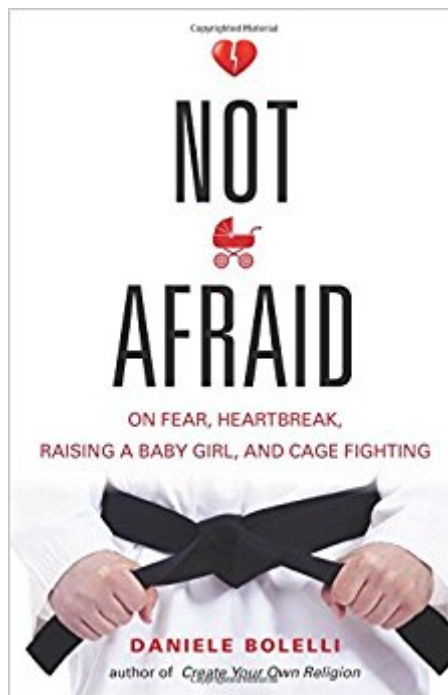




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# **Not Afraid: On Fear, Heartbreak, Raising A Baby Girl, And Cage Fighting**



## Synopsis

This book is a meditation on facing fear, heartbreak, and mortality. In his own irreverent and inimitable style, Daniele Bolelli tells the story of his courtship and marriage, which would have been a sweet story had not all hell broken loose. Or as he puts it, "Hell was a ninja who entered my house without being seen. It all began in such an unremarkable way that it barely registered as anything meaningful. Little did I know that the experiences of the next five months would rip me apart and kill me. They would re-forge me into a different man. On that day, I became an unwilling traveler on a journey through the heart of fear. Every step along the way has forced me to face my fears time and time again." It is the story of a man who in rapid succession has his wife die in his arms, loses his house and his job, and is left to care for his 19-month old daughter. Oddly enough, the best tools for coping with all of this were those he learned in more than two decades of martial arts practice. Not Afraid tackles this extremely heavy subject matter in a light-hearted style and with an attitude that acknowledges pain and suffering but denies them dominion over one's life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Bolelli is a genius warrior philosopher. What he talks about here is the opposite of a victim's mentality. By sharing the emotionally apocalyptic experiences he has gone through, he gives a gift to anyone who is struggling with the dragon of fear and sadness. For me to hear this story and to think of everything that happened to him, and then to think about my own little doldrums that I fall into--suddenly I'm invigorated. Everyone please listen, open your ears and open your hearts to the

incredible, the brilliant and the super sweet Daniele Bolelli." --Duncan Trussell, comedian and host of the podcast The Duncan Trussell Family Hour

"Not Afraid, is an adventure story of the truest, deepest sort. In recounting his story with enormous courage, sincerity, and wit, Daniele Bolelli reminds us that real adventure always involves great risk and often, unimaginable loss. Life's toughest adventures aren't the mountains we set out to climb or the jungles we explore; they're the quiet challenges that come looking for us where we live. You've never read a story like this or known a man like this. I recommend both without hesitation." --Chris Ryan, the New York Times bestselling author of Sex at Dawn

"A true warrior poet, Daniele bleeds on these pages with fearless vulnerability and uncensored humor. The narrative starts with the challenges of a 'sensitive little nerd' overcoming his fear to turn pro in the realest combat sport in the world, building momentum as it carries the reader through his epic struggle with the death of his true love. For those of us who know the author from his many podcast appearances, his written word is as raw as the spoken counterpart--It's like a little hologram of our favorite Italian reading the story in your head." --Aubrey Marcus, writer and CEO of Onnit.com

"An inspiring life story about overcoming fear. This is a necessary task, no matter what you do in life. Whether you are an amateur or professional athlete, you will be able to draw many similarities to your sport. At the same time, this book gives us a great reminder to enjoy the ride while it lasts. Well done Daniele, you did it again!" --Bostjan Nachbar, professional basketball player

"The honesty and authenticity in Daniele's writing is truly inspirational. Most books about life are written with kid gloves and give us old school clichés to handle adversity. Daniele has gone through some of the most difficult situations a father, husband, and all around warrior can go through. He gives us an honest look into the pain, heartache, and process of fighting back against things that would bring most to their knees. Everyone can relate to the feelings and thoughts Daniele displays. We can only hope to someday have his strength and conviction to come through and thrive!" --AJ Hawk, 2011 Superbowl Champion with the Green Bay Packers

Daniele Bolelli is a writer and college professor. He has also fought professionally in mixed martial arts and appeared in I Am Bruce Lee (2012). He is a frequent guest on The Joe Rogan Experience, The Adam Carolla Show, and The Duncan Trussell Family Hour. His own podcast The Drunken Taoist is regularly rated among the most downloaded worldwide in the "philosophy" category of iTunes. His other books include Create Your Own Religion. Visit him at [www.thedrunkentaolist.com](http://www.thedrunkentaolist.com).

If you're looking for the traditional hallmarks of a "my trials and tribulations" kind of book, you won't find it in these pages. Daniele Bolelli's "Not Afraid" is true to its own message: surpass convention,

refute orthodoxy, and defy expectation. Superficially, this is the story of the death of Bolelli's wife and his struggle to shoulder the weight of raising a child alone. Relying on hard-earned lessons in the ring and on the mat, he absorbs emotional blow after blow, feeling the pressure as he fights daily for his daughter--not only to keep a roof over her head, but to give her the love of two parents in a world that saw fit to leave her with one. Bolelli relays losing his wife and the aftermath with relatively loose chronology, and fairly so--a tight narrative is not the strength of this book, as its entirety can be gleaned by reading the back cover. Instead, he focuses on the interlocking threads of the fighting spirit and emotional maturation discovered and utilized along the way. Admittedly this style yielded a measure of discomfort, until I realized how well it fit with the purpose of the book. What at first seemed like relatively disjointed anecdotes of combat, convalescence, and conflict with authority started to make sense as symptoms of evolution undergone by the narrator, of the emergence of the warrior spirit that rises to survive a shattered world. In the early chapters, Bolelli describes his conception of a warrior as might any young man reared in the cultural legacy of the West; fearless, confident, and physically fierce. By the end that conception has come full circle, presenting the true warrior as something far more human, far more vulnerable, and far stronger. As such, Bolelli departs from conventional storytelling with no apology, and the result is at once vivid, jarring, hilarious, and powerful. With a knack for organically sliding between voices and moods, his writing style is relaxed and devoid of pretense and will ring familiar to listeners of his podcast. "Not Afraid" will make you think, but not half as much as it will make you feel. You'll glimpse the soul of a cagefighter, but you'll see the bared heart of a warrior.

Part memoir, Part Living Our Life of Hard Knocks Manual that is both heart-wrenching and uplifting, visceral and humorous while wrapped in, at times, lyrical prose and always gently led by a very authentic voice of the author (Read Italian accent). Daniele Bolelli, College Professor (who digs deep into Native American Indians history), Martial Artist, MMA Competitor and writer wrote a fantastic book that takes the reader along the eventful arc of his life, laden with heartbreaks and tribulations and how the philosophy and mental- toughness forged through years of Martial Art Discipline and caged fighting that brings to bear Life Skills that help the author to weather the storm and, even, stare down at it, while, flashing a defiant smile that demonstrates refusal to go down as victim of circumstances. Instead, taking a Warrior stance that embraces all that is before him. The last chapter is truly a gem but so are the rest of the chapters before it. Read it! And be inspired by it!

I wanted to share a message that somehow provides a degree of cleverness or astounding intellect

in order to most effectively honor this great work by a great man. However, I promise I will not follow or attempt this approach, because any authentic sense of said cleverness and intellect has already been so successfully delivered by Sir Bolelli himself in this incredible account. Daniele, I want to thank you for embarking upon a journey that I know required an indescribable amount of effort on your part in creating this wonderful book for us. Because of this book, I am now able to more internalize the importance of embracing the darker aspects of life in order to enjoy the brighter, more beautiful side.

This book packs an emotional punch, but one that helped me put things into perspective. Life hits all of us in different ways, either mentally or physically, or in the case of Bolelli, both. The journey this book takes you on from his entry into martial arts to the love of his life, to the tragedy that ensues, Bolelli crafts a story that will make you shed tears of your own and counter with a renewed look on life. As a fan of The Drunken Taoist podcast, his other written works and his new podcast History on Fire, I strongly recommend picking up this book. Bolelli pours his heart out onto the pages of this book and will make you the better for having read it.

Danieli Bolelli is an incredible storyteller with an inspiring tale that had me laughing and crying. I couldn't help but hear his thick Italian accent in my head as I immersed myself in his story. He's a fascinating guy that comes across as very relatable throughout this book just as he does on his podcast. "Not Afraid" is almost a must-read companion piece to The Drunken Taoist.

This book could not have had more of an impact on me if Prof. Bolelli had thrown it at my head. The hardcover version not the paperback. If you don't read this book, and let it into your soul, YOU have given up on leading anything other than a beige colored life. Please don't be beige. Also, there is an audio version of this that is africkinmazing as the good Prof narrates it himself. Its like listening to a being from another multiverse, in a good way. Buy it from him website, it may just change your life.

Danieli's story is both equally heartbreaking and empowering. Personally, it provided some momentum to plow through some of my own issues and insecurities - my issues not being nearly as trying as Danieli's. I recently received a job rejection (for a position that I thought I had in the bag) and rather than stewing in what otherwise would have been a lengthy depression, I have largely managed to 'get over it' in a matter of a day or two. Bad things happen.....let's have a party anyways.

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