

Demons in the Wire

Biên Hòa Air Base, Tet 1968

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Hell was in the Heavens...
Demons through the wire,
Bunker Hill 10 in silhouette,
immersed in rockets' fire.

Dog Handler Bob Press *Called TO ARMS!*
struck down and gravely wounded,
played dead throughout the night.
NVA and Viet Cong flowed over and
around his *body*, sowing demon's
mayhem and destruction.

Sentry Dog Diablo attacked the horde,
1,400 strong, his snarls and fearsome
bites inflicting ghastly wounds,
fought on until shot dead.

The enemy snared by sirens' call—
*Victory is Yours! The Fortress your grand
prize*—charged defender's gauntlet, the
slaughter roiled on.

Two enemy battalions attacked Biên
Hòa Air Base, victory seemed at hand...
Alas, the Air Force 3rd Security Police
executed a different deadly plan—

Like a great sea wall, the 3rd SPS broke
enemy's tsunami wave, Armageddon
ruled as they clashed and fought with
rifles and grenades.

All through the black night the sky
flamed alight with rockets' trails,
cannons, and tracers red and green.

By evening the 31st, 600 NVA lay
cursed...dead in open pits of unmarked
mass graves. Biên Hòa plans gone
awry; their widows would cry...
The Demons...had melted away.

"The night of Jan. 30-31, 1968, a hundred cities and more than 20 Air Bases were attacked simultaneously by some 84,000 enemy troops. Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, was a prime target. To capture it, enemy forces had to neutralize the two great Air Bases—Biên Hòa and Tân Sơn Nhứt—near the city. Two infantry battalions and a reinforced infantry CO were assigned the task of penetrating Biên Hòa's defenses and destroying US and VNAF aircraft and facilities. Their carefully planned surprise attack was to follow a heavy barrage of rocket and mortar fire."