



The Betrayed: On Warriors, Cowboys and Other Misfits

Dr Jimmy T (Gunny) LaBaume

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Sometimes people do the wrong things for the right reasons. The author admits that to be the "story of his life" and openly shares much of it in this book. Although the book is largely an historically based autobiography, it is part fact and part fiction. In cases where identities needed to be protected, the "facts" necessary to that end are changed but without altering the accuracy of the description of the event or its historical significance. It is a personal story. It is a cowboy-warrior's story told in a cowboy-warrior's language. It is the story of one man's journey from bondage to freedom and from slavery to liberty. It is the gritty story of this man's life-long education in the school of hard knocks as his journey took him from a sharecropper's shack, through the rodeo arena and the boxing ring, across the football field and the drilling rig floor, into the Marines and two wars and ultimately culminating in the university laboratory and classroom (the most dangerous of all the aforementioned places). Although woven around the experiences and adventures of one man, it is also the story of the people who lived during the period of time in American history that an entire generation was betrayed. It is the story of the dramatically changing times in which this personal odyssey took place. It is the story of the betrayal of an entire generation of Americans and particularly the 40% (of the military aged males) of that generation that fought the Vietnam war. The story is told mostly in the form vignettes—short scenes of a particular moment or event. Some are significant. Many are trivial. Some are humorous. Others are heart breaking--even nightmarish. But when sequenced, they tell a story that has a theme. They chronicle an odyssey—an intellectual journey that begins with the author's self-contradictory and delusional rationalizations for some of the horrible things that he did in the name of "mother, God and country" and ends with the realization that they were, indeed, horrible. The conclusions are not mere "visions in the night." They are a result of a very difficult process of shaking a lifetime of authoritarian indoctrination. Some segments of the book will likely be interpreted as "whining" or "self-pity" and they probably are. But it is also a story of love, hate, happiness, sadness, anger, complacency, adventure, excitement, boredom, bravery, fear, duty, tyranny, incompetence, empire building, honor, cowardice, heroism and yes, betrayal. The book is the product of a lifetime of experience and reflection with a little research and a healthy portion of labored discipline added. It was written with the white heat of passion that occurs during the moment when the world comes into focus for the first time. It will bring your world into better focus.

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