

Classic Poetry Series

Eric Torgersen

- poems -

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The Story Of White Man Leading Viet Cong Patrol

The Story of White Man Leading Viet Cong Patrol
-AP Dispatch, Des Moines Register, August 4, 1968

The slain enemy resembled
an American Marine
who was 18 years old
when he disappeared.

The violent episode
was one of the strangest
in this strange war.

*

For a moment
the two young men--
the American Marine
and the white man
in the uniform of the enemy--
stared at each other.

"He had an AK 47
automatic rifle
but he just looked at me."

Gordon fired
after a moment's hesitation.

*

Several of the Marines suspect
that the unknown white man
whom they call "the Caucasian"
could have shot first
but deliberately held fire.

At the debriefing
everyone was afraid
to say what they had seen.

Anonymous submission.

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