# Benny

If I hadn't been there in that same foxhole with Henry and Benny that day, I don't think I would've believed the story myself...

This was back in 1941. The two of them came into our unit together. Benny was always teased by the other guys for being so small and quiet, but Henry, very large in stature, always stood up for him. When we were separated into battalions, Henry begged the Superiors to let him be in the same one as Benny. The Superiors allowed it, being that they noticed how much more "normal" Benny was when Henry was with him. Every now and then, Benny would tremble or get "the shakes" is what I would call 'em, and Henry would hug him until he stopped his bizarre behavior. Usually, someone like Benny wouldn't be considered fit for the army, but America took whoever they could at the time. If they could fire a weapon and get their asses out of harm's way quick enough, that was sufficient. The other soldiers taunted them by calling them lovers, but Henry always kept a cool head, leading Benny to not take things to heart.

Whenever things got bad on the battlefield, Henry would protect Benny like a child; it was to the point where Henry would cover Benny's ears when the bombs went off in the distance or when one of us threw a grenade... But, there was that one day I'll never forget: seven of us were all huddled together in one of the biggest foxholes I think I'd ever helped dig, and we were completely outnumbered; bombs started falling all around us, and bullets were flying through the air, some of them kicking up some serious dirt and the others hitting some of our soldiers, our brothers. I remember seeing Benny curled up in the deepest part of the foxhole, starting to get the shakes while he held his hands over his ears. Henry was too busy up front, letting off rounds at those Nazi bastards, to check on his friend. Benny's shaking got worse, and for the first time, I heard his voice; he started yelling Henry's name out.

From the moment he screamed his friend's name, all the explosions and commotion outside seemed to fade. The explosions sounded muffled almost. Henry dropped his rifle and ran over to Benny, kneeling next to him. "It's okay, Benny; just focus. You're not hurting anyone. Just focus on the bombs and the bullets." The other soldiers at the front of the foxhole stopped firing their weapons, too. One soldier took his helmet off and stared a Mark 1 General Purpose Bomb right in the nose as it headed straight for our foxhole; it exploded only 20 feet from us, the fire and debris of the bomb encircling us, but not touching us; we couldn't even feel the heat from it.

Suddenly, our foxhole got tighter as other soldiers ran inside. When I asked what the hell was going on, one soldier stuttered out, "You-you t-tell me!" and pointed outside. I finally got the guts to go and see why we hadn't died yet, and when I looked outside, the entire platoon was standing outside of their bombed foxholes, ours being the only one not destroyed. Before I could scream at them for being so exposed, another bomb went off above their heads, the explosion behaving as if there were an invisible shield around us.

Bullets flew at us, but they bounced off whatever was protecting us. To me, it looked like a glass dome was stopping everything that could've killed us that day, but then I quickly returned to the

foxhole and saw Benny standing up, his eyes glowing a bright white hue and his hand stretched upward. I stared in complete awe, scared and grateful at the thought that Benny was the one protecting us the entire time. Benny closed his hand into a fist at one point, and I heard a massive bomb go off above us. "The Atomic Bomb! It just malfunctioned! Right over us!", a soldier outside screamed out. I pulled my eyes away from Benny and ran outside to catch everything else he was doing. A few more bombs came speeding toward us, but they turned up and around, hitting the Nazi planes they came from.

Benny used whatever gifts he had, exhausting his body and mind until the explosions had stopped. When everything was over, Benny's legs gave out, and he fell over, but the soldiers closest to him caught him. Henry hugged Benny as he was carried outside of the foxhole, his tears wetting Benny's dog tags and camouflaged uniform. The soldiers lay Benny down on the soft dirt; Henry wiped his face of the blood that came out of his nose. "Thank you, little brother. Thank you." Henry crouched over Benny's dead body and hugged him and kissed him as the other soldiers removed their helmets out of respect and honor for Benny.

A few weeks after Benny's funeral, in which he was awarded the Soldier's Medal, the Medal of Honor, and the Purple Heart, I had the chance to talk with Henry about Benny. Henry told me that Benny joined the army with him because their parents wanted him to protect Henry, which was something none of us other soldiers concluded when we first met the two. Benny knew there was a possibility of death if he overexerted himself, but he loved his brother and his country, so it was a small burden to bear for him. I never found out what made Benny so powerful; I was just thankful that he did what he did that day in that foxhole.