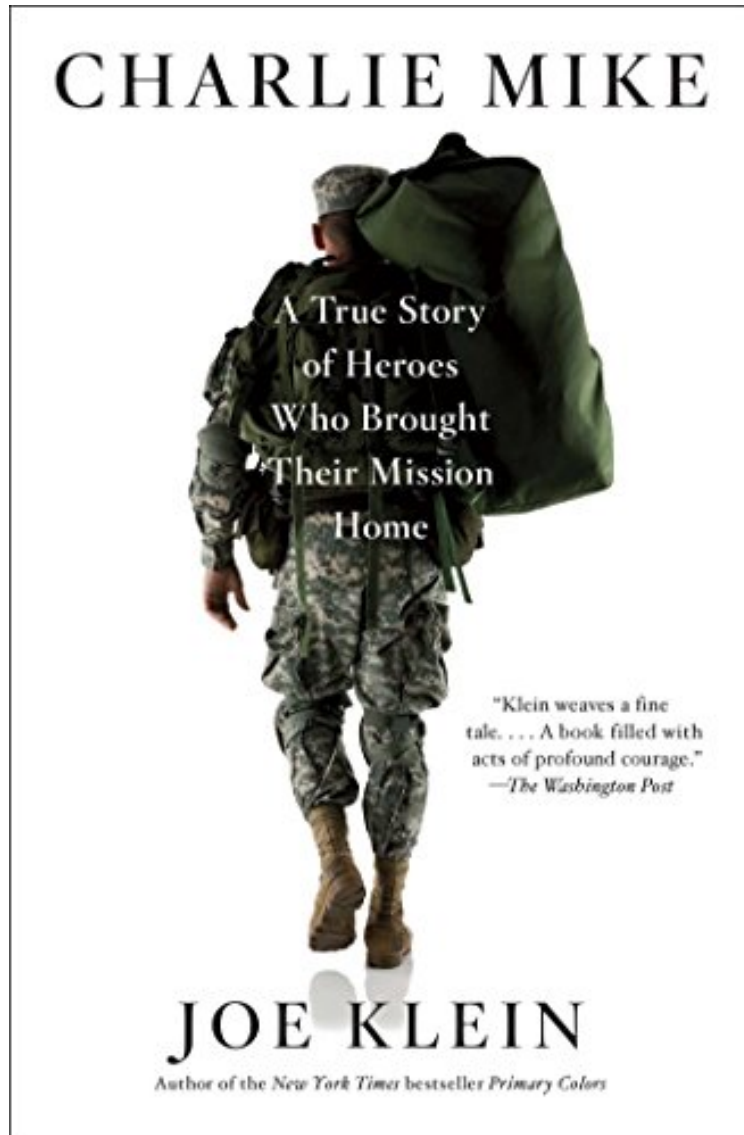


(Free pdf) Charlie Mike: A True Story of Heroes Who Brought Their Mission Home

Charlie Mike: A True Story of Heroes Who Brought Their Mission Home

Joe Klein

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Joe Klein : Charlie Mike: A True Story of Heroes Who Brought Their Mission Home before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Charlie Mike: A True Story of Heroes Who Brought Their Mission Home:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Lets you into the hearts of minds of a group of amazing people, each

one someone you feel you could know

By Rosalie Ong

The telling of the story and the way the characters, all real people, are introduced and developed is absolutely riveting. I started this book just out of curiosity, after seeing it in the bookstore then seeing some buzz about it on Facebook among my friends. I needed a book for my trip, so got it on Kindle for my iPhone and Android phone. After the first few lines, I knew I wasn't going to be able to put it down. I finished it in just a couple days in between packing, working, getting ready for my trip. I finished it on the plane not yet at my destination, wishing I could learn more, wanting to know more about these people. I had met the founders of Team Rubicon during Hurricane Sandy as a volunteer and got to spend time with several of the hundreds of veterans who TR flew in to help people after their homes were destroyed, but even if I hadn't the imagery and the scenes are so clear. I saw the movie of this in my head. This book really lets the reader into the minds and hearts of the four primary people who started Team Rubicon (and now Team Rubicon Global) and The Mission Continues -- first as human beings and good people and then as the heroes they are. The author spends equal time letting you get to know people around them as well, each character rich in different ways. Definitely worth the read.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Our Veterans Building a Generation Dedicated to Serving Others... Great Book!

By J. Hardy

Excellent book, well written, and easy to read. I have been working with Eric Greitens on a number of leadership events over the past 18 months of which many tell his story featured in *The Heart and The Fist* and his more recent book *Resilience*. He is an amazing individual and this book provided more insight into Eric as a child, student, Rhodes Scholar, humanitarian, warrior, and leader; answering a number of the questions I often wondered about but did not ask him. More so, the book told of the origination of his nonprofit for veterans, *The Mission Continues*, how it was founded, where some of the original funds came from but more importantly more detail on the inspiration behind it. The book also featured stories about Jake Wood, founder of Team Rubicon... another fantastic story of a soldier who came home and realized the world still needed him and he still needed the world to need him. The premise behind these two fantastic individuals boils down to essentially "achieving peace with oneself through the service of others"... It is a fantastic lesson and one I feel today's younger generations are missing out on... including my own and I'm 42. I found this book both inspirational and motivating. I plan to live out and to share the lessons I've learned from Eric Greitens and Jake Wood with my children and anyone that will listen. There is always someone out there suffering more than you and by helping them, you can change lives including your own. Great book, a must read! Also check out "*The Heart and The Fist*" and "*Resilience*". I tell folks in our leadership programs that "*The Heart and The Fist*" (and now also "*Charlie Mike*") will make you want to be a better person and "*Resilience*" will provide you with insight and teachings on how to become that better person.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A must read if you have any interest in our recent war veterans

By MaggieG

134.75 stars

Charlie Mike is not the name of any person, but military shorthand for continue the mission. This is the story of some veterans from Americas 21st century wars and their reorientation to civilian life. Navy veteran Eric Greitens was the initial driving force behind the organization that grew to be named *The Mission Continues*. His life had been filled with a desire to achieve excellence in all things, academics, sports, martial arts, leadership, and service, military and otherwise. That innate urge led him to carve a way for veterans of his generation to transition back to the civilian world. Eric's ideal of warrior and all that entailed convinced him that veterans needed not only to be of service but also needed the camaraderie of fellow veterans while doing so. Many felt isolated from the civilian population and struggled to fit in. Give them a mission/purpose with other vets and they could heal each other and hopefully decrease the astronomical rate of suicide and emotional dysfunction among the men and women who had served.

Jake Wood, a Marine veteran of Afghanistan, and his buddy Clay Hunt, were on their way back from volunteer service in post earthquake Haiti, on a plane to Miami, when they found Eric's advertisement in *Outside* magazine. He was looking for veterans who wanted to be part of a force that used their military skills for service to others. Jake and Clay had just completed a remarkable experience in Haiti and both knew they wanted to help at another disaster zone in the future. To their surprise, they found the Haitian people gracious and grateful for the help that they brought. They saw no evidence of the havoc that was described on broadcast TV and in other media. That was the opening for Jake and Eric to join forces. *Team Rubicon*, focusing on disaster response, and *The Mission Continues*, the larger organization with a wider scope of service projects result. *The Mission Continues* has its own website and presently has a large number of corporate sponsors, celebrity board members, and thousands of veterans in its membership. Klein documents the beginning and the extraordinary lives of the men and women involved in this project. I found this book eminently readable. Klein writes well, packs a lot of information into these pages, and his deep respect and admiration for the people involved in this organization are evident. At times I found him a bit too emotional, but that is just a matter of opinion. It is a book about people who have been to hell and back, some still with one foot in hell, so know that you will alternately cheer and tear when you read their stories. Not all make it back to civilian life. There are undiagnosed traumatic brain injuries, post traumatic stress (which one psychiatrist refuses to call a disorder because PTS is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation), and the incredible stress of dealing with the Veterans Administration and their byzantine application process. There are broken relationships among the veterans as well as veterans and their loved ones. There is also heroic generosity of spirit backed up with action. The biggest surprise to me was to learn how these combat veterans felt about the people and places where they were deployed.

This true story of two decorated combat veterans who find a new way to save their comrades and heal their country is a great look at two of the best veteran organizations going and the incredible humans who make the effort work (Jon Stewart). In *Charlie Mike*, a true account that reads like a novel (Publishers Weekly) and explodes like a thriller (The Huffington Post), Klein tells the dramatic story of Eric Greitens and Jake Wood, larger-than-life war heroes who come home and use their military values to help others. Wounded in Iraq, Navy SEAL Eric Greitens returns home to find that his fellow veterans all want the same thing: to continue to serve their country. He founds The Mission Continues to provide paid public service fellowships for wounded veterans. One of the first fellows is former Marine sergeant Jake Wood, a natural leader who begins Team Rubicon, organizing 9/11 veterans for dangerous disaster relief projects around the world. We do chaos, he says. A deep and compelling exploration of a group of young veterans determined to continue serving after leaving the military (The Washington Post), this is a story that hasn't been told before—a saga of lives saved, not wasted. The chaos these soldiers face isn't only in the streets of Haiti after the 2010 earthquake or in New York City after Hurricane Sandy—it's also in the lives of their fellow veterans. *Charlie Mike* shows how Greitens and Wood draw on the military virtues of discipline and selflessness to guide others towards inner peace and, ultimately, to help build a more vigorous nation.

"An inspiring story of life--and death--after returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Joe Klein movingly describes how the struggle of veterans to rejoin a civilian world detached from their military experience and its life-changing impact often requires as much, if not more, courage and heroism as the battlefield. I could not put down this book which is, in the end, not just about finding new purpose but about brotherhood and love." (Robert M. Gates, US Secretary of Defense, 2006-2011, and author of *Duty*) "*Charlie Mike* is an extraordinary book about extraordinary individuals—young Americans who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan and returned home, only to discover a powerful need to 'Charlie Mike' to continue the mission by performing tasks larger than themselves with fellow veterans who sought to do the same. Joe Klein captures the experiences of these individuals clearly, vividly, and eloquently, and gives us an exceedingly moving and truly inspiring tribute to the members of what deserves to be recognized as America's New Greatest Generation." (General David Petraeus) "Joe Klein has done us a national service, telling the inspirational stories of vets from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars who returned home and as civilians continued their dedication to country and people in need. This is the can-do generation and this book honors their non-stop citizenship." (Tom Brokaw, author of *The Greatest Generation*) "A master storyteller, Joe Klein brings the reader into the lives of a captivating group of soldiers who found ways, after they returned home, to sustain the camaraderie and sense of mission their military service provided. What a powerful, uplifting and important tale this is!" (Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of *The Bully Pulpit* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *No Ordinary Time*) Game-changing. . . . The book explodes like a thriller. . . . The brilliance of this book is that it entertains and engages as it brings about a sea change in our views of vets and the military. (Huffington Post) Klein's young men and women were heroes in Afghanistan and Iraq, but in a way they're even more heroic back home on their interior battlefields and in their deep commitments of friendship. *Charlie Mike* is beautifully written, compellingly vivid, rich with humanity and soul. (Lesley Stahl, 60 Minutes correspondent) A great look at two of the best veteran organizations going and the incredible humans who make the effort work. (Jon Stewart) Few writers have captured the grief and suffering of combat veterans making the transition from war to home better than journalist Joe Klein. . . . In *Charlie Mike*, a term that means "continue the mission," Klein's main focus is two veterans who seem to represent the best America has to offer. . . . Klein shows how their service changed them but also propelled them to serve others once their military service ended. (USA Today) Klein's brief personal stories of these extraordinary men and women whose lives were marked by war are enlightening and powerful. . . . Ever the insightful reporter, he captures the conversational rhythm and vernacular of these remarkable warriors who have refitted their service to civilian life. . . . The compelling story of a continuing mission, rendered with sympathy and verisimilitude. (Kirkus) "Vivid. . . . Klein offers a compelling portrait of Greitens and other vets who used their military discipline, determination, and sense of mission to continue in service to the nation." (Booklist) About the Author Joe Klein is an award-winning journalist and the author of seven books, including the #1 bestseller *Primary Colors*. His weekly *Time* column, *In the Arena*, covers US politics, elections, and foreign policy and has won two National Headliner Awards for best magazine column. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Hey? Jake Wood? It's McNulty. Nick Nolte? Jake knew full well that the voice on the other end of the line was neither old nor gravelly enough to be the actor, but goofing on people was Jake's method of interpersonal exploration. McNulty. Stop fucking with me, Jake said. You're not Nick Nolte. No, asshole. Mc-Nul-ty. William McNulty. Remember we talked six months ago about doing that Somali pirate thing? Vaguely. Barely. Yeah, Jake said. What can I do for you? I saw your Facebook post about Haiti, McNulty said. I'm in. It was January 13, 2010. A day earlier, Jake Wood had been sitting in his apartment in Burbank, glued to the news about the devastation in Haiti—the collapsed buildings, wounded civilians, the chaos in the streets. There were reports of looting and banditry. It looked a lot like a war zone. He had been there before, in Iraq and Afghanistan. He realized that he missed it. Jake had been honorably discharged from the Marines in October 2009. His plan was to make the transition to full-fledged adulthood. He was applying to business schools for an MBA. It had felt premature immediately after graduating from

the University of Wisconsin Jake in a suit? Jake in an office? And it didnt feel particularly wonderful now, especially after a way-too-quick rejection from Stanford Business School had detonated in his mailbox. Maybe I can do something in Haiti. I want to help, Jake said to his girlfriend, Indra Petersons, a meteorologist for KABC-TV in Los Angeles. They had just started living together, after dating for a year. He knew that Indra was, at that moment, watching him think. It was amazing how clearly she saw through him, through everybody. They had met at a pickup football game, Thanksgiving of 2008. She was beautiful, Latvianbut the unexpected part was the complete absence of coy. Oh, sure, she had said when hed told her that one of the schools he was applying to was Northwestern. You can go get your MBA at Northwestern. Thats a great place to go. But Im not following you to Chicago. And Im not counting on you coming back. Jake figured Indra would go along with his Haiti excursionshe was a storm-chaser herself, after all. But he was very much on probation. The bottom line was that he was going to have to prove to her that he was serious, that he was ready to begin the rest of his life after a four-year adrenaline fiesta in the Marines. He felt a visceral pull toward Haiti. It would be for only a week or so. It was a onetime deal. Well see, Indra thought. Jake was, as she was, a frightening combination of brains and looks. He was six foot six, rippedhe had lost all his extraneous football weightwith soft brown eyes. But mostly he was very perceptive, in a no-nonsense way. He could think along with her; they could see the world the same. Jake was taking some brush-up economics courses at the local community college, which werent exactly setting his brain on fire. The MBA was something he would definitely do . . . eventually. But right now, he couldnt take his eyes off the tube. They were saying that no relief was getting into Haiti because of the general chaos and the fear of armed street gangsbut how dangerous could Port-au-Prince be? Would the gangs be an organized threat, real soldiers, like the Taliban? He doubted it. And if they were terrorizing the populace, all the more reason for a Marine to go in and protect the civilians. The airport was closed on account of anarchy, apparently. That was a problem. If you wanted to help, how did you get in there? He called the Red Cross and talked to a nice lady. He told her that he was a Marine Sergeant with two combat deployments, a college graduate, and that he had experience in disaster relief after Hurricane Katrina. Are you a Red Cross volunteer? she asked. Thats why Im calling. To volunteer. Were not taking spontaneous volunteers, she said. You have to be trained. Its dangerous down there. Im a . . . Marine, he said, carefully editing the f-bomb. I can do danger. Dont you need people who can, like, protect the medical personnel? She was sure they did. But that would require training, too. How long does the training take? Anywhere from a day to a week, depending on what youre going to do . . . but Im not sure were taking inexperienced people, in any case. Inexperienced? He hung up. Fuck it, he told Indra. Im going anyway. He posted his intentions on Facebook and started calling his friends. His best friend from the Marines, Clay Hunt, had to go to a wedding in Houston that weekend. But Im in, Clay said. Ill meet you there. Yeah, sure. In the midst of all the shit and anarchy, Clay would just find him. He worried that Clay would only find troublethat had happened beforebut there was no time to think too much about that. He tried five other Marines; they were willing but didnt have passports. He had a better result with a Wisconsin roommate and football teammate, Jeff Lang, who was now a firefighter in Milwaukee. Sure, dude, Im in, Jeff said, and hed check whether any of his fellow firefighters wanted in (one did). Later that day, McNulty called. McNulty was also a Marine Sergeant, an intelligence specialist, but hed spent most of his timeat the Marines behestas a private intelligence contractor. He had been an interrogator in Iraq and also worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). He was trying to start an intelligence consulting firm and a film company, which he would call Title X Productions, after the section of the U.S. code that governs military conduct. Ive got to be in Istanbul at the end of the month, he said, but Im ready to roll right now. Jake liked that: Lets roll was his generations call to arms, made famous on September 11, 2001, when the passengers on Flight 93 decided to battle the Al Qaeda terrorists who had seized the plane. They crashed in central Pennsylvania, the first victory in the war against Al Qaeda. McNulty had become aware of Jake a few years earlier, when a friend had turned him on to a blog called Jakes Life, which Jake used to tell war stories to the folks and former football teammates back home. He liked to write and was good at it; it was a way to wring out the war and to chill. He didnt dwell on the horrible stuff, although he didnt hide it either. McNulty was an obsessive consumer of war newshe read everything he could find on the netand Jake seemed like one of those guys who had his head screwed on straight, who hadnt been addled by bloodlust or anomie. When Jake blogged that he was leaving the military, William had called to see if he was interested in working for Title X. He was trying to get a strategic consulting contract from the U.S. government to do intelligence analysis on the Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden. He and Jake had several phone conversations before Jake finally said thanks, but no thanks. He had a bad foot, an old football injury exacerbated by all the running hed had to do as a Marine. He was about to have surgery on it for the sixth time. Anyway, it was time to get real, to apply for that MBA, to settle in with Indra. And now, out of nowhere, Will McNulty was on the phone, and he had some very good ideas. Will had graduated from the University of Kansas with a dual degree in economics and communicationsbut his real education had been suffered at the hands of the invaluable Roman Catholic drill sergeants of learning, the Jesuits. Will knew a priest back in Chicago, who knew a Jesuit Brother down in Port-au-Prince, who was asking for help. Within a matter of hours, Will arranged for them to meet up the next day with Brother Jim Boynton in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, which shared the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. Brother Jim would be carrying medical supplies across the border, and McNulty offered to get letters of passage from both governments. Were going

to be carrying narcotics, he told Jake. We should have everything in order. I would never have thought of that, Jake said to Indra. So, twenty-four hours after being rejected by the Red Cross, Jake had a partner and a mission. Brother Jim was trying to get some doctors to join them. What are we going to call this operation? McNulty asked Jake. We should have a name, right? William, in a Jesuitical frame of mind, emailed him a bunch of Latin possibilities. Jake liked Rubicon. He knew the expression crossing the Rubicon but didnt know what it referred to. He googled it and told Will that it was the river Julius Caesar had crossed when he returned to Rome on his way to overturning the Republic and establishing himself as emperor. It was the point of no return. Thats kind of cool, Jake said. Weve got to cross a river to get into Haiti, right? His first thought was to call it Operation Rubicon, but McNulty was wary: an operation suggested a lot more organization and planning than they had done. Its just you and me, the firefighters, and Brother Jim, right? Will said. Lets call it Team Rubicon. You dont want to oversell. There was one more phone call that day. McNulty had checked in with a friend in the intelligence community who told him, Will, theyve got armed gangs toting M-16s, and theres lots of looting. Its dangerous. Dont go down there and try to be a hero. Will relayed this to Jake, who blew up: McNulty, Ive handled heavier shit than some fucking street gang in Haiti. Im going. What I need to know from you is, are you with me or not? Cmon, were fucking Marines. We do chaos. Im going, Will said, noting that, like most Marines, Jake used the word fucking as an adjectival amplifier. I told you I was fucking in, didnt I? Also that day, Jake revived his wartime blog. His first post began: I knew Id come out of retirement at some point. They now had a name, they had raised enough money off Facebook for \$500 plane tickets to Santo Domingoand, remarkably, they had letters of passage that Will had secured from the Haitian and Dominican embassies in Washington. They would meet up with Brother Jim in Santo Domingo on the evening of Day 2. They doubled their numbers the next day. Jeff Lang, the Milwaukee firefighter, asked the pilot to make an announcement on his flight down to Santo Domingo: Were there any doctors or nurses on board who were headed to Haiti and wanted to be part of a medical relief team? Dr. Eduardo Dolhun, an obstetrician from San Francisco with extensive disaster relief experience, raised his hand. Another doctor approached Jake at the baggage claim in Santo Domingo. You look like youre headed to Haiti, Dave Griswell, an emergency room doc from Virginia, asked, Can I come with you? Absolutely, Jake said. Just before he boarded his own flight to Santo Domingo, McNulty, who looked semiofficial in his Marine camouflage pants, was approached by an obvious military sort (he could always tell a comrade by his looks, his walk, his body language, his attitude). You wouldnt be going to Haiti, by any chance? asked Mark Hayward, an Army special forces medic. He signed on, too. Team Rubicon now had eight members. Jake Wood and William McNulty finally met each other in Santo Domingo on the evening of January 14, 2010. Jake saw that Will was really intense: he was about six feet tall, fit and wirythat was gooddark Irish, clean shaven but with a heavy beard, and sharp blue eyes that almost seemed to bug out when he was talking. Hed already sensed that Will would be a perfect XO (executive officer), second in command, and organizational guy, but there was also intelligence and sensitivity, perhaps an emotional vulnerability to him. Both were enlisted men who were college graduates, who could have, and maybe should have, been officers, which infused Team Rubicon with a particular style: there wouldnt be any of that bullshit officer stiffness and formality. There would be, Jake hoped, an easy noncom pride and defiance. They would be loose and fearless. The hell with the Red Cross. Crossing their Rubicon on Day 3at Jiman, a tiny town next to a dry stream that divided the Dominican Republic from Haitiproved to be less dramatic than expected. After hearing about the street gangs, Jake was intent on being armed for the trip. He later managed to acquire a pistol, but he would never need to use it. They piled into two vans, cross-loading the medical supplies so that a full ration of medicine would get through if one of the vans was attacked, detained, or confiscatedbut that proved an unnecessary precaution, too. The drive to Haiti was long, eight hours, but uneventful, and crossing the border wasnt very dramatic either. The letters of passage that Will had obtained were honored on both sides of the border; all the medical supplies got through. The next drive, from the border to Port-au-Prince, took about an hour and a half. McNulty thought it was beautifulthe Baie de Port-au-Prince on the right and white chalk cliffs on the left. Jake was struck by the robust police presence, helicopters in the air, military on the ground. They saw none of the free-range criminality and danger that was being reported on television and by McNultys intel friend. There were traffic snarls around gas stations as they entered Port-au-Prince from the north, but food and drink were being sold along the side of the road. This wasnt so bad. As they moved south, though, there were more collapsed buildings, hundreds and hundreds of them, and soon, wild and utter devastation. Mark Hayward, the Army medic, told McNulty that the pervasive, gagging, rancid smell in the air came from dead bodies rotting in the tropical heat, something William had never experienced before. There were crowds of people in the street as the team moved toward the Jesuit novitiate at dusk, wanderingnot riotingasking them for help. Jake was tempted to stop but decided that they had to keep moving, get to the Jesuits, and plan out their deployment from there. The novitiate sat at the end of a winding road. It was a large compound, surrounded by an eight-foot wall topped with razor wire. There was a heavy metal gate guarded by a security team. The Team Rubicon firefighters immediately set to work assessing the structural damage to the novitiates buildings. The damage was significant, so the team set up sleeping tents in the yard. That evening the monks fed them pumpkin soup with pasta, plus saltine crackers and pieces of goat meat. There were some refugees at the novitiate, one child with a broken leg, and Doc Griswell set it. Jake and William were daunted by the conditions theyd seen, but they were hopeful about their team. It

had taken them all of four days to organize themselves, get to Haiti, and start helping out. The next morning, they went to the Manresa refugee camp, which was well across town, on the grounds of a former Jesuit retreat. Before they left, Jake set out the logistics and gave each of the team members an assignment. He had their Jesuit translator, Franois, hire two tap-taps—the hallucinogenic, crazy-painted, covered pickup trucks that served as taxis—and the team hit the road. Manresa was a hot and bare field, clogged with people. There was a single tree toward the back of the camp, and they strung a tarp from it. This would be their triage center. People immediately began to gather, hundreds of them. McNulty saw that they had crushed limbs, compound fractures, bloody and tattered bandages, open wounds. The doctors had Franois ask the people to line up according to the severity of their injuries, and, much to McNulty's joy and amazement, they triaged themselves, quietly, without pushing or screaming. There was, in fact, a reverent silence, punctuated by occasional sobs of pain and babies crying. The crowd parted to allow the most severely wounded to be brought in on makeshift litters—doors that had been blown off in the quake. The Team Rubicon doctors, medics, and firefighters went to work, making the most seriously injured comfortable, setting bones, cleaning and debriding wounds. McNulty didn't feel capable to do that—he had no training—so he began to break down window frames into sticks for splinting. He organized a crew to gather window frames from the Jesuit retreat and other collapsed buildings in the area. They worked all day, snacking on protein bars, losing track of time and place, losing themselves in the effort to heal the gracious, grateful Haitians. One of their patients had a broken back and was partially paralyzed. He could move his arms, but his legs were crushed. He needed to get to a hospital. They flagged down a Haitian driving a hatchback who agreed to take their patient. He was littered on a door, which was longer than the hatch bed—the patient's lower legs were sticking out the back. They paid the driver to go to the hospital. There was no guarantee that he'd do it, but after a day of work at Manresa, their default position was that most Haitians were not only benign but also intent on helping out. The taxis that had brought them to Manresa had promised to return at four p.m., but they didn't. As evening fell, Franois managed to hail a couple of tap-taps to take them back to the Jesuit novitiate. We've got to solve the transport situation, McNulty said to Jake. What do you propose? We can't wait for ambulances or relief crews. Let's charter two tap-taps and overpay, to guarantee they'll be there for us. He asked Franois to hire two tap-taps for \$100 per day, plus \$10 for every emergency run—which was ridiculously generous in Port-au-Prince, where the going rate for rides was loose change. By the end of the week, they had five dedicated tap-taps, as more teams of doctors and nurses arrived via the Jesuits back in Chicago. Brother Jim Boynton had been a Jesuit for twenty-six years, most of them spent teaching in Detroit. A year earlier, his superiors had asked if he'd be interested in an international assignment. Absolutely, he'd said. He asked for someplace in South America, where he could use his Spanish. They sent him to Haiti, which was close, but not Spanish-speaking; he would have to learn Creole. He was sent to Ouanaminthe, a lush, tropical town near the Haitian-Dominican border, where he became the principal of the local school. On the afternoon of the earthquake, he was in Ouanaminthe, playing Irish jigs on his fiddle for some of the students in the street outside the Jesuit residence. The kids were dancing as the ground began to shake and tumble. And it was magical: the kids continued to dance as the ground heaved, as if they were playing on one of those inflated plastic bounce-house contraptions. When the temblors stopped, he surveyed the rest of the village, mostly reed and mud huts, and found everything was pretty much okay. But he soon began receiving emails about the disaster in Port-au-Prince. His Jesuit superiors asked him to go to Santo Domingo, organize a medical team, and head back to the novitiate in Haiti's capital city. He had experience with disaster relief, and he knew that these operations could take months to get organized. He didn't know where to start . . . and then, at that very moment—a sure sign of Divine Providence—the email from William McNulty popped into his mailbox. Brother Jim's only previous experience with the military was to protest at the gates of Fort Benning against the School of the Americas, a training facility for Latin American military personnel, including those who had committed massacres against Roman Catholic priests and nuns in El Salvador. But he found himself immediately at ease when he met Wood and McNulty. You're Jesuit-educated? he asked Will, although he already knew the answer to that question. Yep, McNulty replied. I'm a man for others, he said, citing the Jesuit motto. Jake looked Brother Jim in the eye, from his great height. So you're a monk? he asked with a laugh. Brother Jim was wearing his usual T-shirt, shorts, and a crucifix. I'm glad you're here, Jake continued. We probably couldn't have figured this out without you. Boynton had been up all the previous night, securing the medical supplies and arranging logistics, and now Jake said, You look like you could use some shut-eye. We've got a big day tomorrow, and just like that, Jim was following Jake's orders. That seemed strange: he was forty-two; Jake was twenty-seven. Over the next few days, Brother Jim would watch how Jake led—treating everyone with respect, reading situations accurately and decisively, leavening a moment with a wisecrack—and he realized that this was the first young person whose judgment he trusted more than his own. On the road to Port-au-Prince, Mark Hayward had briefed Boynton about what to do if he got shot and how to deal with severed arteries—basic military first aid stuff and entirely terrifying—Brother Jim blanched, and Jake read that, too: Don't worry, Jim, he said. It's gonna be all right. Please God, don't let me get shot, Brother Jim prayed. But also, Thank you, Lord, for sending me these guys. When they loaded the two pickup trucks for the trip from the border to Port-au-Prince, Boynton made sure to get into the one with Jake and William. Brother Jim was shocked by the casualties, the number and severity of the wounds at Manresa on their first day of work. Jake and Will had told him they were shocked, too, but they didn't show it. He was amazed by how calm and well organized

they were. That night, they gathered outdoors around a fire near a massive banyan tree at the novitiate for dinner and a debrief. The chow was beans and rice, comfort food, perfectly satisfying. There was beer. The debrief would become a nightly routine, as would the beer. Jake started the proceedings, reviewing the days deployment and explaining the next days assignment. The Jesuits wanted them to go to an AIDS clinic run by Mother Teresas nuns. Jake split the group into two teams and announced the new tap-tap transport arrangement. They had used up all their medicine the first day and were hoping that there would be some at the AIDS clinic. In the afternoon, McNulty would go to the airport, where two and a half tons of medical supplies and a team of doctors and nurses were supposed to be coming in on a United charter flight from Chicago, courtesy of the Jesuits. Getting the supplies to the novitiate was going to be a real headache. Every day, thousands of tons were landing at the airport, which was being run by American troops, but they were not getting out. After going through the logistics, there was a stress debrief, which also became a nightly feature. Brother Jim led this part. The team members were encouraged to talk about the emotional impact of the things theyd seen and done, but they also talked about the strange exhilaration of being part of a military-style mission again. It was a total euphoric relief, Jake thought, being part of a Band of Brothers but not having to kill anyone. One day during Jakes second combat deployment, as part of a scout-sniper unit in Afghanistan, his team had spotted a high-value target, surrounded by children, two hundred yards away. Jake had been the spotter; his friend and superior, Shawn Beidler, had been the shooter. The targets heart seemed to explode in a gusher of blood against a mud wall; Jake watched the children through his scope, their faces frozen in horror, then the screaming and running. He couldnt stop thinking about those kids after he came home. But he had been surrounded by children all day at Manresa, some of them being treated for their wounds, others asking if they could help out, others just hanging around, amazed by the presence of these giant Americans who were working nonstop to set bones and clean wounds. And Jake realized, in that moment, he was feeling healthier, too. Except for his foot, which was killing him; he was wearing combat boots again, and they truly sucked. Brother Jim had experienced spiritual bonding before; he was, after all, part of a brotherhood. But this was different, far more intense the spiritual unity on the team was immediate, augmented by the physical work and the potential danger. He wondered: Was this brotherhood the real attraction of the military? He had never really thought about it before. I have not been the greatest supporter of our soldiers, he admitted that night during the stress debrief. In fact, I protested against our military at Fort Benning. But youre a product of that military, and I have to say that while Im not ashamed of protesting in the past, I can also say with a great deal of certainty that, after today, Ill never do it again. You are who you are because of your military training. You are more prepared to serve humanity to be a man for other than if youd been in a monastery reading Thomistic philosophy for the past ten years. And, quite frankly, Im glad you havent been. Brother Jim then led them in St. Ignatius of Loyolas daily prayer: Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will. That became part of the daily ritual as well. Jake, McNulty, and Brother Jim shared a three-man tent, and Will was the last to sleep each night. He was in charge of the blogging, which he would tap out on his BlackBerry and send to Jakes sister in Bettendorf, Iowa, who would post it. Phone calls were hard; text was easier and, though they didnt know it, Team Rubicons exploits were beginning to be noticed on Jesuit blogs and in local newspapers. Contributions were coming in, and Jakes father, Jeff Wood, was organizing transport for more medical supplies and volunteers. As the days passed, Jeff realized that he would have to take off time from his day job as the vice president of a factory in Bettendorf to coordinate Team Rubicons stateside logistics. The days were warm, but the nights were chilly in January. Will would slip into the tent and sleep between Jake and Brother Jim. Somehow, each morning hed wind up with all the blankets it was very weird and Jake would be shivering, with none of them. Jake joked about it but never got angry. The caseload at Mother Teresas Sisters of Charity AIDS clinic was small compared to Manresa only a few dozen but nine had serious problems that required higher echelon treatment. And there was no medicine. Brother Jim offered to take several of the more seriously wounded to University the citys main hospital in one of the taptaps and see if he could find some drugs, splints, and bandages. The hospital was a white stucco building with green trim, guarded by American troops from the 82nd Airborne. Somehow it hadnt been damaged in the quake. But there was chaos inside. There were a handful of nurses and civilian volunteers trying to take care of hundreds of suffering patients. Brother Jim asked one of the nurses, Do you have medicine that I can take to my doctors? You have doctors? the nurse replied. Get them down here immediately. We have no doctors. Brother Jim raced back to the Mother Teresa clinic. When Jake heard the news, he was boggled the largest emergency room in town had no doctors? and decisive: Were going to the hospital. Within an hour, Dr. Dave Griswell was running the emergency room at University with the rest of Team Rubicon helping out, working as they had at Manresa the day before. That afternoon, Jake saw a middle-aged woman brought in with lesions and open sores all over her body, her legs mangled. She was barely coherent. Be careful, Dr. Griswell said. I think we have an advanced-stage AIDS patient here. Jake grimaced. Oh, God, he said. He hadnt dealt with any advanced-stage AIDS patients, and he struggled to overcome his revulsion. But he had no real choice: he was there to help. He put on an extra layer of surgical gloves. Weve got to start taking off her clothes, said Mark Hayward now known as Doc Army and Jake pulled out his combat knife, the first time hed used it since Afghanistan, and began slicing away her clothes from the shoulders down. Hayward worked from the bottom up,

raising her skirt, and what they saw was impossible. Her pubic area, her legs and thighs and stomach were covered with purple blotches and open sores. Her entire pelvic bone was protruding through the skin on one side; the other side was crushed. Jake stopped, gasped, looked at Doc Army. She's expectant, Hayward said. Jake knew the term it was Army-speak for near death, nothing more they could do. Okay, he said now, and moved away, thinking: Okay, let's cover her up, let her die with dignity, and go on to the next case. About ten minutes later, Jake passed by her bed and was amazed to see Dr. Gris lying on the gurney, trying to insert a catheter to enable her to urinate. Jake stopped and watched. Doc Army had stopped, too, and was watching Griswell reverently. You know, Jake, he said, here's a weird one: if it weren't for this disaster, she'd die in the streets, alone, cold, and in pain. It took a goddamn earthquake to bring someone to this country who cares enough about her comfort to do this. Griswell worked on her for what seemed an eternity; it was probably only ten minutes before he conceded defeat. Her canal had withered and stiffened too much to accept the catheter, and Doc knew that his continued probing was opening lesions and causing her more pain. I'm sorry, I can't do it, he said to her and backed away, frustrated by his failure. She seemed to understand. She smiled weakly and nodded at him. Jake lost it then. He rushed outside to an alley and began to weep. He was horrified by the poor woman's suffering, but he was also blown away by Dr. Gris and the dedication of the team. He didn't have much time for self-indulgence; there were other people who needed help. It was a decorous weep, brief and quiet. McNulty also had been overwhelmed by the sight of Dr. Gris trying to care for the woman, and he took his tears to a separate alley. His cry had been explosive, the sobs erupting from a place he'd never been before. He kept his tears a secret, as Jake did; it would be years before they figured out that they'd lost it at the same moment, for precisely the same reasons. Meanwhile, Dr. Dolhun, the obstetrician from San Francisco, was delivering babies and doing amputations. Each new baby seemed a particular triumph to McNulty, amid all the death and truncation. There were still no drugs. Amputee patients were given Motrin for their pain; they were given socks to bite on as Dr. Dolhun picked up the saw. There was terrible screaming, lacerating eardrums. Warm January breezes blew through the jalousie windows—the sort of breezes William had always associated with spring break, but now they were a blessing, a balm amid the suffering. Brother Jim was working on a boy who had come in with his father. The boy had dirty bandages on his head, legs, and feet. Dr. Gris told Boynton to remove the bandages. One of the Milwaukee firefighters helped him . . . and the boy's skin came off with the bandage, and the cheesy smell of gangrene almost knocked Jim down. He'd later write on Jake's blog, As I lifted the leg for the fireman to remove more bandage, my fingers went into the flesh like I was holding canned tuna fish. The leg would have to be amputated, but the boy would survive. That afternoon, McNulty went to the airport to gather the advance guard of what he and Jake were calling Bravo Element, the medical reinforcements sent by the Chicago Jesuits. Four male nurses from Masonic Hospital in Chicago had arrived; another flight was coming the next day with the rest of the team and the medical supplies. Inside the airport, the U.S. military was running an orderly operation; outside, there was mayhem. Crowds of thousands of Haitians banged on the gates, hoping to get at the tons of food and water sitting inside. And now, for the first time, there was violence. McNulty loaded the nurses into a tap-tap and was beginning to brief them when a crowd attacked the supply truck in front of them with rocks. Apparently, the Haitians were convinced that there was food or water in the truck. Some of the rocks pelted Team Rubicon's tap-tap, which stopped. That was part of the drill, William had learned: it was called a tap-tap because you got it to stop by tapping loudly on the side panel. McNulty jumped out and yelled at the driver to keep going, then splayed himself on the hood until they'd gotten clear of the crowd. It was the only violent incident of their deployment in Haiti. A strong aftershock 6.1 on the Richter scale woke them the next morning. It was Will's first earthquake, a discombobulating craziness. When they got back to University Hospital, the 82nd Airborne had moved all the patients from the emergency room, rolling their chipped enamel beds and pushing their green canvas gurneys into the courtyard. The patients were still outside, wailing and stinking, their numbers growing constantly. Team Rubicon's firefighters did a structural check of the hospital and decided it was habitable, and the patients were brought back inside. It was now a week after the earthquake. This was TR's third full day of work. The first two had been difficult and tiring, but thrilling, too. Now they were bone-weary, and they were frustrated. Where the hell was everyone? Anderson Cooper from CNN was there in the emergency room, reporting on the desperate situation, there were doctors now in the operating room but still no military doctors or medical supplies in the emergency room. The 82nd Airborne was there, but why hadn't the U.S. military sent out more medical teams—the best combat surgeons in the world? And what about the Red Cross? Jake was particularly pissed about that. McNulty went back to the airport and was thrilled to find that the rest of the medical team included twelve doctors and nurses and a cook. (The cook would be re-tasked as a pharmacist.) They had the troops for a real operation now. The Jesuits had also sent 150 cartons of medical supplies, arranged on pallets. McNulty went to the Command Operations Center at the airport to see if he could get the military to help transport the supplies back to the novitiate. He met with a female Major, who was in charge of coordinating the nongovernmental organizations' efforts. How the hell did you get medical supplies? she snapped. William explained that they were a group of self-deployers who had joined together in the past week. That means you're an NGO and you come under my jurisdiction, she said. And I need the medical supplies. No fucking way, William said. These are dedicated supplies, sent to us by the Jesuits in Chicago. And what are you doing in uniform? she asked, eyeing Will's camouflage pants. You're not a Marine anymore. It's illegal for you to wear the uniform. Will tried to get her name, but

she refused to tell him, and her name tape was covered by her load-bearing vest. You know what youre doing by wearing that uniform, she was shouting now. You know what youre doing . . . He wanted to scream at her: What Im doing is helping people. He decided to ignore her and see if he could find a way to spirit the supplies out of the airport. He walked a quarter mile to where the medical team and supplies were waiting on the tarmac. He wanted to seem confident and in control for the doctorshe was their first impression of Team Rubiconbut he was worried. How the fuck am I going to do this? he asked himself aloud. By just doing it, it turned out. He went outside the terminal, flagged down three more tap-taps, and had them back up into a secure area that was being guarded by only two U.S. soldiers. Holy shit, this could get hairy, he thought, as the Haitian crowd, seeing the movement, surged toward the gate. McNulty set up a human chain to move the supplies, carton by carton, from the tarmac through the cargo terminal and outside to where the tap-taps were waiting. They stacked the boxes by the gate and once again the Haitians surprised him: they didnt rush the supplies. Mediseen . . . mediseen, he said, and they respected that. In fact, about ten of the Haitians joined the human chain and helped load the supplies into the tap-taps. They asked for food or water in return for their work. Mediseen . . . mediseen, he said, and they backed away. The local police, watching all this, offered to escort them wherever they were going. They reached the novitiate late that night. Meanwhile, there was some good news at the hospital. A U.S. military medical team was coming to take over the emergency room. And somewhere in the middle of the afternoon, Jake heard a familiar voice. Hey, dude. I made it. Clay Hunt. Moth-er-fucker, Jake said, separating the term of endearment into as many syllables as possible. How did you find us? Well, you guys posted the coordinates on the blog, he said. I got a ride on a private plane from Santo Domingo, took a taxi to the Jesuit HQ, and they told me that you were down here. That night, around the campfire, there was a sense that a corner had been turned. Jake laid out the assignments for the next day: there would be four FAST (Forward Area Surgical Team) units. Each would take a tap-tap loaded with supplies to separate refugee camps. Sadly, they would also be losing members of the original eighththe firefighters were heading home to Milwaukee, and Dr. Dolhun was going back to San Francisco. But Team Rubicon was moving into Bravo Element phase with a lot more knowledge, confidence, and personnel than theyd had just three days earlier. The four FAST teams deployed successfully to remote refugee camps the next day. Doc Army noted that, finally, there were other medical teams out and about. Indeed, to his disgust, he found out that several teams of medical personnel had been locked down at the U.S. embassy, prevented from working in the field for fear of the nonexistent danger in the streets. The FAST units were far more robust than the original team, with multiple doctors and nurses and plenty of supplies per unit. Mark HaywardDoc Armyhad gone out on a FAST unit with Brother Jim, and in late afternoon, after a satisfying days work, he looked up and saw Jim playing his fiddle with antic merriment, entertaining the children with Irish jigs. The rest of the medical team joined in, playing monster tag with the kidsSeth, a mammoth male nurse with a shaved head, was a hilarious monster. Everyone was laughing, laughing uncontrollably, laughing with relief, till the tears streamed down their cheeks. This was a good day, Hayward told Brother Jim as they headed back to the novitiate. Im almost happy. Jake was feeling pretty good that night, too. He had been out in the field with Clay Huntand, for the first time since the war, Clay had seemed really good. He was loading and unloading equipment, helping out where he could, playing with kidsthe guy was a genius with kidsand actually smiling. Clay was from Houston, a little guyhe and Jake would have been called Mutt and Jeff in an earlier era, but this generation of troops knew nothing about the ancient comic strip. Clay was wicked smart, but scattered. He could quote Yeats and Tennyson, but he couldnt seem to handle community college. He was a handsome guy, Jake thought, with soft, long-lashed eyes and a sweet disposition. Clay hated the war, and he let people know it when they had deployed to Afghanistan, which was not cool. Back home, he was being treated for post-traumatic stress at the VA, but not very successfully. He was married, but that didnt seem to be working out very well either. And so it waswell, it was thrillingto see Clay so happy and . . . whole, working downrange in Haiti. I think we may have a model here, William said that night after the meeting. His time in Haiti was coming to a close. He had those Title X business meetings scheduled in Istanbul. But he knew that this couldnt be the end of Team Rubicon. What do you mean a model? Jake asked, impatient and a bit hotter than hed intended. For what? We could do this in other places, asshole, McNulty said. Weve got skills that other relief teams dont. We go in first, right? There certainly was a need, Jake conceded. There were natural disasters everywhere, all the time. Hed flashed angry because he was torn. He didnt want to chuck everything and become the boss of Team Rubicon. How would he live? How would he get paid? Then again, his dad had emailed that about \$150,000 in cash donations, in addition to the medical supplies and volunteers, had come in while theyd been in Haiti. Team Rubicon was all over the news, tootheir blog had been linked to by military bloggers and other relief organizations. Newspaper articles had been written. There were stories on TV, featuring a rather unique angle: Iraq and Afghanistan veterans doing something good and inspiring, rather than being portrayed as basket cases, for a change. In 2010, the idea that veterans might actually be a positive force was still very much a novelty. So, okayMcNulty had a point. If Team Rubicon could make just a small difference in the way that civilians saw veterans, and the way veterans saw themselves, in addition to helping out the Haitians of this world, well, that would be pizza with extra toppings and free drinks at the bar. Jake was not willing to concede that to McNulty quite yet. He figured that his own fate was business school and a quiet life making lots of money. But he was willing to contemplate more missions for Team Rubicon while he pursued his MBA, keeping it small and occasional.

My dad said we had to form a 501(c)(3) whatever that is or pay taxes on it, he told McNulty that night, knowing that a 501(c)(3) was the preferred corporate entity for nonprofit organizations, but hating to sound like he knew what that was. I can check that out when I get back to D.C., Will said. Okay, brother, Jake said, hugging him. This has been good. McNulty left the next morning in a blur of bear hugs and with a lump in his throat. Within days, seven of the original eight Team Rubicon volunteers were gone only Brother Jim remained with Bravo Element. They now had dozens of people on the ground, with a full complement of medical gear, maps, internet, and solar panels to provide energy. They had learned so much in two weeks about medical care in chaotic conditions, about one another. Years later, Jim would think about their experiences in Port-au-Prince and feel an emotional hollow, a desire to re-create the military experience of brotherhood the banter, the spiritual bond, the thrill of pure service. Wood, McNulty, and Clay Hunt left Haiti exultant, firing off celebratory blog posts from Santo Domingo. Clay wrote that he and Jake were going to eat huge chunks of cow. McNulty wrote that a Spanish relief worker had asked him out for dinner and dancing. Problem. I can't dance, I smell like the ass of a dead rhinoceros, and all I have are dirty cammies and boots. On the flight from Santo Domingo to Miami, Clay showed Jake a copy of Outside magazine, featuring a former Navy SEAL named Eric Greitens who had an organization named The Mission Continues that gave fellowships to wounded veterans who were willing to do public service. I think people end up benefiting from serving as much as those they aim to serve, Greitens was quoted. That was certainly true in Haiti for all of us, right? Clay said. I think I might apply for one of those fellowships. Greitens's program was new and relatively small, but it seemed a confirmation of what Jake had experienced for real on the ground in Port-au-Prince. He had other plans, but The Mission Continues might be perfect for someone like Clay. Jake had watched his best friend do a reverse zombie in the refugee camps: Clay was fully alive again and fizzing with all sorts of ideas. He could try for The Mission Continues fellowship or maybe he could go to Loyola Marymount and take classes to become a physician's assistant. He wanted to go back to Haiti, and when he went, he wanted to be something approaching a medic like Doc Army. He was talking about this as Jake's eyes began to close. Okay, dude, Jake said. I'm going to sleep. Unable to fold himself into a sleeping position in his seat, and somewhat to the dismay of his fellow passengers, he lay down in the aisle and slept there. The flight attendants, aware of what he'd been doing in Haiti, left him alone.