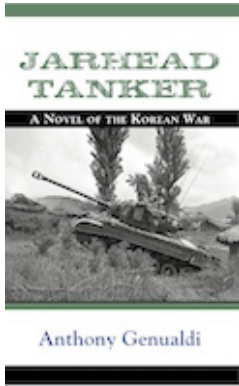


JARHEAD TANKER

A NOVEL OF THE KOREAN WAR



Anthony Genualdi



This is the story of U.S. Marine officer John Callahan, an armor crew veteran of WWII who is, after being in reserve, sent to the war in Korea. He serves at Inchon, Seoul, and the epic battle of Chosin Reservoir. He and his men fight to survive the harsh climate and ferocious enemy. He later comes back for a second tour of duty, trying to hold the Chinese back...

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By

Anthony Genualdi

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The following is based on a true unit that existed in the Korean War. Some of the events are based on fact, and some of the characters are based on real persons, but for the most part are changed to remove any resemblance to anyone living or dead.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

28 NOVEMBER 1950

Five miles. Baker Company only made it five miles before running into wreckage. Most of the trucks were off to the sides of the road. Dead and wounded men, American, British and Chinese were everywhere. The Chinese were shooting down from the hillsides. Only the fires of the trucks were lighting the night.

“Baker five, this is Baker six, over,” Carney called on the radio.

“Baker five here. Over,” Callahan replied.

“Baker six here. I can’t see a way through this godawful mess and I can’t raise anybody from the column. I’m turning around for Koto-ri. Third Platoon will lead like before. When they’re through, close up tight. Over.”

“Baker five, roger. Over.” Callahan turned around and manned his .50-caliber gun. “Driver, get ready to turn around. We’re going back.”

“Aye, sir,” Hardesty replied.

Callahan fired at the Chinese above him. He still hated the machine gun being mounted behind the hatch. He’d rather shoot where he was going, not where he’d been. The tanks from Third Platoon were starting to pass Tank 22 on the right. Their commanders were shooting up at the enemy too. Bullets started to ping off the turret around Callahan. He looked to the left of his tank and saw Chinese soldiers in

a ditch. One was winding up to throw a grenade. Callahan let him have it, and his grenade went off beside him, taking a comrade with him. "Gunner, infantry in the ditch, caliber thirty, traverse left. Steady...on. Fire, right to left." Morton swept the ditch with the coaxial gun.

Third Platoon was past them now. After that, First Platoon and what was left of the radio jeeps came by. Callahan then ordered his driver to turn in place and go south. After a few minutes they had to stop. Carney had radioed that they couldn't get any farther with the wreckage clogging the road around them. They'd wait through the night, call for artillery support, and try again with the dawn.

From the north and from the sides, Chinese troops kept trying to knock out the tanks. They'd fire their weapons and throw grenades. Callahan, his crew, and the other tanks fired back until their machine guns were locked up from the cold or out of ammo. Their Grease Guns were brought out, and after a while, also were either out of ammo or jammed up from frost.

After an hour, some men limped in from the north. Callahan leveled his pistol at them and prepared to shoot. "Hello, Yank. Bloody glad to find you."

"Well hello, English. Sorry we don't have a spot of tea made up." The British Marine who'd yelled at Callahan before, and four of his friends, climbed up on the Pershing. "What's your name?"

"Corporal Ames. I've forgotten your name, Yank."

"Lieutenant Callahan." He offered his hand.

Ames shook his hand. "Hello, sir."

"What happened to your column?"

Ames shook his head. "Bloody Chinks blew up the truck in front of us. They cut the column in two when they did that. They blew bugles, and threw grenades, and fired mortars. They came at us from all sides. We think they got our colonel. Your tanks and your men helped us kill a lot of them, but there were so damn many." Ames took a breath. "But, just so bloody many Chinks. We couldn't hold them off."

Callahan pointed to the ditch. "Could you check and see if there's some weapons and ammo there? We need something else that shoots."

"Right, sir." Ames motioned for the man next to him to follow, then they jumped off the tank and crawled into the ditch. They came back with two Thompson submachine guns and three clips of ammo each. "This should help."

Callahan shook his head. "Damn Chinks probably got these through Lend-Lease. My tax dollars at work." He then looked back up the road to find another two limping figures.

"Lieutenant, it's me."

"Gunny?"

"Yes, sir, with Gardelli."

"Ames, do me a favor and spread your guys around the tank. You there, give those men a hand up here." As Ames's men climbed down, Gonzalez and Gardelli climbed up onto the engine deck. "Wow, am I glad to see you guys. What happened?"

"They must have gotten one of our bazookas, or hit us with a mortar. They got us in the right front of the hull."

"Are you the only ones left?"

"Yes, sir."

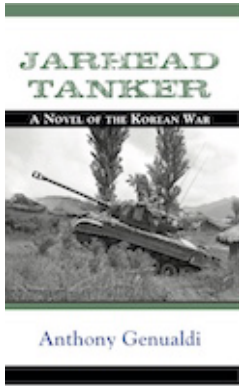
"So, Winford is dead, too?"

Gonzalez nodded. "Yes, sir. Funny, he died with his eyes open, and he had...this queer smile on his face."

Callahan nodded, "I'm not surprised to hear that. How are you two?"

"We each got it in the legs. But we can fight. What's the plan, sir?"

"We'll move in the morning, Gunny. Meanwhile, we kill Chinks here." At this point, one of the remaining radiomen had gotten through to the artillery. They managed to get a few salvos in to break up the Chinese attack. It would still be a long night.



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