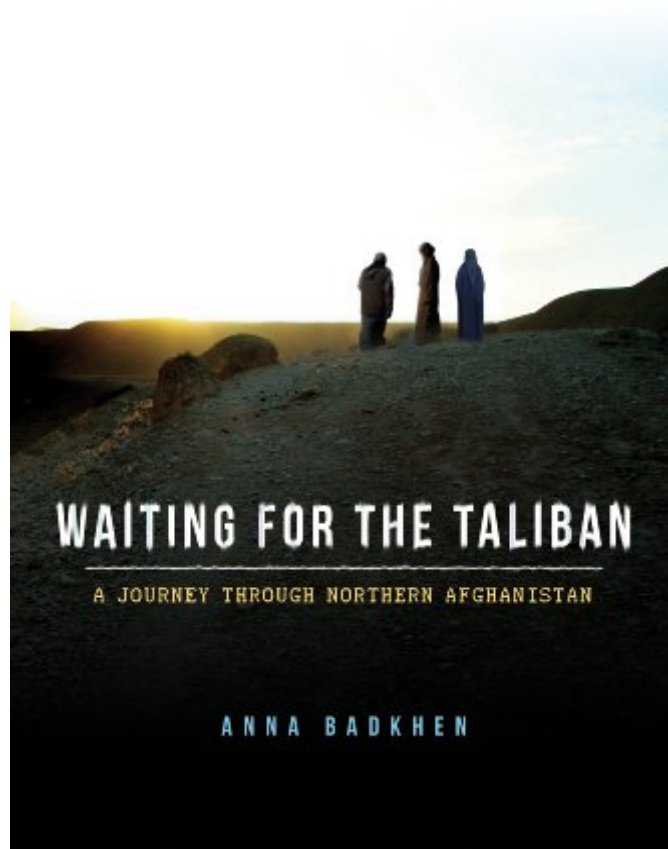




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Waiting For The Taliban: A Journey Through Northern Afghanistan



Synopsis

War correspondent Anna Badkhen returns to Northern Afghanistan in search of the friends she made in the early days of the occupation, back when it was the safest part of an unsafe land. Blighted, hopeless, still unspeakably beautiful but now overrun by the Taliban, the region is a different place entirely than the one she first encountered. Traveling from village to village, she comes to understand what went so terribly wrong in the North—and, by extension, what is going so terribly wrong in Afghanistan in general. In her dispatches, which she calls “part diary entries, part love letters from a land that stole my heart,” she offers one of the most heartbreaking, lyrical portrayals ever of Afghanistan—and a powerful warning to those seeking to force the country into a bright new future.

Format Note: Available for the first time as a collection, Badkhen’s dispatches span three weeks of daily coverage to create a short-form e-book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It is an excellent read (though short - 978 Kindle Locations). Pretty much apolitical, it will give you insight as to why simplified Western/American political solutions just don't seem to work in this poor

and war-torn country. Insights are derived from the diverse Afghan people the author visits during her most recent trip to Afghanistan. She tells their stories in a travel-diaryish format. Some of the stories are funny (but mostly not), many are sad (heart-wrenchingly "How can God let this happen!" sad), all are interesting; salted with historical background information (both recent and ancient) that at least partially explains how the life conditions of that story arose. A bargain at \$2.99. Buy it.

Anna Badkhen leaves little doubt that after nine years the Taliban are reclaiming the northern part of the country because the US and NATO forces turned their backs on it during the surge effort to quiet southern Afghanistan, the former Taliban stronghold. Something, she wants us to know, has gone terribly wrong in Afghanistan in terms of the war we're prosecuting there. The three years she lived there, Badkhen describes as "happy times for Northern Afghanistan." She claims it was safe, that there was no kidnapping; that the trouble was all in the south. That there were no Taliban in a region not traditionally home to the Pashtun ethnic group from whence the Taliban come. In fact, in 2001 it was the hotbed of anti-Taliban sentiment. That is no longer the case. Where once the Taliban was loathed, it now holds sway, setting up checkpoints, administering Shariah justice, and conducting terrorist bombing campaigns in Mazur-e-Sharif, taking control of Balkh Province. The people of Afghanistan will not look at the back of the last departing American or NATO soldier with any fondness. We will not be missed. Our expenditure of treasure, material, and human lives will not be remembered, much less revered. No, we will only be displaced and replaced by another gang of force that will impose its will on the Afghans, washing against their mountain ranges like another wave upon a cliff lined shore. Badkhen leaves no room to doubt they will continue to behead people for punishment and goats for buzkashi between bouts of ethnic cleansing. And that is the hard truth. Read more of my review here:[...]

I just spent the last year deployed in Northern Afghanistan and this is a great little read. Written in 2010, I arrived in country in early 2011. It provides an interesting perspective as well since the author traveled and stayed with local Afghan families, so her writing is not filtered through a Coalition lens. She faced the dangers of traveling as any other Afghan civilian would. As others have mentioned, though, it is a short read since it is basically a compilation of her three weeks visiting the country. As far as providing an overall view of the north, however, the book's scope is too limited to truly do so since the author spent the majority of her time in Mazar-e-Sharif, with a trip to Konduz and Baghlan as well. What it does do well is allow readers to glimpse the daily difficulties Afghans face in scraping together a hardscrabble existence in a country whose citizens must do

their best to survive from day to day - whether that means surviving the Taliban or the caprice of an incompetent central government. Worth the read.

This book makes the Afghan people real. The suffering that they endure on a regular basis is beyond anything we can imagine in the U.S. Yet she describes a resilient people who keep on moving forward with life despite horrendous tragedy. I cannot understand how we as human beings can so thoroughly fail to provide basic aid and services to the most helpless. Where have our billions of dollars been spent, what have we accomplished that in any way improves the lives of others or increases our safety. As a mother of 2 small children my heart breaks to hear of starving children, dying of exposure and easily preventable/treatable maladies. As the wife of a soldier I have to ask what the purpose is to our sacrifice as he does yet another tour in Afghanistan. In short this book helped me see a people and not just a statistic or a news segment. Educating me on the reality of the futility of our current operations without leaving me overwhelmed with the details of an incredibly rich and old culture(s).

In terms of detail and specificity, clarity and knowledge of the topic area, this book really is unparalleled among others written on northern Afghanistan. The author is intimately knowledgeable about the areas and skillfully uses historical context to provide the reader a sense of place, space and time. Her detail in describing seemingly less important people and places really lends credibility to her subtle and balanced description of the floundering efforts of western agencies to help the featured population. More than just a one time political snapshot story of northern Afghanistan, through references to her multiple visits to the area, Anna Badkhen has woven the story of a journey of compassion and connection that is far too often discarded by journalist authors for details of sensational events. Great diary-style read that flows well and is easy to follow.

In this short read I learned a great deal about the Afghan people and the failure of our policies in Afghanistan. For a reader who might have limited time to devote to the subject this is a perfect short read. The author was able to leave one with a yearning to read more. A worthwhile read for anyone.

very good

Anna's way with words draws the reader into a short but descriptive glimpse of the humanity of all sides involved in the ongoing conflict. It is beautifully written and disturbingly revealing how man

loves and loathes his fellow man.

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