

Patience

PATRICK J. MAHONEY III

No, they aren't going anywhere today, nowhere at all. Not as long as I, Corporal Nick Shekro, USMC, have anything to say about it. I had discovered five of the little bandy-legged so-and-so's holed up in a cave on the north side of the hill, not sixty yards distant. With the help of "The Widow Maker," Browning Automatic Rifle, number 2250783, I am going to keep them in that cave till the boys with the flame-throwers arrive to prepare the "Filet a la Nip," a delicacy which has become quite common as of late but, nevertheless, always heartily welcomed by our guys. With time on my hands and being quite comfortable lying here on my stomach between two boulders commandeering the entrance to the cave and with the "Widow" resting on her bipod, with the hinged butt plate firmly secured in my shoulder, I took up my vigil, praying for a couple of them to come out soon. After what seemed like an eternity, I saw first one and then another inverted stew-pot rise slowly from behind the boulders at the mouth of the cave. These stew-pots

with their netting soon rose higher revealing the squinty-eyed, scrubby-faced heads beneath them. The safety on the "Widow" clicked off and old thoughts raced through my head; two-two-one, two-two-one, just like they taught us in Boot at P. I.—no long bursts, burn up the barrel, crystallize the firing pin, just two-two-one. With these thoughts in mind, I squeezed off three short bursts in that order. One Nip fell, head over the boulder, face down, exposing the missing back of head and helmet. Dum-dums, International Law, ha! The second Nip was knocked flat against the side wall of the entrance, with the lower part of his face now missing. That ought to give the other three inside something to think about. Just like Coney on the Fourth of July; clay ducks just waiting to be knocked down. I waited for those ducks, and I'll wait for these too. It may take a long time before they make a move now, but I'll wait. Hell, I've got nothing else to do; and besides, I've got patience.