

DESERTION *by Libby*

Desertion. No country is immune; no vaccine exists.

The Rat Patrol episode featured in this issue of DUNES is "The B-negative Raid" where an American deserter, harbouring with the enemy, is 'captured' by the Rat Patrol so his rare blood can save Sgt. Moffitt's life.



The Deserter
Played by Fabian in the episode "The B-negative Raid"

Desertion has been a part of warfare forever, and no nation has escaped it. The fictional Pennell of "The B-Negative Raid" was not unlike a significant number of real soldiers who during the second world war chose to escape their military duty. More than 21,000 US military personnel, for a variety of reasons including intent to avoid hazardous duty,

were convicted and sentenced for desertion during the war. Had Pennell been taken forcibly to American military authorities he would likely have faced a court martial, and if convicted of desertion he could have been executed. During the war forty-nine US military personnel were sentenced to death for desertion but only one execution took place.

If Pennell had been a deserter from the German *Wehrmacht* he would have been far more likely to have been executed. During the war about 15,000 such individuals were put to death, and ten times that many Russian deserters were executed by their country. Execution for desertion was abolished for the British Forces in 1929, but over 7,000 were courts-martialled for desertion during the Battle for Normandy alone.

Pennell stated that he wasn't 'cut out for battle' and that he would not return to his unit. That admission would have been a critical one had he faced a court martial for desertion. A declared wish to return to his unit might have meant he'd be classed as AWOL (Absent Without Official Leave) instead of 'deserter'. Punishment for being AWOL is lighter than for desertion.

The number of days absent from duty is not as important to a military court than intent to remain absent indefinitely. According to military sources reviewed, desertion is:

- 1) being absent without authority and with *intent* to remain away permanently OR
- 2) being absent with intent to avoid hazardous duty or to shirk important service OR
- 3) accepting a position with a different military unit or another nation's forces without authorization.

In the final scene of "The B-negative Raid" we learn that Pennell, assuming he took Troy's advice, would likely say he had been confused in battle, 'lost' his unit, and was later 'found/rescued' by a Allied patrol. If this claim was accepted by the authorities, he might well have returned to fight again (had he not been a fictional character, of course).



Sources:
<http://www.stephen-stratford.co.uk/desertion.htm>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desertion>
<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/punitivearticles/a/mcm85.htm>

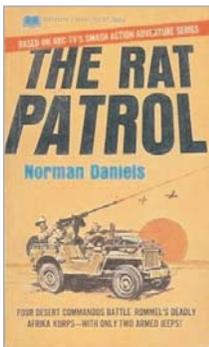
Book Review

The Rat Patrol

by Norman Daniels

Reviewed by Sgt. Victoria Moore

Paperback Library Edition, New York, 1966



Spoiler alert. In this review the novel's mission outcome is revealed (as well as other exciting tidbits)

Enticed by a sheik's veiled beauties, Tully burrows into the sand and emerges inside the sheik's tent. He is quickly discovered, but unwittingly sets off an international incident just as Allied forces mass for a major offensive.

Planning for the offensive nears completion and a British general and his secretary, a cheeky sergeant major, come to view preparations. The

hussy, errrr...sergeant major, makes a beeline for Troy, and gives him a passionate kiss while he desperately tries to remember her name. Troy, never one to run from a physical encounter, ardently returns her kiss in front of thousands of lonely soldiers and finally remembers dating her once or twice in England.

As predicted by Troy and Moffitt, the Desert Fox easily repulses the offensive and 2,000 Allied soldiers are taken as POWs. Not admitting defeat, Troy crafts a plan to free them and then use them to create another front, thereby forcing Rommel to send a division and weaken him for the next Allied offensive. Troy's strategic genius is front and center in this novel.

Col. Quint approves Troy's plan but gives him only half the supplies he wants. Undaunted, Troy sneaks out the second copy of the signed requisition, Moffitt fills it, and they thus cunningly 'draw' what they need. Troy then kisses Jamila, the belly dancer whose beauty is only surpassed by her cupidity, and thereby seals the deal for her help. With her, and her contacts, they free the POWs.

Meanwhile, G-2 has learned the Germans have a new secret weapon and they've hired every Arab and camel to move it to the front. But what is it? The Lads are flown in by night and dropped near a caravan route to attempt the most hazardous of missions.

Operating as two teams, they infiltrate different caravans and pilfer portions of each load. They then regroup to ponder their purloined pieces. Suddenly Troy remembers a lecture in England on rocket launchers. They radio their information to Red Fox and save the day! Their final challenge of escaping the Stukas and getting back to their own lines is no match for Troy's wits.

The book sometimes strays from the TV series we know. One wonders if having all the Lads smoking was a tip of the Aussie Bush hat to the show's cigarette sponsor. And Hitch popping a big bubble and then lighting up smells funny to this reviewer.

Alas the illustrator forgot Tully drove Troy in this book. Note the cover showing Troy and Hitch firing from the same jeep.

An interesting tidbit is revealed. We learn how they came to be called the Rat Patrol. Troy explains it's because they nip and scratch at the underbelly of the Afrika Korps. They do the fool's errands jobs, he says, the ones no one thinks can be done, but must be done.

A good first book, the only thing lacking is the Hauptmann.



Movie Review

Play Dirty

Starring Michael Caine

Reviewed by Val



Set in North Africa during WW2, *Play Dirty* is a "Dirty Dozen" kind of movie that doesn't disappoint. British Colonel Masters devises a mission to blow up a fuel depot four hundred miles behind enemy lines. His ragtag group of criminals under the command of Captain Leech have, however, accomplished little in their last eight missions and they managed to get three British officers killed. In view of that rather

poor record, Brigadier Blore agrees to Master's mission under the condition that it will be placed under the command of a British officer. Captain Douglas, originally working for the British Petroleum Company, is assigned this unwelcome job.

Play Dirty is a grim, bittersweet story that depicts the war realistically, in a way that grips the audience. It is a true desert war movie in the sense that the heroes have to face every challenge the desert can throw at them; rocky terrain, mountains, mine fields, sandstorms, ambushes... this movie has it all, and in fact it focuses more on the heroes' journey behind enemy lines than on the accomplishment of their objectives.

Most of the movie is centered on the power struggle between Captain Douglas, who is legitimately in charge, and Captain Leech, who holds actual authority over the men and has a lot more experience in desert warfare. They are complete opposites in many ways. Captain Douglas is a decent man who had not seen much of the war so far, and has most of his illusions shattered while retaining his humanity. He affects a phlegmatic, almost bored attitude, but occasionally betrays bursts of emotion when circumstances force it out of him. Captain Leech is a greedy scoundrel, but not devoid of charm and charisma. They are at odds during most of the movie but in the thick of things, they manage to set aside their differences and to work together to survive. Although we do not know much about their respective histories, the movie does a nice job of fleshing out their characters.

There are perhaps three main flaws I can point to. First, the movie can be a little confusing, especially at the beginning, and it takes a moment to really get drawn into the story. It is also confusing because the British, German and Italian uniforms look so much alike it can be hard to differentiate them, especially from a distance. Finally, one or two scenes fail at creating a sense of anticipation and suspense, and can get a little boring.

Overall, it is a very good desert war movie and a safe bet if you like that genre.





LETTERS HOME by Barbo

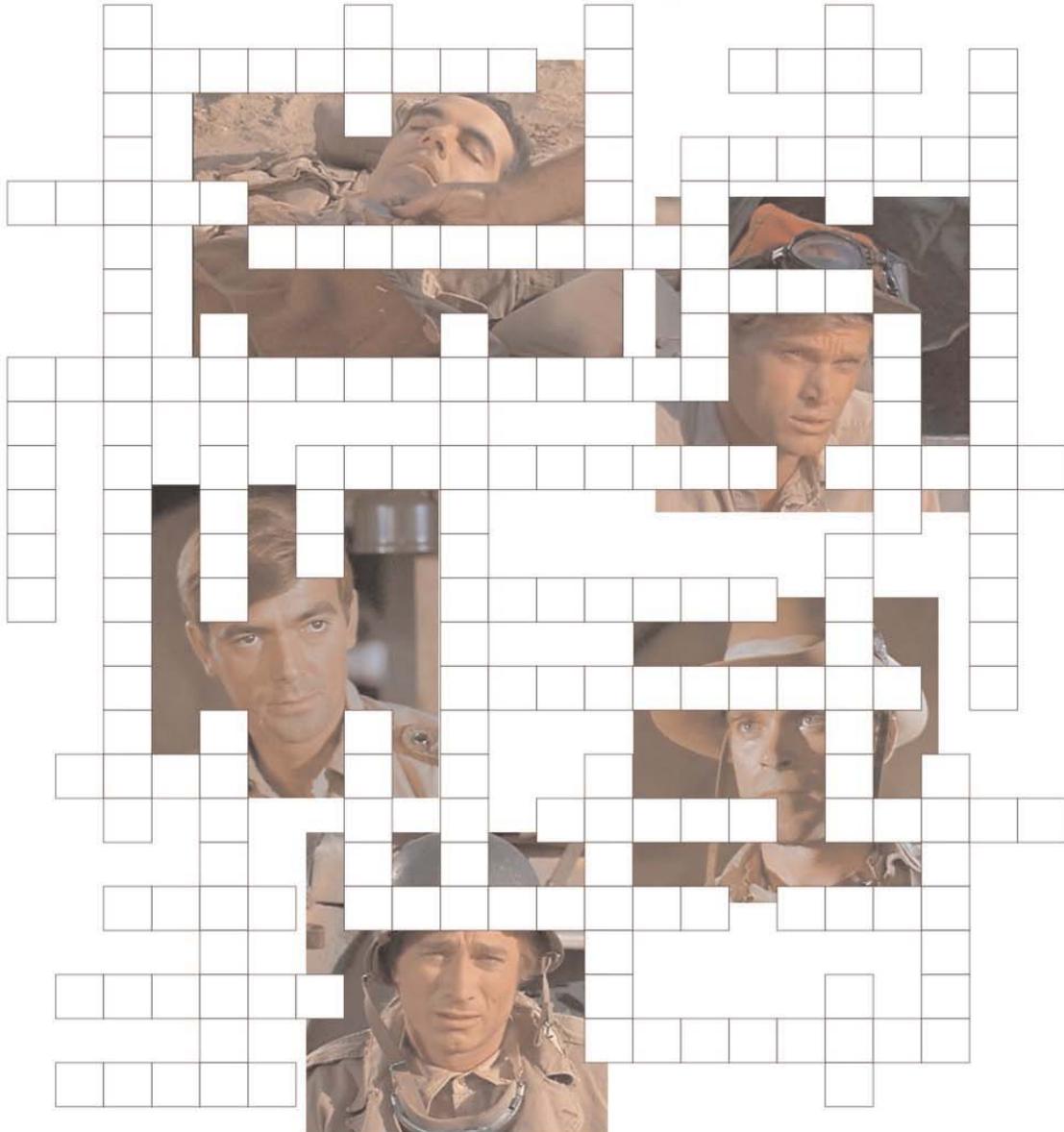
DEAR MOM AND DAD,

I JUST WANTED TO SEND ALONG THIS QUICK NOTE TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I AM DOING FINE. I KNOW IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE WRITTEN. I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT. WE WORK SO HARD DURING THE DAY, BY THE TIME THE SUN GOES DOWN, I'M SO TIRED I CAN HARDLY KEEP MY EYES OPEN, WE'VE BEEN SEEING A LOT OF ACTION LATELY. SOME CLOSE CALLS. BUT, DON'T WORRY, TROY, MOFFITT AND TULLY WATCH OUT FOR ME LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER. SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE JUST A KID OUT HERE - A KID DOING A MAN'S JOB. I DO LOVE IT HERE. I THINK WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, MOFFITT GOT HIT AND LOST A LOT OF BLOOD. WE HAD TO FIND A DONOR BECAUSE NONE OF US WERE A MATCH. SO TROY AND I ACTUALLY FOUND A DONOR IN A GERMAN CAMP! IT WAS A BIT HAIRY, BUT WE MANAGED TO SAVE SARGE'S LIFE. I WAS SO HAPPY I WAS A PART OF THAT. I REALLY LIKE MOFFITT. HE'S OKAY NOW. SO, DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE HOME BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. I MISS EVERYONE. GIVE MY DOG A SCRATCH BEHIND THE EARS FOR ME. LOVE Mark

RAT PUZZLE PAGES **THE B-NEGATIVE RAID** — Fill-In Puzzle By Janet B.

Put the words below into the correct spaces in the grid.



3 letters

MAP
RAT
SAM

4 letters

BRIT
CAMP
GRIM
JEEP
TROY

5 letters

BLOND
CASEY
CHRIS
FILES
HITCH
KHAKI
TOWEL
TULLY

6 letters

BRUNET
CANVAS
FABIAN
PISTOL

7 letters

BLANKET
HOLSTER
LIGHTER
PITCHER
SLUMPED
DOG TAGS

8 letters

DESERTER
SCABBARD

9 letters

SPARE TIRE
WASH BASIN

10 letters

CIGARETTES
EXPLOSIONS
RADIOPHONE

14 letters

MEDICAL RECORDS

15 letters

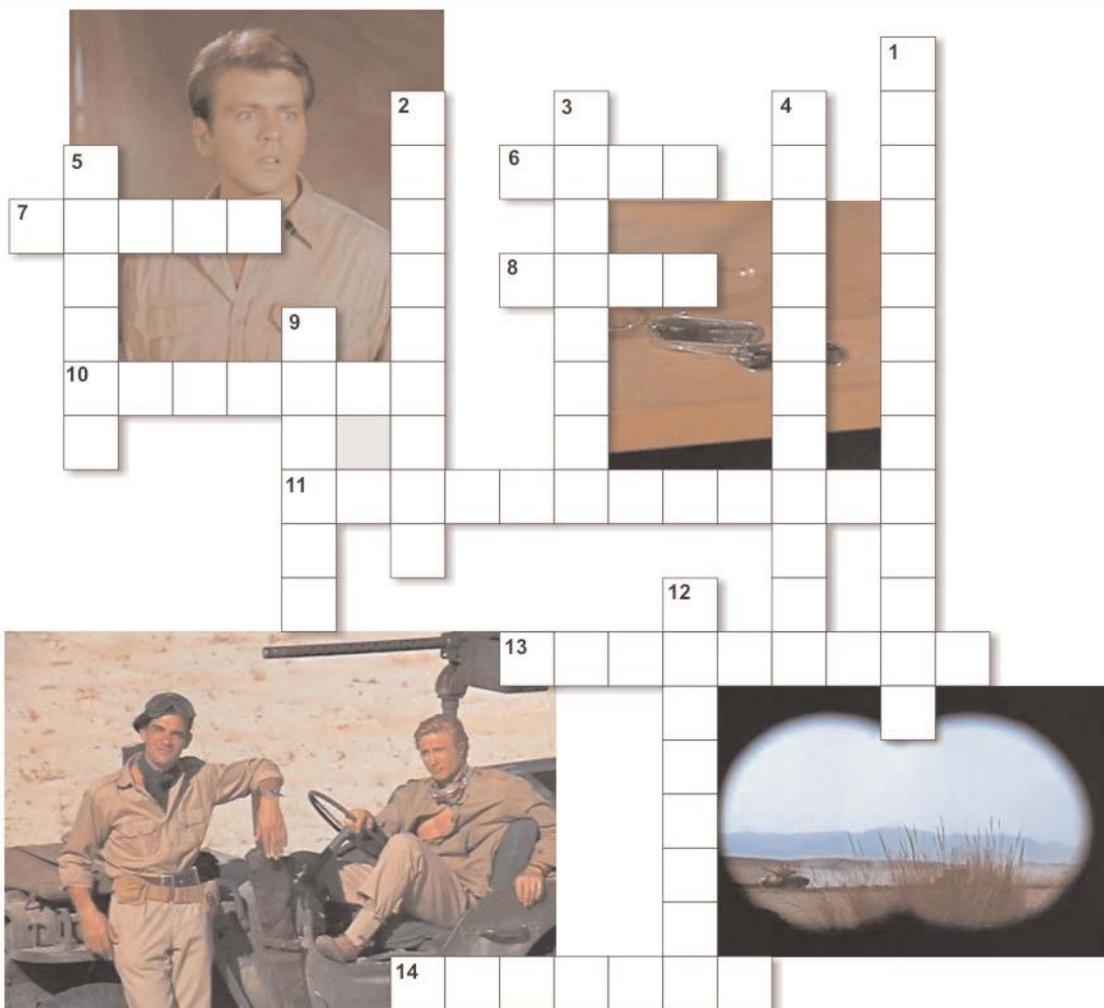
CORPORAL PENNELL
VERY GOOD TEACHER

19 letters

TWO DAYS FROM HOSPITAL



THE B-NEGATIVE RAID – Crossword Puzzle *by Libby*



ACROSS

6. Instead of “Let’s shake it.” Troy said, “Let’s _____ it.”
7. The first vehicle type the escaping Rats used.
8. How many Germans escaped the Rats’ attack on the convoy?
10. This was hooked on Hitch’s shirt pocket when approaching the German camp.
11. The code name for the German convoy that Moffitt used on the radio.
13. Creator of The Rat Patrol music.
14. What Dietrich was doing when we first saw him.

DOWN

1. A German soldier tried to transport some things in the Rats’ first escape vehicle. What were those things?
2. Director of this episode.
3. The blood Rhesus factor for Troy, Tully and Hitch, but not Moffitt.
4. The river code name for the German convoy route.
5. The colour of Troy’s grease pencil used to mark an X on his map.
9. The first time in battle Pennell ran like this animal.
12. How Dietrich described the B-negative blood type.

Vignettes

Four times in the second season the patrol took on a replacement for Tully. Andy (Mac McLaughlin) in *The Double Jeopardy Raid* and *The Fatal Reunion Raid*. Peterson (Darwin Joston) in *The Field of Death Raid*. Bo Randall (Bo Hopkins) in *The Tug of War Raid*. The erstaz Tullys contributed to the success of the missions, but they sometimes injected complications and entertainment. This was something that did not go unnoticed by the rest of the patrol.

Missing Tully

By Anne Serafin

“Man, this has been a long stretch without Tully,” Troy grumbled and tossed away a half-smoked cigarette.

Hitch flipped the wrench in his hand. “You got that right. Doggone jeep only knows one master. I don’t think it likes me.”

Moffitt lifted an eyebrow. “Perhaps not. But I think it liked Peterson even less.”

Hitch laughed. “Yeah! Remember when it tried to climb that rock formation? I thought you guys were done for.”

“Not the army’s best driver, certainly. But I believe Bo proved a greater hazard to you, Hitch.”

“Nearly cut your throat while giving you a shave as I recall.” Troy sat back in the passenger seat of the other jeep.

Hitch rubbed his chin as he gazed into the distance. “I was really glad you took that straight razor away from him, Sarge.”

“Don’t call me Sarge,” Moffitt said, as he had said so many times before.

“Well, that straight razor saved our lives—mine and Felicia’s—when we were standing on that platform, waiting to be hanged.” Troy said, with a straight look at his two colleagues.

“And Bo did do a good job with the machine gun, helping all of us to get out of there, chaps,” Moffitt reminded them.

“He looked like Al Capone or something, in that black suit and fedora.” Hitch grinned.

“So did you for that matter,” Moffitt pointed out. “Seemed as though we were in the middle of one of those Yank gangster movies.”

Troy pulled off his bush hat and ran his hand through his hair. “And Dietrich was foiled again!”

Hitch looked up from the engine of Moffitt’s jeep. “You know something, Sarge? I think Dietrich was glad to see you escape the hangman’s noose.”

“Nah,” Troy said. His hands tightened on his hat. “He hates my guts.”

“Perhaps. One of the mysteries of war. But we’re forgetting one other replacement driver in our reminiscing,” Moffitt said.

“You mean Andy? What was his last name, anyway?” Hitch said.

Moffitt shrugged.

Troy said, “Beats me. Worked with us a couple of times. He did okay. Looked too much like Hitch, though. The only way I could tell them apart was by Hitch’s kepi.”

Moffitt laughed. “Well, be that as it may, I for one will be very happy to see Tully return.”

“Amen to that,” Troy growled. “You done, Hitch?”

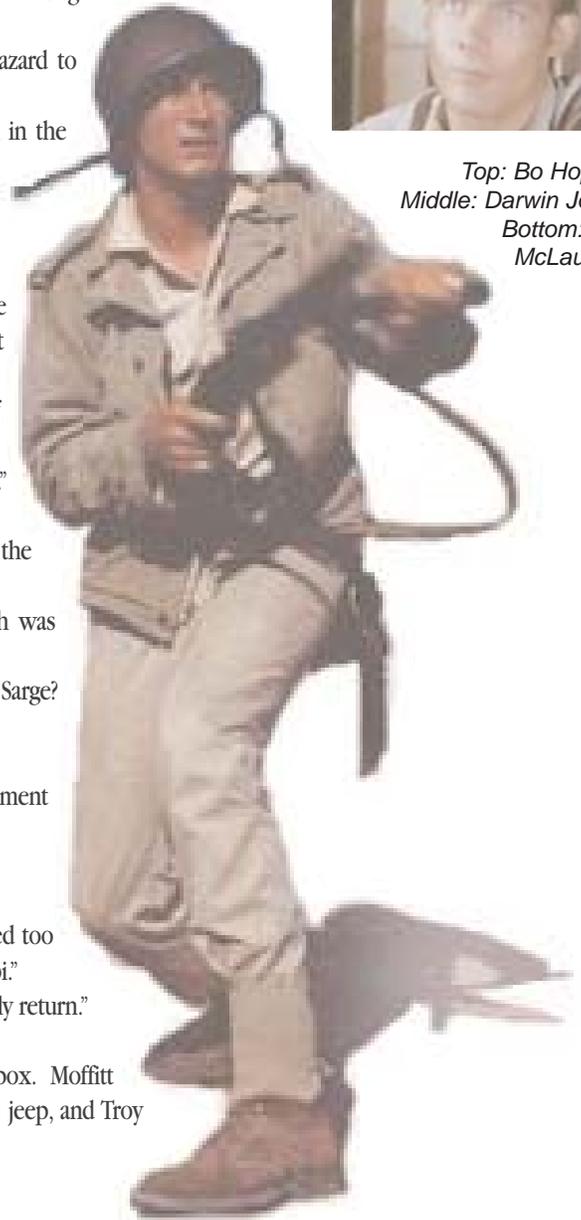
“That’s it, Sarge.” Hitch slammed the hood and tossed the wrench back in the box. Moffitt took the wheel of the jeep, Hitch climbed into the driver’s seat of the second jeep, and Troy slammed his hat back on his head.

“Then let’s—”

“Shake it!” chorused Moffitt and Hitch as they roared off.



Top: Bo Hopkins
Middle: Darwin Joston
Bottom: Mac McLaughlin



In the three parter, "Last Harbor Raid" Major Indrus, a captured American officer, was rescued from a POW camp by the Rat Patrol. His wife, Hazel Indrus, was introduced in a DUNES vignette ("Letter to the Patrol" by JC Lasiter, DUNES May 2007). With permission of that author, Keryn H. now brings Hazel once again into view at the end of the war.

Home At Last

by Keryn H.

Hazel Indrus was in a dither. Her boys were due to arrive any minute, and she wanted everything to be perfect. Never mind that she had never actually met any of them. They rescued her Bernie from that awful prison camp, and that made them hers. She had fretted and prayed for them and sent them packages of home baked goodies just as if they were her own flesh and blood. Now they were coming home.

All at once she was beset by doubts. Would they find her too old fashioned? She knew Tully would be right at home, but after all Jack was British, and Mark was from a well-to-do Eastern family. She was known locally as a good cook, but would they like her cooking?

Suddenly she remembered helping her Nebraskan cousin cook for the huge threshing crew one summer. The threshers were notorious meat and potatoes men. One day she and Lucile prepared great pots of Swiss steak and mashed potatoes. When the men came in from the field, the first few piled potatoes on their plates, ladled gravy from the Swiss steak over them and looked in vain for meat. Too polite to complain, they ate their potatoes until finally someone dipped the ladle deep enough to come up with a piece of steak, with a cry of "Hey, guys, there's meat in here!" After that the pots quickly emptied. Everything had turned out fine. Hazel hoped the boys would find her meal equally good.

She had spent all week cleaning the house, as Bernie said, "to within an inch of its life." She'd been up since dawn cooking. Two of her blue ribbon apple pies sat cooling in the pie safe, a big batch of buttermilk biscuits had just come out of the oven, and the fried chicken was golden brown. There was just enough time to make herself presentable.

She'd put on her "Sunday" dress and straightened her hair, when she heard Bernie's gruff voice coming from the front porch. They were here! She listened a moment. That soft "howdy" was Tully. The cultured "You're looking well, Sir" was Jack. The crisp "Good to see you again, Sir" was Sam, and the prep school "Hello, Sir" was Mark. She knew them all. They were in the entry now, greeting her shyly, calling her Mrs. Indrus. "Oh, please," she said, "call me Mom." She was enveloped in hugs, all doubt gone. Her boys were home at last.



Missing Scene

Blood Brothers

by Keryn H.

It had been a long, hard fought engagement with Dietrich dogging them all the way, but they'd finally eluded him and brought the mission to a successful conclusion. Now the men of the Rat Patrol were enjoying some well deserved R&R. Tully was at the motor pool hovering over the jeeps, making sure the mechanics were treating them right. Hitch, as usual, had found a pretty girl. Troy hoped there wasn't an irate father waiting in the wings.

Troy and Moffitt sat at a rickety table in the local watering hole. Troy ordered his usual beer with a pinch of salt. The bartender didn't have the makings for a Ghibli, so Moffitt settled for a beer as well. As he sipped the warm, slightly flat brew he thought with longing of a pint of Guinness at his favorite pub back home. In his mind's eye he could see it; the dark wood paneling, the heavy furniture, the antique pewter tankards and serving platters on shelves above the hunting prints, and a roaring fire in the massive stone fireplace. A far cry from this dingy bar in a dusty North African desert town.

His musings were interrupted by a voice at his side. "Sergeant Moffitt, can I buy you guys a beer?" He turned to see a grinning corporal with a bandage over one eye and his arm in a sling. To Moffitt he didn't look old enough to drink, and this boy seemed to know him.

"I say, do I know you?"

"You weren't in any shape to remember me," came the reply, "but we're sorta blood brothers. I'm Corporal William Pennell, and you have some of my blood. I just wanted to thank you guys. It's because of you and the second chance Sergeant Troy gave me that I'm going home with honor instead of disgrace."

"What an amazing thing!" Moffitt extended his hand to shake Pennell's. "A few weeks ago, I was asked to give blood to a corporal with B-negative blood. They told me he'd been wounded saving the life of a comrade, but I never learned his name. I guess we really are blood brothers!"



A Very Good Teacher

by Cynthia K. Taylor

"What's the news?" Tully asked as Troy lowered the antenna of their radio. "They gonna send us home to sell bonds?"

Jack Moffitt studied their commander. "Another mission?"

"A German patrol is holed up in the ruins of an old railroad station surrounded by Allied troops. We're to go accept their surrender."

Hitch looked puzzled. "Why us? Let the guys there do it."

"Seems the Germans left quite a few barrels of gasoline at the station and the commander threatened to blow up everything unless we came. The Allies want that gasoline."

"Why does this Kraut want to surrender to us?" Tully asked.

"Got to be a trap," Hitch replied. "Bet we pissed him off sometime and he wants one final shot."

"Answer them, Troy. Why us?"

"No idea."

"But you know who's in command," Moffitt said. "It's Dietrich, isn't it?"

•••••

Troy and Moffitt approached the falling down buildings with a flag of truce, having warned the Lieutenant in charge to stay well back. Slowly, a door opened and Captain Dietrich exited, walking to meet his adversaries.

"All right, Captain," Troy said, "let's get started."

"First, I need to 'borrow' Sergeant Moffitt for perhaps an hour. You have my word that he will be returned to you unharmed and the surrender will proceed peacefully."

"I'm not in the mood for games."

"Nor am I, Sergeant." Sparks flew from dark eyes. "But if I am to surrender I will do it my way. What I am asking is not unreasonable in light of our history together."

Moffitt interrupted. "The Captain has given his word and the building is surrounded. What harm can there be? Besides, I'm curious."

Troy eyed Moffitt, then growled, "I'll be back in one hour."

•••••

Later, at the POW processing station, Troy took Moffitt away from a stack of papers. "What did Dietrich need you for?"

"Mission of mercy," Moffitt answered cryptically.

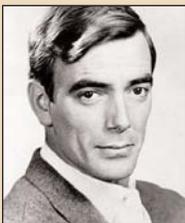
"I will explain, Sergeant," Dietrich said, looking up from his own towering stack of forms. "I had a wounded man who needed a transfusion to survive transportation to the Allied medical center. I knew from reports that the fighting had depleted your supplies to the point that rare blood types were, understandably, being reserved for Allied soldiers. I could not, in good conscience, surrender, thereby sentencing my soldier to death. Then I remembered from your raid to find a donor for Sergeant Moffitt that he had B-negative and I knew that none of you would allow any man, even an enemy, to die unnecessarily. Your officers would never have understood had I asked, so taking a lesson from you, I had to find a more original way."

Dietrich's face turned red and he no longer met Troy's gaze. "I'm afraid there is no gasoline for the Allies."

Troy was silent for a moment, then laughed. "Captain, maybe the most difficult thing we did in this war was teaching one German officer a different way of thinking. I'm just glad you won't be where you can use it against us."



RAT RECIPE – Dietrich's Wiener Schnitzel with noodles by Barbo



1lb. Pork, Veal or Goat
(depending on availability)
1 cup bread crumbs
2 eggs
1/2 cup flour
salt and pepper to taste
Noodles sent from home
(boil to tender)
pinch of sand (not optional)

There was no shortage of stale bread around camp and what better way to use it than to make Hans' grandmother's wiener schnitzel. Veal, on the other hand, was much more difficult to come by as were eggs. But, when supplies allowed, Hans would most often substitute pork or goat meat and make his favourite dish. It reminded him of home.

Cut meat into thinly cut fillets and pound flat, dredge in flour, then eggs, then bread crumbs. Heat oil in skillet and fry schnitzel for three minutes on each side until golden brown. Season to taste and eat with noodles sent from home. Add butter too noodles if available. A snifter of cognac finishes the meal with perfection.

RAT HOBBIES



Kubelwagen Model

by Judith

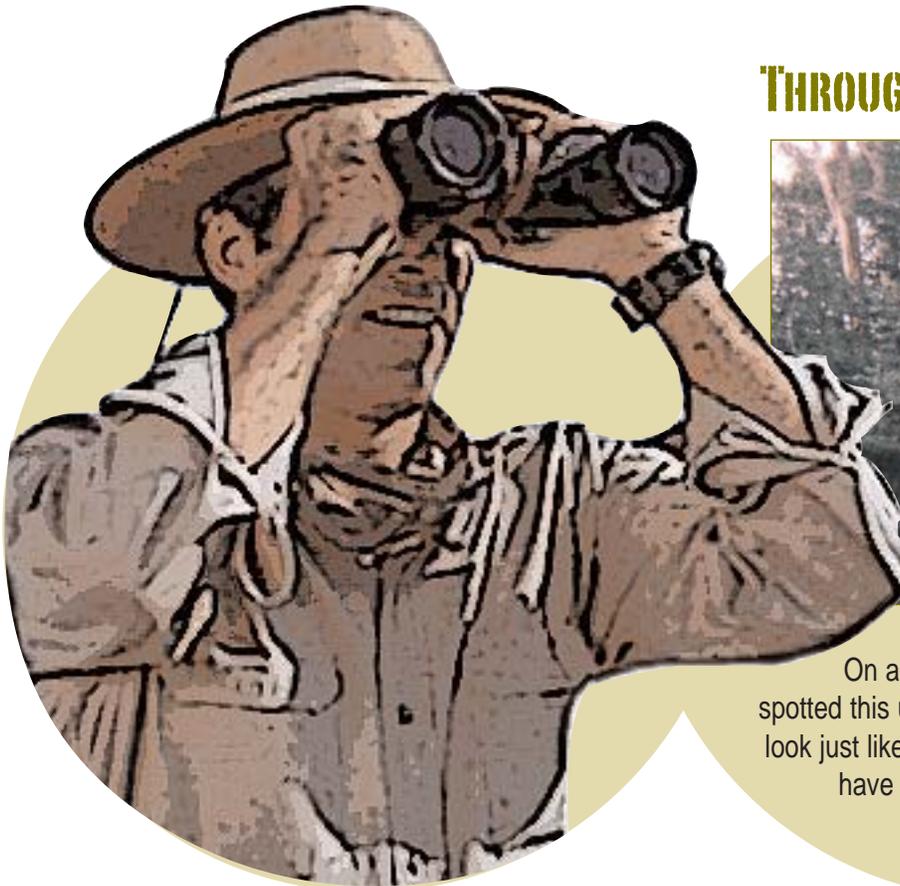
Look at this adorable tiny kubelwagen! Judith found it in a little hobby shop in Fort Wayne Indiana and she simply had to have it. And who can blame her. It's got authentic details in everything except for lacking Hauptmann

Dietrich. He must have been elsewhere, chasing the Rats.

Judith commented to the owner of the hobby shop that despite the economic downturn, it did not seem to be affecting the hobby business. His response was that when people are out of work and feeling blue, they need their hobbies to keep themselves occupied.



THROUGH THE FIELD GLASSES



On a backwoods ramble, Anne spotted this unique signpost. Doesn't the road look just like one a certain moonshiner might have used? Well spotted, Anne!

Photo by Anne Serafin

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