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In part one of the Patriots book, all of the stories "caught my eye", as all of them were very interesting and all had lessons to be learned from them. The George Watkins story probably had the most effect on me, and I think had some really great lessons in it, however, the story that really jumped out at me and caught my eye the most was that of Tran Thi Gung. The first reason that this story jumped out at me was the fact that she was the only woman in her unit, and how hard that must have been on her. She was out here with a bunch of men doing just as good of a job as them, if not better. The second thing that stood out for me was when they were describing her, how tiny she was. It just shows to me that the Vietcong didn't care really as much about training, or who they had fighting for them, as long as they had huge numbers fighting for them, (something you read earlier in Bernard Trainor's passage, about how the North Vietnamese "pecked away" at us). Another reason why Gung's size really jumped out at me was because of her size compared to the size of American soldiers, she said "I felt very scared and very nervous because I was just a small girl and the Americans were so big" (pg. 16). Another thing that stood out for me in this story was how easily this war could ruin family's, and how easily it could change someone's life. Gung's father was killed when she was a child, just because he was a Viet Cong. Things like this would ruin a family, and deaths in the war would be a heartbreak for all the soldier's families back home. In Gung's case, her father's death caused her to be filled with longing for revenge. It changed her life, the whole reason she joined the guerrillas is because of that event. It makes me wonder how many of the Vietnamese joined the war because it affected their family in a negative way. On the other side I wonder how many Americans joined the war because they were "fighting for their country" even though they had no idea of the horrors that the war would bestow upon them. The last thing that stood out to me in her story was when she recalled killing an American soldier, and how his comrades rushed in to his aid, and sat mourning their lost friend, and how the Viet Cong used this as a tactic to slaughter more Americans. It shows me the bond that fellow American soldiers shared. I'm not saying the Vietnamese soldiers didn't share this bond, but I think they were trained to not let their emotions get in the way on the battlefield, while a lot of our soldiers since it was their first time at war, they couldn't prevent things like this from happening. I think most of these stories, if not all, are trustworthy. I think some events may vary by how they were perceived by the people fighting

the war. But I think for the most part, things they talk about are truthful and did indeed happen. They were there, they know how things happened. Sure, it has been a long time since the war, but something like the Vietnam War, is something you never forget, although they may like to, I think the events of the war are burned in the minds of all soldiers who are still alive today.

In part two of the Patriots book, the story I found most disappointing to me was the story of Vo Nguyen Giap. His story not only disappointed me with the content it contained, but with the overall attitude he had. I felt his story had not so much information, but "ifs". If the Americans had done this they would've had a chance to win the war. I also think his general attitude towards the Americans was just ultra negative, I don't expect someone who fought against us in the Vietnam War to have a positive attitude and like us, I just didn't like the story because of how he talked about us. He also talks about the North Vietnamese President's final days. This, along with the rest of the story, did not have much information in it that I found interesting. It was more of just where they met and his final words.

I didn't know if you just wanted positive lessons that I had seen from only part two, or part one included. As I had seen some positive moments from a story in part one, I am including those as well. The first thing I read that I think really showed some good was the bond between the American soldiers. "I killed an American. After he fell, some of his friends came rushing to his aid. They held his body and cried." (pg. 17). The bond these men formed in such a hard time of war is incredible. It shows me, that if they can form such a friendship in a time like that, there is no excuse why everyday people cant form a bond that strong with people they have known for much longer. The fact that these men wept for their dead comrades in the middle of a heated battle is really something special. The next thing I read that really showed me will power, was in the story of George Watkins. He had lost both his legs and both his eyes in the war. "She cooks and cleans the house, but I take care of all my personal needs--getting on and off the couch, into bed, and going to the bathroom." (pg 21). When I read this I thought about what I would do in his situation, and how hard it would be not to just give up and roll over. He has the will to continually take care of his needs even though he is blind and has no legs. I honestly cannot say I would do the same thing. The heart he shows, and the willpower he shows is something I should strive to have someday. The last positive lesson that really jumped out at me was from the same story (George Watkins story). He says in the story " I'll tell you what's surprising. I didn't think about my legs. Legs was a second thought. For some reason my sight meant

a lot more than my legs.” (pg. 24). The reason why this spoke to me is because it really got me thinking how much we fail to appreciate the little things, and how much we underestimate the importance of everyday things such as sight, or our senses. I couldn’t imagine living without my sight, but I never really thought about it until I had read that. I guess the lesson from that would be to not underestimate and under appreciate the simple everyday things in life.

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