

WAR STORY

by Tom Lombardi

We shot at them.

They shot at us back.

We shot out the windows of an abandoned building nearby so as to trick them into thinking we'd had snipers stationed in that building.

They shot at the abandoned building.

We shot at them.

They shot at us back.

We broke for lunch.

They broke for lunch. Least that's what Kessler our translator said when he'd overheard one of their guys complaining that for the second time this week his buddy had forgotten to pack "the damn salt."

After lunch we lit up smokes, while private Barrachi read out loud his wife's latest

letter describing how the other morning she'd gone to Victoria's Secret in the mall to buy some bras with the gift certificate her sister-in-law had gotten her and ended up masturbating in the dressing room while thinking of her husband and trying on some thongs that were on sale.

Thinking of Mrs. Barrachi fingering herself in the dressing room of Victoria's Secret, I went hard.

They shot at us.

I lost my hard-on.

We shot at them.

They shot at a parked car so as to trick us into thinking they'd had a sniper firing off rounds in that vehicle.

Captain Briggs ordered Private Byrne to take out the car with a grenade launcher. The grenade launcher was jammed. Per my training to back up Byrne, I threw a grenade onto the car but it bounced off the roof and blew up on the sidewalk near the fire hydrant.

They shot at the exploding fire hydrant.

We shot at them.

They shot at us.

We heard one of their guys shriek, which reminded me of my childhood dog when he'd gotten hit by a UPS truck and my dad had to put a bullet into the dog's head. To this day, I still think Dad secretly enjoyed it.

Private Patrick Kilowsky whom we called The Weather Man got shot in the neck.

We went home.

They stayed put, rebuilt their homes.

At home I went to Denny's on Main St. and ordered a Coke and a Monte Christo with extra cheese, which warmed my chest, and eating it I thought about Mrs. Barrachi, whose husband had died in friendly fire about two months ago, except this time I didn't get

hard. I even considered driving two-hundred miles north to Virginia to visit her and offer my condolences but for some reason the thought of it made me sink deeper into the padded booth seat, and besides, it was almost dark, and raining pretty bad.

