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## Untitled

Ashley Danielle Siebert

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**PICTURES OF VIETNAM**  
**(for Mom and Dad)**

Michael Raffaele  
Featured Poet

Today my eyes scrolled through photos older than my body  
And my mind traveled back three decades an hour.  
I put on hundreds of different faces and cried hundreds of different tears  
With black and white hands projected out to me through an old war scrapbook.

First I arrived on the Cambodia shore-  
With the New Testament strapped to my helmet  
And the rifled song of war stringing my back-  
Pointing to the clouded sky amped up for the barracks-  
Kissing my stripes with the stars of America on my forehead.

Then I found myself crouched fetal position on a tiled De Nang market square-  
Attached by the fingertips to my little bui doi brother  
Who rested cribbed in an empty bullet box on New Years Eve.

And I played tug of war with men I've never met on a blue beach in Nha Trang-  
With huddled tribal children giving my foreign lens the peace sign-  
Framed by the camouflage of my soldiered arms-  
The hail of my photo lens now interchangeable with the flicker of my gunfire.

The afternoon I slept in the sun under the new remnants of an old Hindu temple-  
My head rested on a warm gatling whose firepower I can't even put into words.

I was exposed to a fatigued march through the central province of My Son-  
Where I heard my boy cry from his bed laying so many still lives away from me-  
While waves and waves across my fathers yawned through protests of peace  
As I raised a lively lily to their hollowed barreled eyes and begged them to bring me home.

**UNTITLED** Ashley Danielle Siebert