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60/100

Assignment One Catherine Smith

In the midst of all of the harrowing accounts contained in the book Patriots, I found the story of Bernard Trainor to be among the most fascinating. His experiences seem unique and he tells his tale eloquently, in a manner that inspires empathy. Trainor served two stints in Vietnam, while also working as an undercover CIA agent. Recalling a time when he and his fellow soldiers shot up a hospital for lepers, one can hear the regret seeping through his written words. I feel that Trainor's personality is easily calculated by examining his way of expressing himself, and he comes across as credible and forthright. I believe that although his stories are clouded by the fear and confusion he surely experienced while overseas, his anecdotes still retain facts and wisdom rarely seen in recollections of war.

As someone who would like to believe that everyone on earth carries with them a massive potential to bring happiness to others and beauty into this world, it was difficult for me to read the story told by NGO Vinh Long. This man has witnessed countless acts of evil in his lifetime, filling me with apprehension and horror. It is hard for me to believe that some humans have souls while reading about a man whose father was brutally tortured, who witnessed his own people starving to death, who saw, as a small boy, the bodies of those the French mindlessly slaughtered floating in ponds.

After reading Long's account, I was staggered by the amazing things a man or woman can conquer when they set their mind to

To be capable of seeing things I cannot begin to wrap my mind around, and yet still move on and love, live freely, have faith in those around you, makes me feel hopeful. The human heart can conquer even the most horrific of experiences, and this inspires faith in my heart. If ever I go through something that seems insurmountable I know I can make it through, with enough determination.

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