

REMINDS ME OF A MILITARY STORY, DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD  
TELL IT, WELL ...

It was down at Parris Island. They had a big thing, the military chain of command. We were recruits, new. It was confusing when we were new, they put us out to guard these empty barracks, made us stay out there all night. They were empty, nothing to guard. It was deserted, just to get us used to it. The D.I. said, "there's only one thing a marine cannot allow anyone to do, you can't let anyone take your weapon. You understand, if you come back without it you're in big trouble." That was the worst sin, letting anybody take away your weapon. You'll stay here two years if anyone comes back without it. They scared us. Well I'm out there. It's 3 o'clock. You got to go thru all this "Halt. Who goes there" stuff and if they don't respond, you're supposed to get them. You know you're on an U.S. island. You're not in Saudi Arabia. So up comes this off-duty D.I., probably had a few drinks. You know how they harass you in boot camp. Well I'm standing there with an M14, bigger than an M16, and I'm thinking this is a test. Are we going to react or let this go by and I think he's trying to get me and I say "Halt. Who goes there?" He smirks, "don't give me any of that stuff, don't you see my hat and my uniform?" And I say "Halt," it's 3 o'clock and he says give me that weapon and I give him a butt stroke across the jaw taking all his teeth out and an ambulance came, took him away. They'd ingrained this in our heads. We didn't have live rounds. If we had, I'd probably shot him. He went out cold. But later, my own drill instructor said, "Don't mention this but you'll make a fine marine, just don't say I said it."

## LIBERATION

with the Allies  
near, the Nazis  
locked us in a  
building, set  
dynamite charges.  
But it rained so  
nothing went  
off. I was 68  
pounds, my hair  
snow. When the  
first American

came I said, "I  
am Jewish," he  
said he was too,  
held the door  
open and in that  
one gesture, five  
years of being  
hostage at gun  
point, dirt,  
he restored my  
humanity