

**Cam Ranh Bay AB Air Base  
Of Young Men and the Vietnam War  
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**Of Young Men and the Vietnam War**

Young men sent to a faraway Shore  
It was called a mere conflict instead of a War  
But the young men knew its real name as *War*  
And they marched off to fulfill a patriot's Chore  
The innocence of all was stripped quickly away.

They lived on life's edge day after Day  
Unwanted by those whose lives they would Save.  
Unloved by their countrymen, and not the latest Rave.

Their bonds made strong by a similar Plight  
They vowed their devotion and to make a good Fight,  
The hot sun beat down like a fireball from Hell,  
There was not much rest, and never enough Mail.

Twilight brought them no rest, nor Respite.  
For Charlie lurked hidden in the dark shadows of Night  
With a satchel charge and AK clutched in his Hands,  
He brought much death and destruction into the Land.

The death angel would stand silently just out of Sight,  
While young men were sleeping quietly who did not  
know their coming Plight.

When rockets would slam and exploded into the soft  
sandy Ground.  
If your name was written on it, you never heard that  
Round.

Some were unlucky, and some weren't Prepared,  
And every young man was equally Scared.

Their voices would quiver as they radioed the attack or  
tried to make Jest.

While 122's were falling, launched from a faraway Crest,  
The night sky was lit up a bright cherry Red.

Young men were heard to scream from a hospital Beds,  
Yesterday they had spoken of leaving that Place;  
Before the dawn broke, they met God face to Face.

At dawn, all could look and could clearly See  
The results of the battle which had been a Melee:  
Holes blasted in parts of a winding Road;  
Buildings peppered by the impact of the rockets spent  
Loads.

The places men slept were ripped and Torn,  
The bloodstains cried out:  
FROM THESE NO CHILD  
SHALL BEBORN.

The grim-reaper's thirst only partially Slaked  
While young men sat and waited for the next, he would Take.

The wait was short—a sniper's bullet found it's Mark—  
An Air Force sentry lay wounded and alone just before Dark.

I'm sure folks at home never heard of these Assaults;  
Probably too busy with a job or maybe their Thoughts.

Oh, if these things could only be Hyperbole...  
Wish it were so for many would still have their Sanity.

Alas, it is true, all that I've wrote, and now young men must  
Forbear.

With those that forgot them and never did Care;  
Now Hail the heroes of World War II, Korea, the Desert Shield  
and Desert Storm, are new national monuments.

While young men —now old—sit thinking Again,  
Will we be remembered as time passes By?  
No, indeed, except by those who served beside us, and by  
Almighty God way up in the Sky.

*Steven F. Ray*

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