

IT IS ALWAYS AMAZING TO ME

© 2017, by Terry Sasek

It is always amazing to me at this time each year
How your mind travels back into that locked vault
Located far back in the sub-consciousness recesses

Like a great safe cracker my mind opens the vault
In that instant the locked up memories do emerge
I had hoped they'd never see the light of day

They start escaping up into the conscience mind
First into my dreams and then my daily thoughts
Affecting the mind and body as it once had done

January 10th is near again and those demons return
I'm never prepared for their yearly visits to me
When suddenly I will bolt up out of a sound sleep

My heart's suddenly pounding like a jack hammer
My blood pressure sky rockets to greater heights
And sweat pours from my body like a flowing river

It is just a preview of what is yet to come again
This ordeal of nightmares I have faced since 1969
So very real are the sounds, smells and the visions

It is once again 2:00 AM in the morning in Vietnam
Without any warning the air is filled with terror
Mortars and artillery are slamming into our base

Guys screaming "IN COMING" and running for bunkers
Explosions are erupting everywhere on the airbase
The deadly sounds of shrapnel ripping things apart

Matters not to these exploding rounds what they hit
objects made of metal, stone or human flesh & bones
It is meant to destroy whatever is there when it hits

As quickly as it had started that morning it was over
Sixty two rounds slammed into their targets on base
One of our guys was dead and four more were wounded

Then that night with the attack still fresh in our minds
We were once again hit very hard with fifty six rounds
This time two guys were killed and five others wounded
That experience forever changed my life and my attitude

I had stopped caring about everything and everyone there
It was as if the VC weren't enemy soldiers anymore to me

In my mind I'd reduced them to less than human beings
I was quickly losing my faith and was mad at God too
I felt he had allowed our brothers to die in that way

It took many years and a very loving wife who helped me
To overcome the bitter anger I had harbored deep inside
To finally realize that it was *man* not God who caused it

Yet here I am now forty-seven years later still suffering
From the crippling effects of defoliants and nightmares
But worst of all were the two attacks on January 10, 1969

So once more the demons are starting their yearly visits
And they will continue to haunt me for several more weeks
I've always been a survivor and I will survive this too.

© Terry Sasek BT 68-69 LM#687 - all rights reserved.

*No twenty year old kid should ever have had to face such
a vicious and devastating attack as we did without any
warning and though we were lucky enough to have survived
it all, three of our brother warriors never had a chance
to become the old men that the rest of us are today. The
nine who were wounded will forever be reminded each day
and every night that they were the lucky ones for they
had gone home to their families as their wounds healed
and though they bear the scars from the battles fought
as young men, they too were blessed to have survived it
all and become old men as well themselves. But it's the
three warriors and their own families that I think of
each and every year who had died in those two deadly
attacks on January 10th, 1969 for they never got to be
old men like the rest of us have.*