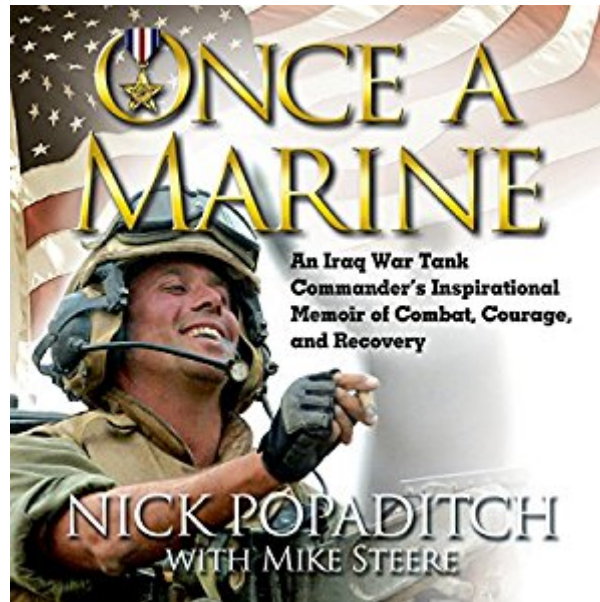


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# Once A Marine: An Iraq War Tank Commander's Inspirational Memoir Of Combat, Courage, And Recovery



## Synopsis

May 6, 1986: Nick Popaditch arrives at the Receiving Barracks, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California. April 9, 2003: An AP photographer captures a striking image seen around the world of the Gunny Sergeant smoking a victory cigar in his tank, the haunting statue of Saddam Hussein hovering in the background. Popaditch is immortalized forever as "The Cigar Marine." April 6, 2004: The tanker fights heroically in the battle for Fallujah and suffers grievous head wounds that leave him legally blind and partially deaf. The USMC awards him with a Silver Star for his valor and combat innovation. April 18, 2004: "Gunny Pop" comes home to face the toughest fight of his life - a battle to remain the man and Marine he was. This is the central drama of Nick's inspiring memoir, *Once a Marine: An Iraq War Tank Commander's Inspirational Memoir of Combat, Courage, and Recovery*. Listeners in and out of the military will stand up and cheer for this valiant Marine's Marine, a man who embodies everything noble and proud in the Corps' long tradition. Never has modern mechanized combat seemed so immediate and real, or the fight in Iraq seemed so human and worth believing in. At first, Nick fights to get back to where he was in Iraq-in the cupola of an M1A1 main battle tank, leading Marines in combat at the point of the spear. As the seriousness and permanence of his disabilities become more evident, Nick fights to remain in the Corps in any capacity, to help the brothers in arms he so aches to rejoin. Facing the inevitable following a medical retirement, he battles for rightful recognition and compensation for his permanent disabilities. Throughout his harrowing ordeal, Nick fights to maintain his honor and loyalty, waging all these battles the same way - the Marine way - because anything less would be a betrayal of all he holds dear.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 38 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Open Book Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 14, 2013

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00FW3EQNC

Best Sellers Rank: #242 in Books > History > Military > Weapons & Warfare > Conventional >

Armored Vehicles #257 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Middle East #514 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > Afghan & Iraq Wars > Iraq War

## Customer Reviews

I met Nick Popaditch at Book Expo America (the largest book industry trade show in the USA) in Los Angeles last May. Imagine the vast halls of a major convention center jammed with people hawking books. Banners and balloons fly, people run to meet celebrities, bands play. It's wild. Nick and his lovely wife, April, happened to be down the aisle from my publisher. I was wandering around the halls with the herd and ran into their booth. Meeting Nick and April was a shock. My dad was a member of one of the first UDTs--underwater demolition teams--in WWII. He was a highly decorated war hero. Running into Nick was like running into his reincarnation. The stance, the physique, the totally present mental attitude, the energy. I was raised by a warrior and finding another one right in front of me brought back lots. My father was killed by a negligent and probably drunk driver in 1964, surviving the war to be mowed down on the road. Thanks, Nick, for being who you are and letting me have that glimpse of my dad again. This book is an introduction to the state of the warrior. The essential learning it offers is nonpolitical and of value regardless of how you feel about Iraq or the election. I write about spirituality and becoming who you really are--the flowering of your soul. I've got a couple of books out, on spiritual practice and a sci-fi look at the richest man in the world meeting a great Native American shaman. What I get excited about in a book is the spiritual teachings and lessons it imparts. This entire book is a spiritual teaching. Watch Nick as he tells his story. He's right there, in the moment, as present as your own breath. (He's that way when you meet him in life, too.) Notice what he does as he prepares to ship out. "Getting straight with God.

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