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# By Honor Bound: Two Navy SEALs, The Medal Of Honor, And A Story Of Extraordinary Courage



TWO NAVY SEALs, THE MEDAL OF HONOR,  
AND A STORY OF EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE

## BY HONOR BOUND

TOM NORRIS AND MIKE THORNTON

WITH DICK COUCH AND A FOREWORD BY BOB KERREY, MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT



## Synopsis

In April of 1972, SEAL Lieutenant Tom Norris risked his life in an unprecedented ground rescue of two American airmen who were shot down behind enemy lines in North Vietnam, a feat for which he would be awarded the Medal of Honor - an award that represents the pinnacle of heroism and courage. Just six months later, Norris was sent on a dangerous special reconnaissance mission that would take his team deep into enemy territory. On that mission they engaged a vastly superior force. In the running gun battle that ensued, Lieutenant Norris was severely wounded; a bullet entered his left eye and exited the left side of his head. SEAL Petty Officer Mike Thornton, under heavy fire, fought his way back onto a North Vietnamese beach to rescue his officer. This was the first time Tom and Mike had been on a combat mission together. Mike's act of courage and loyalty marks the only time in modern history that the Medal of Honor has been awarded in a combat action where one recipient received the medal for saving the life of another. *By Honor Bound* is the story of Tom Norris and Mike Thornton, two living American heroes who grew up very differently, entered military service and the Navy SEAL teams for vastly different reasons, and were thrown together for a single combat mission - a mission that would define their lives from that day forward.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First to those honorable Navy Seals, thank you for your service. My husband is a Mustang Officer who served in the Navy in Viet Nam. He and I sit during cocktail hour as he tells his war stories, and I am in awe and respond by saying are you sure? At one time I was single, working for a

Congressman on Capitol Hill and was fortunate to meet some members of the Navy. I have never met anyone who served in the Navy who has not loved it and who has not spent hours talking about it. Many who got out early regret it. The book flows well and familiarizes the reader about the workings of the Navy Seals. The requests the teams received in Viet Nam sometimes were to go far north to rescue pilots left me in suspense!! Tom you are one lucky Dude! Their hoisting you into the ship seemed impossible, but then nothing is impossible for a Seal. It is a fantastic book about two Medal of Honors recipients who served with the same Team. This makes this book a "gotta read". There was a difference in the Teams who served in Viet Nam and the Middle East. The difference, Viet Nam needed more Teams. Tom, I held my breath the entire time they were rescuing you. Quite a rescue!!! You are one lucky Dude.

This is an incredible book and one we have been waiting forty years for. I know both Tom and Mike and both are my heroes. Most of their heroic actions have been shared in short stories and verbally but putting this story together in this form made it all come alive. What true heroes these two Americans are and the finest examples for our young men and women to emulate. They are, by far, the two greatest and bravest men from my generation and will always be. The pride and respect shown to both is not only well deserved but a sign of the high esteem they are both held in by all veterans, not just those from the Vietnam war. I am very humbled and proud to say I served in the United States Navy for over twenty years and had the privilege of meeting both of these heroes at various times in my career and following during my time as a government civil servant. Anyone wanting to be held spell bound by TRUE acts of courage Above and Beyond the call of duty need to read this book. I am sure it will be in every veterans library. I have both the hard cover and the audio edition and have purchased several hardcover copies for friends.

I had read numerous articles and books about the actions of Norris and Thornton before but this book tied their actions together like never before. Also it is interesting to see what they did in their careers following the awarding of the medal. I did not realize Thornton was a plank-owner in SEAL Team 6 or that he later became an officer and served during the first Gulf War. Nor did I know Norris was as highly successful in the FBI as he was or a "plank-owner" on the HRT. Very good read overall - you won't be disappointed.

I have always been a vast consumer of history books, with a specialty of Military History, Warfare and the battles that our Warriors and Heroes have fought. I have known the basic premise of what

happened behind Mike and Tom receiving their Medal of Honor, respectively, but THIS telling in Bound by Honor is the FULL story. Dick Couch once again masterfully narrates the story told my first Tom Norris, of his rescue of the two downed aviators. Then Tom and Mike Thornton begin to tell the story for which Mike was awarded the MoH, in saving Tom's life. I was spellbound and captivated from start to finish. I recommend this book to everyone.

I served with Mr. Thornton aboard the USS Edenton. He was my boss. It was an honor to serve with him. The Edenton was a small rescue and salvage ship. Because it was small, we didn't have a large crew. Averaged right at 100 at any given time. Because of the size of the crew, when we worked, we worked hard. When we played, we played just as hard. For those of us who worked for Mr. Thornton, we knew he had our backs for both. This is an excellent book. It revealed to me some things I already knew about Mr. Thornton and some things I did not know. To Mr. Thornton and to Mr. Norris, I would like to say, "Thank you both for your sacrifices and for your service," Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Petty Officer, Derrick "Rick" Ryals

I am almost speechless after reading this book. In the interest of full disclosure let me make clear I am a retired Special Agent of the FBI. I only mention that because after recovering from his horrific head wound Tommy Norris went on to become a Special Agent of the FBI. The fact we carried the same little gold badge around in our pocket is the only similarity between Tommy and the rest of us little boys and girls who served our country in that job. Him and Mike Thornton are giants among men. They are on the same level as Superman. Don't believe me, just read this book. Until recently I have been somewhat depressed as to what the political process is bringing this country in who will be the next commander in chief (no capitalization on purpose) either dumb or dumber. I am not sure which one is which. A clueless buffoon and draft dodger who had the audacity to mock John McCain, or a vile ill tempered lying crook who has shown nothing but disdain for our military her entire life. After reading this book I now realize it does not matter. As long as we have men like Tommy Norris and Mike Thornton walking among us. Drinking the same water and breathing the same air as the rest of us. Rising to the occasion when necessary and doing what has to be done. As long as we have men like that in this country we will be just fine. Thank you men. Thank you for your service and dedication to this country and your fellow comrades. Wow!

Highly recommended account of two outstanding Medal Of Honor Americans, both heroes in combat and in life. Any book written or associated with Dick Couch is a first rate read. This one is no

exception. Should be mandatory reading by all Americans in order to gain appreciation of all those who have or currently serve our nation in the military & law enforcement.

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