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Part One

Picking just one story to talk about was a tough decision for me because of the amount of emotion and difference in opinion within each story. So I decided to go with the one that burned an image into my head that I just can't get rid of.

Early in the attack George Tuan, one of our Vietnamese interpreters, was running like mad to his assigned mortar pit. Partway there a 57-millimeter round caught him right at the knees and took his legs off. He just kept running on the stumps. Within thirty seconds he was dead.

I can't imagine having to see something like that let alone relive it and speak of it again after all those years, and to have close friends die in your arms after being unable to save them. That is why I chose Roger Donlon's story, the first American in the Vietnam War to receive the Medal of Honor. The way he recollects those events in such vivid detail makes me feel like no matter how much time has passed those memories will be burned into his mind. I do know that after time has passed details of memories can change some and a person's opinions can have a sway on how they remember an event but the amount of detail that he gave gives the feeling of actually being there with him all over again like those memories have never faded for him. His account was very factual to me because when I read his story I felt more like I was watching a

movie other than seeing it as if I were him. As I was reading I felt like I could look around and see all the stuff going on around me or look over his shoulder. The fact that he gave numbers of men and talked about parts of the story that he only found out later, such as when they were being attacked on the 4th of July and they called for air support, that took much longer to get to them on account of the hangers being locked and the planes not being fueled, makes me feel like he talked to other people about this story and has multiple accounts of the different things that happened within his story.

Part Two

I was very disappointed in Chester Cooper's story, not in him but the events he encountered with the leaders who were involved in the war. Just the complete lack of respect for the people who were trying to create peace by negotiation; for example when he met with the Norwegian ambassador and was going to send him to Hanoi to deliver any message the US wanted. "The only condition he made was that we not bomb the airport the day he was coming into Hanoi." When Cooper went to check to see if there would be a problem and in fact they were scheduled to do a bombing he tried to talk them out of it for the sake of the negotiation and no one listened or, from my point of view, even cared.

I didn't really consider any of the stories, as a whole, as hopeful. There were small things about the stories or about the speakers themselves that spoke of goodness and potential for good. Chester Cooper seemed like a good man trying to help with the negotiations and Le Lieu Browne; a woman working in a man's

world just trying to help and live in peace. I also thought that it was really sweet that through all the bitterness involving the war that she still found love with Malcolm Browne, a journalist whom she frequently had to call in for her boss to, "chew him out."

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