

Dark Secrets

Vietnam's Brain Shrapnel; no easy road to tread

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Dark secrets of the war; *We all have them.*
Secrets never to tell, nor even whisper;
What happened, has happened--still happens.

Protect the memories of the innocent [*those back home*]...
the somewhat innocent [*he was a hero*]...
...the not so innocent [*what the ... just happened?*]--
the not innocent [*those who can't forget, live the dreams; locked the
brain-box and tried to toss the key*]--
Who am I to judge?

Write the letter to his parents,
like the one you hope someone will write for you:
... *He was a good and moral boy [except when he wasn't].*
... *Everyone liked him [except those that didn't]*
... *He never swore or said unkind words [more than anyone else] ...*
He never killed anyone [in cold blood]
... *I trusted him with my life--[not everyone did]*
... *He was a real hero.*
Write "Free" on the envelope... and toss it in the box.

Dark secrets, no easy path to tread,
don't step on the dream in the mind-fields ahead.
On point stalk the dark, at dawn set it right;
grasp the pad, lift the sheet, erase the night.

Keep your mouth shut, they wouldn't understand,
Take it-happened through the grave,
to heaven or hell, and
pity the veteran who
just rang the bell.

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*Dedicated to Vietnam War poet and author, Jackie Kays ("I am
forever honored, for I have marched with heroes!")*