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I think Clark Dougan's story was a good example of a turning point in the war, and in more ways than one. For one it represented a personal turning point for the man himself. In reading the editorial about his school acquaintance, it brought the war home to him in a personal way. Prior to seeing it he was aware of the war and of people from his hometown being lost to it; "We've just received the very sad news that Terry Kilbane, a marine lance corporal, has been killed in Vietnam. Let's please observe a moment of silence." But it wasn't really someone he knew even a little. Reading about Greg and remembering the discussion they had had in their homeroom the year before made the war a more personal thing to him. He realized how easy it could have been him in those shoes, and the whole thing was less a faraway thing and more right in front of him, then it was before.

nice
start

The second turning point was that of the country. Articles like the editorial written about Greg were being written in newspapers and more and more conservative papers. The youth of the country were being stricken down in a war over seas that many people couldn't relate to or stand behind. Clark said after reading the editorial about his school mate, "I think that was the moment when "Middle America" really turned against the war." And it makes sense. Your average Joe American was just seeing casualty after casualty, but not seeing any real benefit to our country to warrant the loss of lives. When even the conservative papers were asking why it had to have had an effect on their audiences. "I think a lot of World War 2 vets who had been sitting around their kitchen tables saying, 'You've got to fight for your country,' were starting to say, 'Fuck this. It's not worth Greg Fischer's life, or his buddies life.' Or maybe they weren't saying it, but they were starting to feel it."

water

Le Minh Khue's story struck me as a good example of an ending. Though she talks in her story of the end of the war that is not the ending I was as moved by. There were two endings that jumped out at me in this piece. The first is the ending of innocence in a sense, the way the war was romanticized for her at such a young age that she lied about her age so she could become a part of the youth brigade. That in doing so her and her peers grew up so quickly and found "relations in wartime were always temporary." The way she expresses how they just accepted that to be how it would be struck me as a death of their innocence somehow. How they dealt with death and bombings daily as children. Moving dead bodies and carrying ammunition around at such a young physical age, had to mature them quickly. Imagining a young girl facing down an incoming rocket gives me chills. They never had a chance to be children.

AWK

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The second ending is harder for me to describe. It was in her disappointment after the war had ended. How her expectations of the cities and people were not met. How Danang had been reduced to a commercial pit that was little more than another impoverished city once the consumer products were gone. Her disappointment in how plastic the city had become. How the unity was gone and in its place a craving for shopping had taken its place.

That all strikes me as worst ending possible for someone like her. All those years of fighting in hope for the end of the war, only to find herself disappointed in the people around her when it finally came to pass. The way the desires of the people changed, the

sentence
fragments

way the landscape changed. Each of those things an ending in its own right. The country was left changed completely. All the way down to each individual person. And that is what I got from this story. A young girl who lost her parents and was raised by family members to fight for the ideas they influenced her with, who at a young age took up the mantle herself, exchanging her childhood for a place amongst those fighting, and who upon surviving through to the end of the war was left with a foreign landscape, and foreign culture over the land she was fighting for. I found her story a powerful and very telling one. And I was sad for her endings.

In Part 2,
your thoughts
rambled (as you yourself
said it was difficult to
describe)

I was still able to "get"
your points.

Part 1 was cleaner
& more concise.

Much better than
Assignment #1