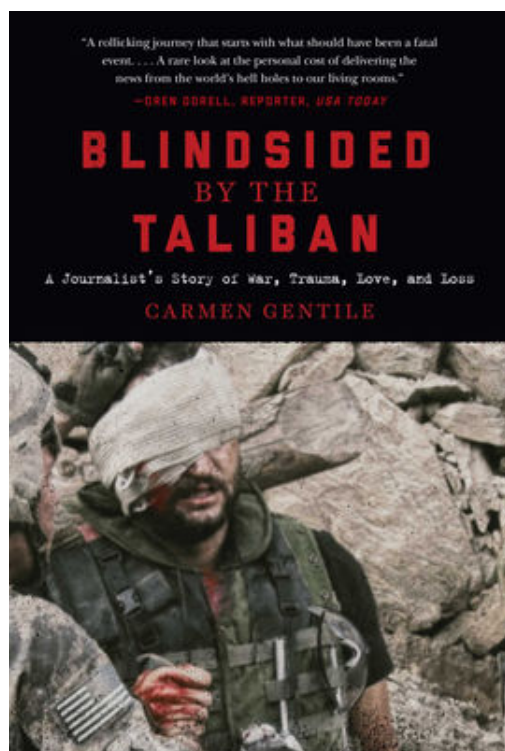


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I turn to see a rocket-propelled grenade screaming toward me. The ordinance strikes me in the side of the head, instantly blinding me in one eye and crushing the right side of my face.

On September 9, 2010, while embedded with an Army unit and talking with locals in a small village in eastern Afghanistan, journalist Carmen Gentile was struck in the face by a rocket propelled grenade. Inexplicably, the grenade did not explode and Gentile survived, albeit with the right side of his face shattered and blinded in one eye. Making matters worse, his engagement was on the ropes and his fiancée absent from his bedside.

Blindsided by the Taliban chronicles the author's numerous missteps and shortcomings while coming to terms with injury and a lost love. Inventive and unprecedented surgeries would ultimately save Gentile's face and eyesight, but the depression and trauma that followed his physical and emotional injuries

proved a much harder recovery. Ultimately, Gentile would find that returning to the front lines and continuing the work he loved was the only way to become whole again.

As only he can, Gentile recounts the physical and mental recovery which included staring only at the ground for a month, a battle with opiate-induced constipation and a history of drug addiction, attacks by Taliban assassins born of post-traumatic stress, the Jedi-like powers of General David Petraeus, and finding normalcy under falling mortars in an Afghan valley. The result is an unapologetic, self-deprecating, occasionally cringe-worthy, and always candid account of loss and redemption in the face of the self-doubt common to us all.

Blindsided by the Taliban also features the author's photos from the field that depict the realities of life in Afghanistan for soldiers and civilians alike. #KissedbytheTaliban

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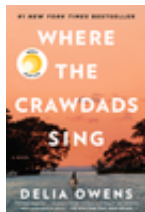
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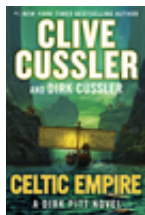
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