



# Shared Courage: A Marine Wife's Story of Strength and Service

*Michelle Keener*

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Their husbands went to war in Iraq; they went to war in their living rooms and on their computer screens. Shared Courage is the story of Michelle Keener's experiences as the wife of a Marine officer with two deployments during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

It provides a colorful, sometimes heartbreaking, and always inspiring account of how military life affected both one family and an entire community of Marine wives. From Keener's wedding and marriage, to her husband's assignment to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines (the famous "McCoys Marines" who pulled down the statue of Saddam in Baghdad), and the birth of a daughter in the base hospital, Keener describes what it is like keeping a military family together before, during, and after deployment.

She and other Marine wives faced the uncertainty of war; the media reports of the Marines advance on Fallujah in what would be one of the most harrowing battles of the war; the fear of not knowing whose husband would be coming home safely--and whose would not; the gut-wrenching knocks on the door with a Marine in his dress blues standing on the front step; the coming together in shared grief over the loss of a friend's husband; and eventually, the elation of having one's own husband return home safely.

Through it all, the immediacy of the war - real-time media reports from embedded reporters, e-mails from their loved ones - is felt by the reader, and the community of strong women who faced the news of the war day by day and hour by hour is inspiring. With this book, Keener gives a voice to all military wives, a group who few people notice, who receive no medals, but were asked to sacrifice in countless ways.

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