ago, novels about those conflicts have only begun gaining critical and commercial attention in the past few years. Kevin Powers's *The Yellow Birds*, was one of the most talked about books of 2012; the same year, Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction. Both books were finalists for the National Book Award and included in our own Best of the Year list.

Powers and Fountain took very different approaches to the Iraq War. *The Yellow Birds* is a moving, often lyrical story that follows the tradition of in-the-trenches war fiction, taking hints from such classics as *The Things They Carried* all the way back to *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Powers is a veteran who received his MFA after returning to the U.S.); in contrast, *Billy Lynn* is more of a satire, taking place on home turf as the surviving members of Bravo Squad are paraded out during the halftime show of a Dallas Cowboys game.

Tonally and thematically, *Redeployment* falls somewhere in between these two novels. In its diversity of viewpoints, Klay has composed a complicated portrait of the war and its psychological effect on Iraq and at home in the States. Like *Yellow Birds*, these stories are moving and subtly philosophical; like *Billy Lynn*, *Redeployment* isn't afraid to be funny, to be brash.

Read the full review on [Omnivoracious](#).

Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of the Month, March 2014:** I defy any readers of Phil Klay's stunning *Redeployment* to a) put it down and b) limit the number of “wows” they utter while reading it. These twelve stories, are all about the Iraq War or its aftermath; they are so direct, so frank, they will impress readers who have read all they care to about the war as well as those who thought they couldn't stand to read about it at all. The strength of Klay's stories lies in his unflinching, un-PC point of view, even for the soldiers he so clearly identifies with and admires. For example, one veteran tells a guy in a bar about a particularly harrowing war experience. When the stranger, moved, declares his respect for our troops, the soldier responds, “I don't want you to respect what I've been through. I want you to be disgusted.” Klay is fearless; he eviscerates platitude and knee-jerk politics every chance he gets. “[A fellow soldier] was the one guy in the squad who thought the country wouldn't be better off if we just nuked it until the desert turned into a flat plane of grass,” he writes. These stories are at least partly autobiographical, and yet, for all their verisimilitude, they're also shaped by an undefinable thing called art. Phil Klay is a writer to watch. --Sara

*Nelson*

From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Klay's stories are sensational, with vivid characters, biting dialogue, and life within and beyond the Afghan and Iraq wars conveyed with an addictive combination of the mundane and the horrifying. A soldier reenters civilian life after the surreal wartime task of shooting dogs that eat corpses. A rookie takes part in a raid on insurgents and then eats cobbler. Two soldiers agree to swap responsibility for a killing. A foreign service officer navigates bureaucracy with results that are no less sad for being comic. Soldiers return to barracks after patrol and wordlessly pick up their video games, which they choose over sleep. Redeployment is most remarkable, though, for the questions it asks about the aims and effects of war stories themselves, and Klay displays a thoughtful awareness of this literary tradition. That perspective holds these diverse tales together, as his narrators ask why and how war stories are told. What details does a soldier share with civilians? Does one tell it funny or tell it serious? Is the storytelling a further return to war, a redeployment in itself? Those questions, and Klay's exciting new voice, may stay with the reader long after this book is back on the shelf. --Annie Tully

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Gail Kennedy:**

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