

# Islands of the damned: a marine at war in the pacific admission essay sample

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In the book “ Island of the Damned: A Marine at War in the Pacific” by R. V. Burgin a firsthand account of the war through the eyes of a soldier. The novel is the memoir of Romus Burgin, who served in the Marines as a mortar man. R. V. Burgin describes both the losses and victories of war in a poignant fashion.

Throughout his time in the service, Burgin was part of the 1st Marine Division in Melbourne, Australia. There he met many other veterans that he developed a kinship with. In Australia, he also fell in love with a young woman there, which he eventually married at the end of the war (Burgin, 2010). He was transferred to Milne Bay where he entered combat for the first time in 1944. He related the fear associated with banzai attacks and his own feelings about taking the lives of others. Burgin states that he was just happy to survive and felt that killing others in this type of situation was not immoral. In his eyes one must do everything necessary to insure their own safety and that of their comrades. At Talasea, Burgin related the great challenges of being a soldier in jungle conditions. Heavy rain and dense forest made fighting very difficult and dangerous (Burgin, 2010).

Burgin also recalls some lighter moments in his memoir, such as the friendships he built with his fellow soldiers, USO shows, and his earning of a bronze star (Burgin, 2010). However he also recounts the many horrors he faced staring down men in Japanese bunkers and fearing attacks in areas the soldiers were woefully unequipped to handle. Overall this book presents a very unbiased and clear picture of what World War II was like from a soldier’s point of view.

## **Works Cited:**

Burgin, R. (2010). *Islands of the Damned: A Marine at War in the Pacific*. New York: Random House.