

A Soldier's Reflection

The air was hot and harsh it took away my breath,
Fear tried to capture me as I stepped into a land of death.

The smells which overwhelmed were unknown to my senses,
Transported to Camp Evans surrounded by razor wire fences.

As I looked around I see eyes staring; seemed distant, so cold,
These were not men; but boys, this war had made them old.

Not me; I will never be like that, was the thought that came to
me.
I am not like them; their eyes so dim, faces worn, this I would
never be.

I looked at the tattered clothes, well worn boots, faces dirty as I
told my name.
They took so little interest of who I was but attentive, from
where I came.

Hoping I was from their hometown or somewhere within their
state,
They looked for something in common to share, beside a
common fate.

We fought beside each other in the jungle, or on a mountain
height.
We became more than brothers, willing to die for the other in a
fight.

It didn't take long to find out; don't take stock to the color of a
friend.
It didn't matter your ethnic birth we would become brothers to
the end.

No one talked of attaining metals or prestigious awards to win,
For the secret of making men heroes, is found within a friend.

We eased through the heat of the jungle and trudged the mud
of monsoon,
We quietly stalked through the jungle and lay in wait beneath
the moon.

Eye seeking, ears listening, smells in the air on our senses we
must rely,
For we knew if we made even the smallest mistake someone
could surely die.

I stared deep into our jungle home straining to see what the
threat would be,
To lead them into the depth of fear; into a perilous pit of what
you can not see.

Was it the endless hours without sleep, or consuming
vigilance of each day?
Could it have been the events of trauma around us, truly I can
not say.

Hours turned to days, days into weeks; as time passed I had
began the change
This land had changed the boy I was; the new guys looked at
me so strange.

Knowing their brightness will fade away and this person you
will not know.
I remembered my thoughts as I saw their eyes, innocence still
in their soul.

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Written for my brothers of Charlie Company 2/506th
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