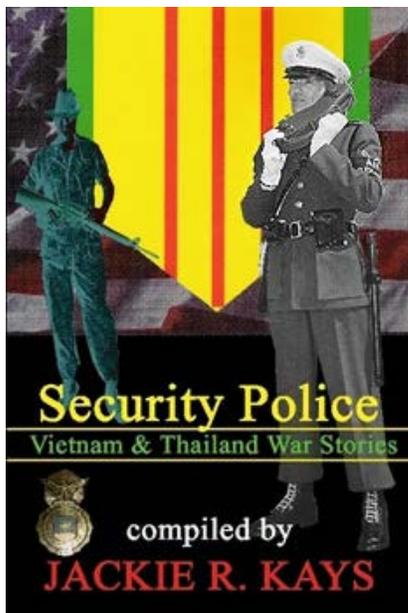


Security Police

Vietnam And Thailand War Stories

Compiled by Jackie R. Kays



Book Review,
by Don Poss.
VSPA Webmaster

Security Police, Vietnam & Thailand War Stories ([Click for Book Sales](#))

by [Jackie R. Kays](#), VSPA LM 366

★★★★ I have just finished reading Jackie Kays' latest book, "Security Police," for the *second* time. Every exploding page weaves the thirty stories about your war, my war, and our year in the gauntlet zone. You will easily find your war ... but a warning: you will *never* find your lost innocence.

As an avid book reader when I finish a good book I think about it being a *good read* and then move on. After reading "Security Police" I have thought often of the many stories by brother Air & Security Police who

served in Vietnam and Thailand during the war years. Stories like Silver Star winner Pete Piazza's that transport you from Travis AFB, to the war zone and stir dormant memories of your own.

The pages turn quickly and you find it is midnight again. Just one more page. You revisit your first night on perimeter, with flares ringing the base and the nearby hill with green and red tracers fencing like lasers. The countless times the base was pounded. And the payback. The distant glow of false dawn and flashes that lit the clouds like a plague. "*Not my war ... someone else's*" ... but then seconds later a whispering man-made thunder reverberates, and a mini quake through your boots teases that you are invited to the party. 155-Howitzers boomed H&I through the night ... and most every night.

You will relive the naïve *new-guy* feeling that you are young, invincible and will live forever. Through the stories of those decades ago, you again survive mortars, snipers, rockets, sappers, firefights, and pass to the next war zone feeling: people don't just die here, they are killed. Chapters flow like the months of a calendar, and you see the constant stream of bodies loaded on C-130's headed for Tân Sơn Nhứt and stateside. By now you realize you could be loaded on that plane by dawn. Every new story jogs a cobweb memory: sandbags, fortifying, snakes, choppers, F-4s, Sentry Dogs, marines, army, dead sappers, tanks, memorial ceremonies, ducks loaded with bombs, ammo dumps, aircraft bone yards, body parts, heat, rain, cold, sampans, K-9 burial grounds, mortars, bunkers, rockets, and barrels of "stuff" they used to clear the jungle from the perimeter, but said not to worry about it. It's all there; including the next war zone feeling where you believe you cannot survive another six months like those just passed. After a heavy mortar stand off attack you are told a close friend was just killed in action. Numb. Not possible. The next war zone feeling comes natural as the rain: an acceptance - *you will not survive this war*. That simple truth is a surprise, as that revelation somehow is a load lifted from you ... *fate is fate* ... nothing you can do about it ... and it doesn't matter.

The months like the pages fly as a decade is stolen from your youth. Then, like the writers, one night a crazy thought occurs that you just might make it out of here -- *no way* -- and you quickly dismiss it. The monsoon has returned and it is the same month you arrived. The rain

tattoos your helmet like gravel, and there it is: that idea pops back up and you find yourself thinking about what you will do back in the world when ... *if* ... you get there.

Every story has a twist to your year -- *was it only a year?* You saw some brave actions, and some foolish. You did not see any cowards because you were too busy crawling under your own helmet and trying to be one-with-the-mud. A brave man *may die only once*, and if so, then he was a damn fool who couldn't find his helmet or understand what was happening all around him. You were surprised when friends said you did a good job, but wondered why saving your own ass merited a backslap.

Then one day of glory the pages come alive as you toss your duffle bag over your shoulder heading for the freedom bird. You are positive Sarge will say there's a roster mistake but somehow you make it to the flight line and see that majestic civilian bird. You are certain it will get shot down and crash and burn before you fly over the beach. But somehow the flight attendant announces feet-wet, and you are absolutely astounded -- *holyyy-stuff!* Too Short to be Short! Sorry'bout that!

Then you are home and look up your old pals only to discover they are much more immature than you remembered. Somehow you feel twenty years older than them.

I will read [Security Police, Vietnam & Thailand War Stories](#) again, as you may -- it has given me a lot to think about and remember. If you were *there*, this book is for you.

Don Poss

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