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Part 1

TRAN THI GUNG

The story that caught my attention the most was Tran Thi Gung's Story. The first thing that caught my attention was the name "TRAN THI GUNG." This made me realize the person wasn't an American. I've never heard an experience of someone that wasn't an American. Another thing that caught my attention was the quote from the very beginning of the story, "I was stuck in a tunnel for seven days." This made me imagine being stuck underground for an entire week, never knowing when you're getting out or even if you'll live to get out. The biggest surprise to me was finding that Gung was a woman. When I think of war, especially Vietnam, I think of men at war, not women. So I was already pulled into this story from the first few lines.

I believe that Gung has a lot more experience than most people that were involved in the Vietnam War. Gung talks about her father being killed and believing that her mission in life was to continue her father's cause and to revenge his death. Her father was a Viet Cong and after his death she joined the guerillas. Because Gung was such a small girl during Vietnam, it's really interesting to hear that she had a lot of courage and she stayed strong even though she was scared. "...But I felt very scared and very nervous because I was just a small girl and the Americans were so big." It surprised me that Gung would do whatever she had to do. Right after she killed an American, she would wait until the other Americans carried their body away and then she would grab their weapons. She could also use just about any weapon on the battlefield.

I look up to Gung in a way. She was a very brave and courageous woman. Most

women couldn't do the things that she did. She was a very good leader and she was awarded a decoration with the title "Valiant Destroyer of American Infantrymen," among many other awards. This shows me that she was a very amazing woman, and a very brave soldier to do all of the things that she did. Though it was Viet Cong, Gung was doing what she was brought up and taught to do. She was fighting for her people.

I do believe that Gung was very reliable with the story that she told. First of all she has a picture of herself when she was younger, with a rifle in her hand and her right finger on the trigger. She also had a thick belt on that held cartridges of ammunition and grenades. This picture shows me that she is very credible with the story that she told. I believe that because Gung was there, in Vietnam, she has far more credibility than anyone that wasn't involved in the war. I've been told many things about Vietnam, from people, or even history books but, I don't think anyone is more credible than someone who actually experienced the inside of Vietnam. No one can understand it like they can.

Many, many years have passed since the Vietnam War, so some people might think that those who were involved might have forgotten some things. They may think that they over react the things that took place there. I believe that, yes, it has been quite some time since the Vietnam War but, someone who experienced the war, someone who was standing right there while it was all going on, something that was so big and unforgettable; how could they forget that? There are big things that happen to us in our lives, unforgettable experiences and I don't believe someone that was very involved in the Vietnam War could forget or even sway their story of their experience in even the least bit.

Part 2

LUYEN NGYUEN

Luyen Nguyen's story disappointed me the most out of any of the other stories. It

really made me sad to read about how he was so mistreated by the Americans. “The U.S. Advisors told the commandos—we hired you, we pay you, you should obey us and ignore the Vietnamese.” The Americans and the Vietnamese were supposed to be working together, not against each other. From reading Nguyen’s story it sounds like the Americans had no respect for the Vietnamese, and that’s what they were being taught. I had absolutely no idea that this went on during the Vietnam War. It seems as if the American’s thought they were in charge. They were taught they could do whatever they wanted and the Vietnamese couldn’t stop them. Also, the Americans got treated way better than the Vietnamese; better pay better food, more freedom. That disappoints me the most. They should have been treated equally, especially when they’re fighting against the Viet Cong, together.

In Nguyen’s story he speaks a lot about his time in Prison. Nguyen was abused a lot during his imprisonment. They kept him in a dark cell and shackled him all of the time. They wanted him to declare that he was a puppet of the U.S., a henchman, and that the U.S. invaded Vietnam to dominate. But Nguyen stayed strong and loyal to his army. “But I refused to acknowledge these things. I tried to keep my loyalty to the army.” Three months after Nguyen left his family; his wife was informed that he was missing. She thought he was dead. Nguyen had a chance to write to his family but, he refused. He didn’t want to make his family sad again. They had already dealt with the pain of losing him. “All of them believe I’m dead and their tears are dry. I don’t want to make them cry again.” I thought this was very selfless of Nguyen. Even though he missed his family terribly and he was miserable where he was he was thinking about their feelings and not his own. His wife became very poor while he was gone and she remarried. When she found out that Nguyen was still alive she divorced her second husband and waited for him to return to her. Even though Nguyen was away from his family for 20 some years, he still had hope that he would one day be with them again. I think it’s amazing how

courageous Nguyen was. He could have given up at any time and stopped all of the torture from happening. He could have just lied and said he was a henchman. Even though he was mistreated by the Americans, tortured in prison, and missed his family dearly, he stayed loyal to his army and only hoped for the best. I believe Nguyen was a very devoted commando and he ended up getting what he deserved.

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