



Saving Eagle Mitch: One Good Deed in a Wicked World (Excelsior Editions)

Barbara Chepaitis

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When a Navy SEAL and former Army Ranger rescue a wounded eagle in war-torn Afghanistan, a writer learns what it can take to do one good deed in a seemingly wicked world.

In the spring of 2010, as the world's economy faced a potential meltdown and the United States tried to win one war and maneuver its way out of another, one lone Steppe Eagle, shot down on a firing range in Afghanistan, faced problems of his own. Fortunately, help was available from former Army Ranger Scott Hickman and his buddy, Navy SEAL Greg Wright, who took him in and gave him the healing he needed. They named him Mitch.

It wasn't long, though, before they realized they had to find Mitch a safer home than the war zone they were in. Through the strange synchronicities of time, place, and the Internet, they got in touch with the one man just crazy enough to try to help—Pete Dubacher, founder of the Berkshire Bird Paradise, in upstate New York. Dubacher, in turn, enlisted the aid of Barbara Chepaitis, who was just celebrating the release of her book *Feathers of Hope*, about Pete and his bird sanctuary. Thinking it would be an easy task, she quickly agreed to help, but she soon found out that although saving an eagle might seem like a no-brainer, there were plenty of people ready to tell her it couldn't be done.

Faced with a host of bureaucratic and regulatory obstacles, Chepaitis soon found herself cold-calling the White House and the Department of State, while simultaneously utilizing Internet media, the press, and social networks to try to accomplish one good deed in a world that looked more wicked every day. Along the way, she learned a great deal about the nature of personal power, as well as the nature of institutions that usually present themselves as faceless and indifferent to individual needs.

Saving Eagle Mitch offers a unique view into what happens when matters of the heart come into conflict with rules and regulations, and offers hope for the possibility that one person can make a difference in a troubled and confusing world. Inspirational and full of grit and fire, the book explores not only what needs to be done, but why such seemingly small acts of grace are necessary to create a larger good.

“When Barbara Chepaitis contacted my office and asked for assistance to save an eagle in Afghanistan, it was certainly unusual. But after listening to her recount the rescue of Mitch the Eagle by US Navy SEALs, and how much it would mean to our brave service members to ensure his safety, I knew I had to help. And I could think of no better permanent home for Mitch than in the Berkshire Bird Paradise in upstate New York. From the State Department, to USDA, to the Fish and Wildlife Service, we enlisted multiple agencies to make this happen. And like the Navy SEALs who protected Mitch, it was teamwork that forged our success. We know our military is brave, but Mitch reminds us of their compassion, too.” — Senator Charles E. Schumer

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