

TAKING TOO LONG

(WORKING TITLE)

“This is taking too long.”

It was taking too long.

“Just give it a second.”

They gave it three, and four, and five.

“Shouldn’t there be a flash or something?” Garrison asked. After a brief wait, the reply came, “It’ll come.”

“What if it doesn’t?”

No answer that time.

“Jim, what if it doesn’t?”

An answer that time, “It’ll come.”

“Don’t you have a ‘Plan B,’ or something?”

Jim had a Plan B.

“I have a Plan B.”

Prostrate in the grass, under cover of night, bushes and trees, Garrison finally turned to his comrade, rather than speaking aside.

“What is it?” he inquired. Jim kept looking straight ahead. Still nothing. *God, damn it all,* he thought. *Why isn’t it happening?* A voice came from the transmitter on his shoulder, “This is taking too long.”

It was taking too long. Jim put a finger to the device, pressing a button.

“It’ll come. Over,” he responded. He let go of the button. Ten more seconds passed. Nothing.

“Blue,” a female voice asked over the transmitter, “this is Green. What’s your status?”

“Green, this is Blue, we are awaiting signal. Over.”

Garrison whispered, “Are you really going to try and bring that back?”

Jim didn’t answer. They were staring down into the valley below, at a factory. The interception tower had been disabled, allowing everyone to speak freely. None of them could be heard by the enemy. The code names were only being used based on Jim’s orders, orders which had been disputed but were ultimately succumb to in exchange for removal of a key term once prominent in military radio chat. Well, not total removal; it was *optional*.

“Nobody says ‘over’ anymore, Jim.”

“I say it.”

“You and...?”

“Me.”

“That’s still just—.”

“Shut up, Gary.”

“We all have to evolve at some point, Jim.”

“You don’t say?”

“It’s not worth it to waste a second just to clarify—.”

“We’ve already had this discussion.”

“But you still aren’t listening. This is a valid issue that—.”

“Gary, shut up.”

Garrison complied. Silence commenced. After another ten seconds, “What’s our Plan B, Jim?”

No response.

“Jim, what is our—?”

“Blue! Blue! This is black!”

It was a loud whisper. Red and Green listened in as Jim pressed the button, replying, "Black, this is Blue. Are you in trouble? Over."

"The bomb is a dud! Repeat, the bomb is a dud!"

No words. No breathing. Panic struck. It would've subdued them, but it was halted by the need to accomplish the mission. Jim looked at the grass. A tiny line of insects was marching off somewhere.

"Jim?"

They were single file, regimented, focused. Determination was the key to their success as a unit. They were unbreakable, the bugs. Not even the mightiest steel toed boot could halt their progress.

"Jim?" Garrison said once more. Jim didn't want to talk. This was a deathtrap. He'd brought his team into the frying pan, and there was only one place left to go from there.

"Jim, Plan B?"

The button was pressed.

"You're sure? Over." Jim asked.

"Positive," Trent's voice came from the transmitter. "It won't go off."

Only one place...

"Green, Red, do you read me? Over."

"Read you loud and clear, Blue," Sara of Green answered.

"Stop trying to bring it back, Jim," said Brock of Red.

"Okay, listen up," began their leader. "I have a Plan B, and..."

(This is but a small part of a larger story. The rest will come in time, but for now, I hope you enjoyed this piece as much as I did creating it.)