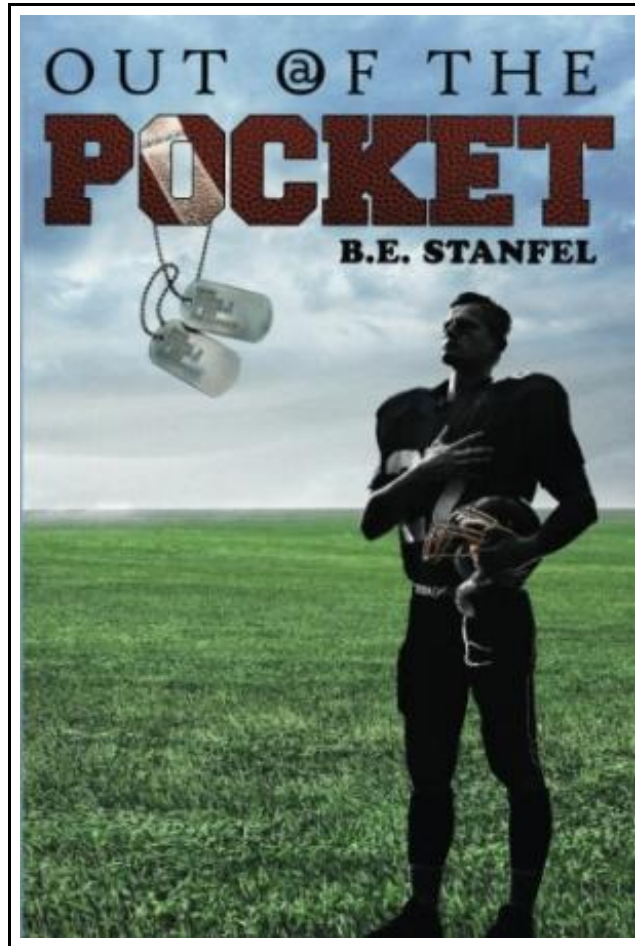


Out of the Pocket



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Reviews

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(Maribel Kerluke)

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Library Tales Publishing, Incorporated. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 214 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.5in. Set in the heart of the suburban Midwest, emerging author Blythe Stanfel gives us her first captivating novel, *Out of the Pocket*. This young adult historical fiction piece catalogs the Iraq War in 2003 and 2004 through the eyes of a senior high school football player, whose father is stationed in Iraq as a Major in the United States Army. *Out of the Pocket* bridges the literary gap that teenage boys often encounter when choosing novels to read, and provides them with an outlet to understand adolescence from a different perspective. . . Soldiers fighting in Iraq struggle physically and emotionally to survive each day, but what about their loved ones left back at home? Young boys and girls can easily relate to the main character in *Out of the Pocket*, Mercer Murray, whose slightly sarcastic yet sensitive voice, offers insight into the life of a typical high school senior struggling with football, girls, and most of all, his father fighting in the Iraq War. Even those with short-attention spans will be captivated with the journal and e-mail format of the novel that explores the justification for war and the hardships of high school life. Although Mercer's main focus is to play football at the University of Iowa the following year, he also learns about the life of a typical Iraqi teenager through e-mails with Ahmed, a young translator for Mercer's father who starts a correspondence with Mercer. Though separated by thousands of miles, the two men form a bond as Mercer provides support to Ahmed in his struggles to provide food for his family, and Ahmed helps Mercer learn how to survive without his dad. High school English and history teachers could use...

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