



Red Blood, Black Sand: Fighting Alongside John Basilone from Boot Camp to Iwo Jima

By Chuck Tatum

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In 1944, the U.S. Marines were building the 5th Marine Division—also known as “The Spearhead”—in preparation for the invasion of the small, Japanese-held island of Iwo Jima. . .

When Chuck Tatum began Marine boot camp, he was just a smart-aleck teenager eager to serve his country. Little did he know that he would be training under a living legend of the Corps—Medal of Honor recipient John Basilone, who had almost single-handedly fought off a Japanese force of three thousand on Guadalcanal.

It was from Basilone and other sergeants that Tatum would learn how to fight like a Marine and act like a man—skills he would need when he hit the black sand of Iwo Jima with thirty thousand other Marines.

Red Blood, Black Sand is the story of Chuck’s two weeks in hell, where he would watch his hero, Basilone, fall, where the enemy stalked the night, where snipers haunted the day, and where Chuck would see his friends whittled away in an eardrum-shattering, earth-shaking, meat grinder of a battle.

This is the island, the heroes, and the tragedy of Iwo Jima, through the eyes of the battle’s greatest living storyteller, Chuck Tatum.

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