

10-25-2012

## Grenade in Grenada (2012)

Sean Hatfield  
*Valparaiso University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://scholar.valpo.edu/core\\_reader](http://scholar.valpo.edu/core_reader)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hatfield, Sean, "Grenade in Grenada (2012)" (2012). *The Valpo Core Reader*. Paper 17.  
[http://scholar.valpo.edu/core\\_reader/17](http://scholar.valpo.edu/core_reader/17)

This Origins Essay is brought to you for free and open access by ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Valpo Core Reader by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at [scholar@valpo.edu](mailto:scholar@valpo.edu).

# Grenade in Grenada

*By Sean Hatfield*

In the remote jungles of Grenada, figures rush through the foliage and bullets whiz by mere inches from their intended targets. Gnarled trees stand resolute through the bloodshed and carnage before them. Vines catch the laces of Army issued combat boots as they struggle to move through the mud and twigs that litter the ground. Tensions run high as two forces face each other in the heat of battle. A war is waging and each side tries to make the other flinch first. Neither of them wants to admit defeat, however only one will be the victor in the end.

On one side of the battleground lays the Cuban opposition. Highly trained, these stealthy killers stalk through the jungles almost invisible to the naked eye and just as quietly. Their uniforms match the flora and fauna of the jungle. Their trained hands have a strangle-hold on their weapons; the AK-47. These guns are predominantly used by guerrilla forces around the world and their distinctive chatter sends a shiver down any soldier's spine. They wreak havoc in their wake and leave the enemies brutally wounded.

Approximately 3 miles away lie America's heroes; strong, brutal, and ready for anything. These soldiers brave the elements and overcome everything in their path to defend America's freedom for all. Their

weapon of choice is the M4 assault rifle. Though not as resilient as their opponent's gun, they still work just as well; especially when wielded by these highly trained men. With nerves of steel, they rarely succumb to their enemies and have been known to take out forces twice their size in foreign lands across the globe. These are the men of America's Marine Corps.

The Cuban forces lie in wait for their enemy to make the move. The tension builds as a silent troupe of soldiers rushes through the jungles and takes shelter behind a fallen tree. There, they scout out their intelligence and radio it in to their Sergeant in charge. Over the radio, the hushed tones of an unknown soldier can be heard giving coordinates of the enemy. Silence overtakes the jungle and in a heartbeat, the tell-tale whistle of a mortar cuts the silence like a knife and explodes in a flash, releasing shrapnel dozens of feet around and taking out nearly half of the small gang of Cubans. The air fills with bullets as the Cuban opposition fights to keep control of their base. The soldiers emerge from behind the tree and strike first, spraying a maelstrom of lead in their attempt to take control of the base.

Meanwhile, all is quiet in the American base. Soon, a call rings in on the walkie-talkie and the Sergeant picks it up. Upon picking up the receiver, he immediately orders a small band of soldiers to report to the front lines. One of those soldiers was a wire thin young man from Plymouth, Indiana. The jungle dirt covers his uniform and the reflections

of sunlight peering from the tree line made his dog-tags glint. The embossed name on these dog-tags read, "Hatfield, Max L." Upon closer inspection, the soldier had steely blue eyes and an itchy trigger finger held fast on his military issued Colt .45 pistol. When he heard news of the trouble on the front line, he sprung into action and sprinted through the dense jungle towards his comrades. Upon finding his buddies hunkered down behind the fallen tree, he immediately began to formulate a plan.

He instructed two of the men to go back to the base camp and grab an MG-42 belt-fed machine gun and bring it back to the fallen tree. The other three or so men were to distract the enemy so that the machine gun could be successfully set up. A few minutes pass and the soldiers do exactly as ordered. When the men with the machine gun came back to the tree, the others ran out and fired a few shots towards the enemy's position in a rickety wooden shed approximately 70 yards to the north. With sweat pouring down their faces, the men screwed the barrel of the machine gun to the body and put it on a swiveling base. The OD green paint of the receiver was looking as shiny as ever as a fresh belt of ammunition was pulled off of the shoulders of one man and quickly loaded into the gun with a click of the bolt.

Shots littered the fallen tree as the men scrambled to make sure the gun was ready to be fired. With one last adjustment, Hatfield readied himself for the fire and brimstone that was about to go down. He took

one final breath and looked to his buddies and slowly lowered his finger onto the trigger. With a squint of his eye, he lined up the cross hairs onto the small wooden shack that lay before him. In one squeeze of his finger, bullets came flying out at an insurmountable rate, filling the shack full of holes as the Cuban forces scrambled inside for cover.

This was just phase one of the master plan. Once the Cubans were huddled inside the shed, the same steely blue eyes as before affixed themselves onto the shed and the itchy trigger finger found itself a new home, not on a Colt .45, but on the pin of a grenade. With reflexes as sharp as a knife, Hatfield leaped over the fallen tree and made a bee-line for the shed. He took cover on the right side of the shed as his friend reloaded their weapons. As the Cubans tried to regroup inside the now dilapidated shed, Hatfield's finger found the pin and pulled it. Charging the ticking time bomb that was now in his hand, he silently counted towards the perfect number of nine. Once that number came, he tossed the grenade inside the shed and crossed his arms over his chest as the shed exploded into millions of small splinters and launched him nearly forty yards away.

His back littered with shrapnel, Hatfield crawled his way back towards the fallen tree and collapsed into the arms of his brothers. They used several branches from the tree to construct a make-shift sling to carry his now unconscious body back to the base, whereupon he received the highest of commendations from his fellow soldiers. This

brave soldier learned that life is short and in order to make the most of life, sometimes one must take risks in order to reap the benefits. By helping his fellow soldiers to help win this skirmish, he secured the American way and paved the way for his children to follow in his wake. His determination and skill help to ensure a safer nation as well as a better way of life for generations to come.

As I sat in the garage next to this battle-scarred man I call my father, I tried to comprehend the trials he faced in trying to bring me into this world. "Son," he said as he looked at my perplexed face, "I want you to know that everything I went through in those jungles made me the man I am today. And the reason I'm telling you this is because I hope that knowing all of this will help you become the great man that I know you have the potential to be." Upon hearing this, I realized the most important lesson I could learn from my father's story was the necessity of flexibility in life. As I looked up at him and he looked down at me, I realized the man I was destined to be was determined by the actions of my ancestors. The risks my father took in the jungles showed that taking risks can lead to big rewards. However, being reckless and not planning out the details can lead to disaster. In conclusion to this story, my father said to me, "Take life slowly and make the most of it. Think critically about everything and be creative in adverse situations. You are the master of your fate and the captain of your soul. Show that to others."