

We didn't see anyone around the base. Everything was quiet and there was no power. There was smoke coming from some of the buildings. We did a patrol of the buildings. In one of the corners of the hospital unit we found Smithy and the Captain. The Captain told us that they had been ambushed and that they were the only survivors of the unit. The Captain was on his last few breaths of air as his left leg was missing and he was bleeding out. Smithy was still wounded but not badly. The Captains orders were to get everybody out. His last words were "Please bring all the boys home".

I gathered the remaining troops who were with Smithy. We rounded up some vehicles and trucks. In the trucks we placed our fallen friends. The next morning we moved out and made it back to the beach where we first landed. As we started to load the boats we came under enemy fire. I ordered the boats to leave and take the wounded to the ships, that we would be ok and send back up for us later. Smithy remained with me and so did Scotty and Evo. We took shelter in the sand dunes but unfortunately both Evo and Scotty were wounded on the run. Four of us stranded on the beach and nowhere to go. It was up to me to bring the boys home.



We had 3 grenades and 4 bullets between all of us. I grabbed them all and hid in the sand waiting for the enemy to get closer. I threw the first grenade and fired off two shots that took down a few enemy. I threw the last 2 grenades and fired one last shot. To my surprise I was the last man standing and by miracle I had one last bullet...one lucky last bullet to save us all...

I turn around to hear the boys cheering and the approach of the boats return. I helped the boys over to the shore line. It was over and we were going home.



On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April the following month I marched proud in my local town's Anzac Day parade. Beside me marched Evo and Scotty on crutches and Smithy in a wheel chair. I stood to attention, as straight as a pin as the Governor General pinned the Victoria cross to my shirt. During the minute silence for the fallen I squeeze my fist as tight as I could as I held on to my lucky last bullet, closed my eyes and remember my fallen friends as I felt a warm tear roll down my cheek I whispered the words "Lest we Forget".