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# Ambush Bay

By Marve Feinberg

They were the quietest  
bunch of guys I'd ever seen.  
I couldn't tell if they'd  
been trained that way  
or if they just had nothing to say.  
Captain Alonzo Davis.  
Officer in charge.  
Known to his men as "Smokey."  
A mustang  
commissioned from the ranks.  
Consistently demonstrated excellence,  
leadership under fire.  
Twice decorated...  
Guadalcanal, Tarawa.  
Eleven years in the corps.  
First Sergeant Steve Corey,  
second in command.  
I knew him only by reputation.  
The finest fighting man  
in our theatre.  
Nine campaigns  
in the last 17 months.  
Corporal Alvin Ross.  
Proven excellence  
with M-1 at any distance.  
Specialty...  
accuracy at long range.  
Sniping.  
PFC Henry Reynolds.  
Demolitions expert.  
Combat experience...  
One year, ten months.  
Age... 19 years, one month.  
Platoon Sergeant  
William Maccone, garrote.  
A garrote is a fine wire  
with a handle on each end.  
Usage confined exclusively  
to the human throat.  
Gunnery Sergeant Ernest Wartell.  
Career Marine.  
Specialty...  
automatic weapons.  
Proven excellence,

Thompson submachine gun.  
Corporal Stanley Parrish.  
Knife expert.  
Close in combat.  
"Stan the man."  
130 pounds after dinner.  
PFC George George.  
Specialty... night vision.  
The ability to see  
in the absence of light.  
By medical statistics, those eyes  
will happen once every 200,000 births.  
Private First Class James Grenier.  
Air crewman radio specialist.  
Combat experience... none.  
Length of service...  
U.S. Marine Corps, six months.  
Reason for selection to highly  
specialized reconnaissance mission...  
dire abdominal attack suffered  
by selected radio man  
accompanied by high fever.  
No time for proper replacement.  
Location at time of selection...  
radio panel.  
Check the water-proofing  
on that radio, private.  
May run a little rough going in.  
No sweat, Sarge.  
I used to deliver wedding cakes.  
I'll take about 30 seconds head start.  
We'll guide on the right edge  
of the village.  
Like the man said...  
"Silence is golden."  
I'm sorry, Sergeant.  
I'm just not used to walking.  
Well, you'd better  
get used to it, fly boy.  
Because anything happens  
to you or this radio,  
we turn this party around  
and go home.  
May I ask the nature

of this mission, Sergeant?

No, you may not.

Amado De Lesa.

Your guide.

I'm Captain Davis.

Sergeant Corey.

- How are you?

- Sergeant Wartell.

Smoke.

Wouldn't you know it... they've got  
the whole island and Mindanao  
to stuff their faces, and they've  
gotta pick the middle of our path.

You wanna try

and go around them?

Can't. There's a reinforcement battalion  
somewhere in this vicinity.

Probably part of it.

If we jump 'em,

we'll wake up the whole neighborhood.

Let's do it.

Shooting-gallery style.

Four rifles.

One man missing.

Captain Davis is dead.

I wanna move out right away.

Russ, Reynolds,

go get his body.

Parrish, George,

bury him up there.

Amado.

Try to make this mess look like it  
was done by guerillas. Use your knife.

- Ernie.

- Yeah.

I wanna get into heavy growth.

Have George take point.

Amado with him.

- You can bring up the rear.

- Right.

Grenier.

Remain in the middle at all times  
giving maximum protection to that radio.

You got that clear?

Damn.  
Let's move out.  
They must've felt something,  
but nobody reacted.  
It was like in football  
when a guy gets hurt  
and none of his teammates  
pays any attention.  
The point seemed to be to create  
the impression that we didn't exist.  
To leave things as we found them  
whenever possible.  
'Course, there are times in life  
when you have to improvise.  
Too good to be true.  
I can't figure it out.  
I feel like we're in a stadium  
with a bunch of Jap spectators.  
You think the Airedale's gonna cut it?  
We got two days. The name  
of the game's gonna be "hurry."  
I don't know. He's not used  
to this kind of life.  
What'd you find out about him?  
You know the stories these days.  
He thought blue would go better  
with his eyes than khaki,  
and now he's a Marine.  
Five years ago,  
we'd have booted him out on his butt.  
Today, he's you and me.  
You guys got any powder?  
I think my feet are about  
to come off in my hands.  
I guess I just ain't used to this jazz.  
Would you like scented or plain?  
Hey, Stub...  
You got any of that lavender?  
Gee, I forgot whether we got  
lavender or sweet pea.  
That's no problem.  
Hey, would you like us  
to draw you a nice hot tub?  
Alvin?

Oh, you guys are puttin' me on.  
None of you guys  
ever seen a bathtub.  
You stand out in the rain  
like a bunch of horses.  
Knock it off!  
Look, gentlemen, this is the first  
and last friendly little squabble  
we're gonna have  
amongst each other.  
And I do not jest.  
Does anyone  
wanna question my sincerity?  
Bury your cans.  
Tank, Sarge.  
Just over the rise.  
Infantry support?  
It's hard to say.  
I didn't see any.  
All right, we'll bypass them.  
You tell them to close up,  
keep together, and no conversation.  
Reynolds!  
That's yours.  
Damn noise is gonna bring  
every Jap on the island down on us.  
Get our people, and let's get  
the hell out of here.  
Maccone, Parrish, get Reynolds.  
Come on, move!  
Come on.  
All right.  
It's 1100.  
Run your radio check.  
Put them here.  
All right, men.  
Start digging here.  
Diamond Blue,  
Diamond Blue, this is Nugget.  
Do you read me? Over.  
Diamond Blue,  
Diamond Blue, this is Nugget.  
Do you read me? Over.  
Diamond Blue, this is Nugget.

I read you five by five.  
Let's keep it that way. Out.  
It's okay.  
Come back here, Marine.  
I'm gonna tell you this just once.  
This radio's part of you.  
You don't put it down ever.  
You don't eat, you don't sleep,  
you don't breathe without it.  
Do you read me, Private?  
I don't wanna see it again  
without you wrapped around it.  
Sergeant Corey, if this radio is more  
important in this mission than you or me,  
don't you think you should tell me  
what the hell I'm supposed  
to accomplish with it?  
I'll tell you when the time comes.  
Well, don't you think  
the time has come?  
I mean, how many more men  
are we supposed to lose?  
We're not supposed  
to lose any men, Private.  
But we're also not supposed  
to bump into a tank  
or a bunch of Japs  
on their way to a Turkish bath.  
We did.  
Okay, that's our tough luck.  
Your tough luck happens to be  
that you're along.  
Now, why don't you just try  
to adjust to that, huh?  
Stay away from things  
that you've never done... like thinking.  
Sergeant, I've had  
enough of that duff.  
I'm not in the infantry,  
but I'm getting sick and tired of having  
my nose rubbed in it, you know?  
Look, all I wanna know  
is what I'm doing here. That's all.  
Without all the silent smirks.

Lower your voice, Grenier.  
Come on, Marine.  
Help over here with the digging.  
I wouldn't ask him  
too many questions.  
He's got a lot on his mind.  
Sergeant, somebody better start  
telling me something,  
because I can get very nasty.  
We're here looking  
for an intelligence contact.  
Seems the Japs have got a hold  
of some big news.  
This contact knows just how much  
they know, but he's been cut off.  
His radio's out of business,  
so we've gotta get to him ourselves.  
And radio back the information.  
Give that boy a cigar.  
Where do we look?  
He's in a teahouse in Pangassan.  
It's a Jap rest camp.  
That's all we know.  
Pangassan?  
Pangassan.  
Who goes in to see him?  
Amado.  
What if he isn't there?  
Then we'll have failed  
our mission, won't we?  
Does anybody know  
what the information's about?  
The Japanese are expecting  
MacArthur's return to the Philippines.  
They may know when and where.  
If they do, we've got exactly 38 hours  
to get your voice on that box  
with the right information.  
Why 38 hours?  
That's when the invasion fleet sails.  
Hey, what's this guy's name...  
our radio contact?  
Miyazaki.  
Miyazaki?



Miyazaki.

How're we gettin' outta here?

I mean, they are gonna

pick us up someplace, aren't they?

Sure, they're gonna send

a limousine to Pangassan.

Chauffeur's probably there now.

He kind of grows on you,

don't he?

Amado.

Go up and check that ridge.

Then pick us up.

Parrish.

Take point.

Belatic.

- What is it?

- Trap used by Moros.

Belatic catch enemy.

Kill him dead.

Who's their enemies?

Anyone.

Strip him of supplies

and bury him.

Hey, Sergeant, you want some gum?

Thanks.

My mouth gets like a tractor.

You don't say

a hell of a lot, do ya?

Want me to recite you a poem?

Look, Sarge, I'm sorry about

this afternoon. I was out of line.

It won't happen again.

I'm just not trained for this sort of work.

But I'll make it.

Do you mind if I ask you

a personal question?

Do you enjoy this?

I mean, you seem to get tougher

each time we lose a guy.

You're a psychologist?

Right-o.

Sergeant Wartell...

can I ask you something?

You're the only guy around here

who'll talk to me.  
What's Sergeant Corey  
got against me, anyway?  
Just because I'm not  
a gravel-cruncher like you guys?  
Hasn't he ever met a flyer before?  
There's more to it than that.  
It's a long story.  
It's just that we ain't used  
to working with amateurs.  
I used to know  
a guy like that once.  
He was the floor walker  
in a department store I used to work in.  
Men's shoes.  
I guess he figured  
I had to be some sort of a nitwit  
'cause I was a stock boy just hired.  
Did you ever stop to think  
it might be you?  
Nah. See,  
he was king around there.  
That's where he wanted to be.  
The carnation, the whole bit.  
And this is where  
Sergeant Corey wants to be.  
And he figures  
nobody belongs here but him.  
When did you get out  
of the stockroom, Grenier?  
In April.  
That's when I was called.  
April.  
In April, he was in the Marianas.  
Sneak and peak recon.  
That's where he got  
the Silver Star.  
Or was that in March?  
No, March was Eniwetok.  
Before that, it was Tarawa.  
Tarawa... that's where he got hit.  
Took a load of shrapnel.  
Knocked him out of action  
for three months.

Couldn't find an aid man that'd  
lay even money he'd last 24 hours.  
Eight weeks later, he was told  
to lay off calisthenics  
or he'd rip open his incisions.  
You see, he wants very much  
to be here, Private Grenier.  
And that's  
a damn lucky thing for you.  
Look, sergeant, I'm sorry  
I mouthed off this morning. I...  
Forget about being sorry,  
and just take care of that radio of yours.  
Maybe your big mouth  
will come in handy after all.  
They were a couple  
of real friendly guys.  
I was beginning to feel like hugging  
the first Jap I saw.  
No! No!  
Who is he?  
Japanese soldier.  
He was caught by Moros,  
but he escaped.  
He wants to be taken prisoner.  
Prisoner?  
What the hell are we  
gonna do with a prisoner?  
Maccone.  
Sit him up against the tree trunk.  
Don't take your eyes off him.  
You get sleepy,  
you wake up Russ.  
We'll decide what to do  
with him by morning.  
In case.  
I'd hate to be in Corey's shoes.  
Japs, either.  
Japs wear sandals.  
He died.  
They all went by  
like he was part of the landscape.  
Nobody looked to see  
if there was one extra bullet hole.

I was curious, but somehow  
I preferred to remain ignorant.  
Hey, Maccone, supposin' we do find  
this village and the teahouse...  
how're we gonna get in?  
Well, we're just gonna  
walk right in.  
See, we're gonna rent us  
some Jap uniforms,  
then we're gonna all get  
our eyes fixed, see.  
We got this plastic surgeon  
comin' over here later on today,  
and he's just gonna fix our eyes  
so that they look slanted, see?  
So we can just walk  
right on in the door...  
Cover!  
- But Amado...  
- Cover!  
No firing.  
They got him.  
Cold.  
Why the hell didn't we shoot?  
Because we're not here.  
As far as they know, he's the last man  
of the guerilla party.  
Okay, now move out.  
Ernie.  
Pangassan should be  
just over that hill.  
I'm gonna go in.  
What if you don't come out?  
Then you get yourself  
a field promotion.  
Eight bucks more a month,  
lots of responsibility.  
That's it.  
You cover me  
only when I'm comin' out.  
But don't open up  
unless you absolutely have to.  
- Right.  
- Grenier.

Stay out of any action.  
Stick with that radio.  
You understand?  
Right, Sergeant.  
Steve.  
Bring me a kimono.  
Hey, Ross.  
Watch the back door.  
Hey, Maccone.  
What the hell  
do they do in a teahouse?  
Filipino?  
You're Filipino?  
Do you speak English?  
A little.  
Miyazaki.  
Get him.  
Please get Miyazaki.  
Bring him here.  
Yes, sir.  
My God!  
Who are you?  
Now, look, ladies,  
I ain't got a lot of time.  
I'm looking for a guy named Miyazaki,  
and I'm not above slitting  
both your lovely throats to find him.  
Where is he?  
I am Miyazaki.  
Don't fool with me, lady.  
You'd better come with...  
Where?  
Will you please put that down?  
Where?  
To my room.  
Suppose I refuse  
to believe you are my contact?  
Midori.  
All right,  
let's have the information.  
I expected a Filipino.  
If you're found here...  
I'll be dead.  
That won't help me.

He desires me.  
I believe that's the phrase.  
Have you a radio?  
Across the river.  
I'll have to go.  
Why... is it in code?  
No, but it's complicated.  
Where's your pickup point?  
What do you want  
to know that for?  
Because I'm going with you.  
Is that right? Then what?  
Then home.  
Long Beach, California.  
Sergeant! Sarge!  
There's a Jap patrol coming up the trail  
about 200 yards away.  
- There's close to 20 of them.  
- Yeah?  
Grenier, you take cover.  
If Corey comes back before we do,  
you stick with him.  
Yeah, Sarge, but what...  
No buts about it. You stick out of this,  
understand? Those are orders.  
Come on with me. Let's go.  
They're heading  
right for that bridge.  
And right smack  
into guess who.  
Let's spread out,  
and don't start firing till I do.  
I count three of us.  
Well, they don't know that.  
Who the hell is that?  
Miyazaki.  
She's from Long Beach.  
- We've got to clear out of here and fast.  
- Wait a minute...  
I'm not going anywhere with ya.  
Maccone?  
Ross, too.  
Over there.  
Where's your radio?

It's shot up.  
Can it be fixed?  
No. It's smashed to pieces.  
Go get Maccone's ammo.  
We're gonna need it.  
No radio?  
I hope you folks  
have enjoyed the game  
as much as  
we've enjoyed bringing it to ya.  
Let 'em take you, Ernie.  
Look, I don't want  
any more medals.  
Take it easy on him.  
Six months ago,  
he was stacking shoeboxes.  
Morphine.  
Use it.  
Ernie...  
Which way is your soldiers?  
Pretty tough, pal.  
Which way is yours?  
If you're not true to us,  
we shoot you.  
Oh, don't do that.  
Gettin' shot gives me a headache.  
How many men...  
your soldiers?  
Including the European theater,  
I'd say about six million.  
If you're not true...  
we shoot you, Joe.  
Oh, you want the truth?  
Yeah, well, the truth is...  
I don't feel so good.  
Come closer, will ya?  
The truth is  
that I'm hungry, you see.  
And guess what I got to eat  
for everybody.  
Baked potatoes.  
Yeah!  
Wait a minute, fellas! Come back!  
You can eat these with the jackets on.

The Japanese photographed this  
in Hollandia.  
They know the invasion fleet will strike  
from this side, bypassing Mindanao.  
They are prepared for it  
to pass right through here.  
Have they assumed right?  
On the button.  
They've laid mines  
all through the area.  
A minefield means nothing.  
They'll sweep that channel  
before Mac goes in.  
Minesweeper action  
won't clear this.  
Why not?  
They're bottom mines  
anchored to weights.  
They can be released in waves  
by a remote radio control device.  
They float to the surface  
and detonate.  
Any ships passing over when that field  
floats up will be wiped out.  
What triggers it?  
A submarine on lookout duty  
especially equipped to release the mines.  
Is there any chance  
we can head off the fleet  
if we get back  
to our pickup point?  
They sail tonight.  
Another 48 hours,  
MacArthur will be there.  
We'll never make it  
back there in time.  
Smack into an ambush.  
Isn't there any other way of triggering  
that minefield besides a submarine?  
There's an alternative device if anything  
should go wrong with the submarine.  
It's at Bucan Bay.  
The control center.  
That's it, then.



We could set it off  
before the fleet passes over.  
Sergeant, that's impossible.  
You'd never get in,  
and you couldn't work the device anyway.  
Okay, fine.  
Fine. Maybe you're right.  
Maybe I can't.  
Maybe we're gonna  
get ourselves caught.  
Maybe we're gonna  
get blown to hell.  
Or maybe we're gonna get bitten  
by rattlesnakes.  
But what do you suggest, lady?  
How far is it?  
From here...  
about a day and a half, with luck.  
Have you heard  
of the term "piggy-back"?  
Is that an offer or a question?  
Either way.  
Don't you ever complain, Sergeant?  
Sure.  
I haven't heard you  
say a word yet.  
I'm in charge. I can't.  
What did you do  
before the war?  
Complained.  
Of what?  
Everything.  
The Depression...  
Hitler...  
Downtown Cincinnati,  
my kid brothers...  
You wanna swap life stories?  
How many kid brothers?  
Two.  
Billy was killed in North Africa,  
Don just made the Marine Corps.  
When did you make  
the Marine Corps?  
December 8, 1941. 9:00 a.m.

What were you doing  
when the war started?  
Making love.  
To a 40-year-old divorcee  
who made a career out of her figure.  
I meant where were you.  
Fountain Plaza Hotel.  
Beach boy...  
...towel dispenser...  
...head gigolo  
all rolled into one.  
Yeah, it was a great life.  
Too bad there had to be a war.  
Yes, isn't it?  
My folks would still be  
in their home in Long Beach...  
instead of the internment camp  
out by the Santa Anita Racetrack.  
I suppose it's for our own protection.  
Maybe they're afraid  
we'll poison their gardens.  
How did you...  
how'd you get in this line of work?  
I was a Civil Service employee  
in Long Beach.  
I had a good record.  
So you volunteered?  
So I volunteered.  
I never thought it would take me to...  
what it took me to.  
But then the same  
must be true for you.  
Not quite.  
You left something you liked.  
You didn't?  
Divorcees with suntans?  
I meant yourself.  
Don't you like yourself, Sergeant?  
I didn't.  
I like you.  
Hey, I got clean and polluted.  
Which do you want?  
Clean, you idiot.  
Nobody gets polluted until 5:00.

Idiot.  
That was the first nice word  
he'd ever said to me.  
You are Americans?  
Yeah.  
What about her?  
She is not an American.  
Yes. American born.  
American soldiers?  
Marines.  
Working for General MacArthur?  
Well, yeah. Sort of.  
Oh. Welcome, American soldiers.  
Welcome.  
Friends!  
General MacArthur has returned!  
Wait. Japanese.  
Many soldiers.  
Here soon.  
Look for Americans.  
Max, we gotta try  
to get out of here.  
How do we get to Bucan Bay?  
Go behind...  
...past water...  
...boat there.  
Take boat down Bucan Bay.  
That's Koyamatsu.  
- You know him?  
- Yes.  
He's sober now.  
A human pig.  
He'd torture you first.  
I could detain him.  
Max could drag me out of here.  
Captain Koyamatsu  
would be happy to see me.  
I could tell him you disappeared  
in the jungles, five miles back.  
That you'd forced me  
to go with you.  
It could give you a chance.  
Can you make him believe you?  
Hold his attention?

I have always held his attention.  
And if I know him,  
he'll be only too happy to...  
Are you gonna let her do this?  
Do you know  
what will happen to her?  
Wait a minute.  
You can't do this.  
Forgive me.  
It's not you.  
Hey, Corey.  
You stink.  
When I say go, we go.  
Now.  
Sergeant?  
I'm sorry.  
You were right.  
As usual.  
To release the mines,  
we'd have to transmit a radio beam  
through a directional antennae.  
The only one I see  
is up there on that tower.  
All we've got to do  
is find the right button and push it.  
How do we get past our little friends?  
We'd better stay away from that fence...  
it's probably electrified.  
We've got to give them a little crisis.  
See those oil drums?  
How do we set them off from here?  
I could plug a hole in one.  
It wouldn't blow 'em up.  
Is that the gas tank back there?  
Yeah.  
What about a Molotov cocktail?  
Let's not wake the driver up.  
Wait'll he tries to drive away.  
Do you have a match?  
What'll we do,  
inform the Boy Scouts?  
Go!  
This is it!  
But it's all in Japanese.

Can you work it?  
It'll take a few minutes.  
Can you give me some time?  
Can you do it in three minutes, because  
that's all about all we're gonna get.  
Yeah.  
You got it.  
Two and a half!  
Corey, come on!  
We did it!  
We got 'em all!  
Now when it was all over,  
I felt qualified to begin.  
I kept thinking.  
All he had wanted me to do  
was send a signal on a radio.  
When I finally did, it was to arrange  
for the pickup of one survivor.  
Corey was a guy who  
made you do things you couldn't do.  
I was living proof.  
It all seemed sort of crazy.  
But who's to say?  
My dear friends, I have returned.  
I am, once again,  
in this land  
that I have known so long  
and amongst its people  
that I have loved so well.

**Rip By:**

BJ.