

We will never forget...

The stench of dead bodies, the look on the face of a dying Marine, the wounded children, the sound of incoming, the red dirt of Khe Sanh, night ambush, elephant grass, malaria pills, rice patties, napalm, the impact of being hit by an enemy round, the sound of an air strike, calling in med-i-vacs, the silence before a fire fight, the prayers to God, leeches, the size of the rats, landing in a "hot" LZ, sweeping through a vil, graffiti on helmets, willey-pete, piling up dead gooks 6 ft. high, bug juice, the 23rd Psalm, the ace of spades, homesickness, the taste of C-rats, calling in arty, round-eyed girls, when one bandage was never enough, being pinned down, memories of home, the Tet Offensive, humpin' the bush, short timer's calendar, the motto of the 3rd Battalion/26th Marines (3/26), calling in choppers, removing the bandages, the smell of Charlie, photos from home, walking point, the monsoons, pungy pits, the sound of shrapnel flying through the air, R&R, watching a buddy get blown away, pulling the trigger, burning the shitters, booby traps, crossing in the open, digging in, mosquitoes, combat, bagging sand, the wall, the jungle heat, Da Nang, Zippo raids, crawling inside a flack jacket, being afraid for 13 months, the welcome home, gook haircuts, the faces, counting the kills, the gear we humped, snakes, the nicknames, the letters from home, counting the days, being short, entering a hooch, beetle nut, fire missions, picking up what's left, the taste of canteen water, tunnel rats, sit-reps, trip wires, salt pills, mine sweeps, thousand pounders, Phu Bai, the meaning of "Hard Corps," body bags, Christmas 1967, what not to write in the letters sent home, the shots, interrogating enemy prisoners, Ham & Limas, standing watch, bummin' smokes, our last night in country, Malayan whips, building bunkers, Hanoi Hanna, the flight home and...American ignorance.

*John Lombardo -
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