



# Once An Eagle: A Novel

*Anton Myrer*

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## Once An Eagle: A Novel Anton Myrer

First published in 1968 at the height of the conflict in Vietnam, *Once An Eagle* captured the imagination and heart of a war-torn nation, reaching number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list twice and selling more than three million copies. Published in nineteen languages, Anton Myrer's novel was made into an acclaimed television miniseries.

Thirty years after its initial publication, *Once An Eagle* has become a touchstone for the military professionals who devise and carry out our nation's defense. According to the *New York Times*, "*Once An Eagle* has worked its way over a generation into the mindset and lexicon of the American military." Named to the Marine Commandant's Reading List, it is required reading for all marines, is assigned to West Point cadets, and is featured in the United States Army War College's annual leadership seminar. Soldiers emblazon the protagonist's name-Sam Damon-across their tanks, and military officers at every level make decisions by asking themselves, "What would Sam do?"

*Once An Eagle* compellingly recounts the making of one special soldier, Sam Damon, and his adversary over a lifetime, fellow officer Courtney Massengale. Damon is a soldier's soldier, the consummate professional, decorated in both world wars for bravery under fire, who puts duty, honor, and the men he commands above self-interest. Massengale, the consummate political animal who disdains the average grunt, brilliantly advances by making the right connections behind the lines and in Washington's corridors of power.

Begun amid the carnage of the Argonne, the conflict between Damon and Massengale solidifies in the isolated garrison life between the wars, intensifies in the verdant and deadly Pacific jungles of World War II, and reaches its treacherous conclusion in the last major battleground of the Cold War-Vietnam.

A sweeping chronicle of American warfare in the twentieth century, this gripping story portrays as well the often overlooked and cruel difficulties of life in peacetime. *Once An Eagle* is more than a novel of battle; it is a study in character and the values we continue to cherish: courage, nobility, honesty, and selflessness. Powerful and unforgettable, it is ultimately the epic story of a man who serves as an inspiration not just for soldiers, but for us all.

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#### **Patricia Gallagher:**

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