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History 195

Journal Entry # 2

Between the 14 stories that we have read, there were a few that separated themselves amongst the others. So far the short stories have been extremely factual and interesting. The specific story that hit a sore spot and left me questioning how these brave soldiers, went through something, as heart wrenching as this War, was Phan Xuan Sing and his reflection "all my ancestors are buried here."

The unit was located in a very secluded area, where the fisher man loved to go out, at anytime and fish. It was a quiet night and all of a sudden they heard something similar to gunshots, specifically like some one was firing off rounds. So the unit did not hesitate and counter fired, until they heard no more return fire. After a few minutes the area was quite sound and they decided to discover who was firing at them. When they caught sight and learned that their enemies were innocent fisherman out hoping to get their catch of the day, they were devastated. A large amount of bystanders were killed and several were wounded.

This story was quite the eye opener. I couldn't imagine being in Phan Xuan Sing unit and discovering that we had just made a mistake of hurting and killing innocent people. But then again, these fishermen might have been notified to stay aside from this area and to possible fish in another spot and decided to disregard their notification and went on.

In addition to this short story, was another that Phan Xuan Sing reflected back on. There were several fire free zones, and if anyone was in vicinity they could be fired upon. So one day their unit was exploring an area in which they heard was deserted and possible enemies could be within the radius. As the troop investigated they stumbled upon an old thatched house. Inside was an elder couple living here and the unit immediately told them to evacuate and not to come back, and they did so. A few days later the unit was in the same area and discovered that the couple was back in their place, so Phan Xuan Sing decided to ask why. The man had replied " All my ancestors are buried here and this is our land, we are not going to leave."

Hearing the elder couple say that they, basically plan on being buried within their house by the war or not was devastating. I couldn't imagine having that much bravery to stand tall against a war I had no control over, but then again who did. Reflecting on what the old man said, He was standing up for his ancestors, and felt that this was the necessary repercussion to do. Everyone was fighting for their country and innocent bystanders were affected by something that seemed unnecessary.

Taking a look back and reflecting, it seems there were very apparent negative aspects in each story, but if you looked beyond the negative, you could sense in some of the speakers stories positive emotion. For example, one insert was talking about luring in

the Americans by killing one, and they would all run to see if the soldier was wounded, and then the opponent would take advantage, and would kill all the Americans together. In correlation with the tactics, they would snatch the artillery and practice. In the story the speaker said, this was how he learned to shoot every weapon on the battlefield. This story overall, was devastating, but in the speakers tone seemed like it was a bit apparent, that this was something enlighten during the war.

In a lot of stories you hear the authors talking about guilt and not knowing why they were fighting, and on the other end of the spectrum you also hear people saying "It was war, wouldn't you shoot me if you saw me holding a weapon and pointing it at you?"

After the author making that statement, I contemplated if I felt that way. To put it raw, it's life or death, and you have no decision if you want to be in this war or not (Since the soldiers were drafted). I am not agreeing or disagreeing, but when I look at it, in that perspective, I could honestly agree with the author.

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