

FADE IN:

Marines pinned down on the side of a hill. They are trying to find an opening to move forward.

GEORGE on camera

Wounded Marines waiting for aid as battle continues.

CG overlay: **Accounts from the battlefield said the Marines came under withering fire when they landed from helicopters and charged up to take a hill.**

GEORGE on camera

Heavy fighting continues.

CG overlay: **The Leathernecks met constant resistance as they moved over the land seeking to drive the Viet Cong from their fortified positions and caves.**

GEORGE on camera

Marine heavy artillery firing.

Navy Corpsman tends to the dying.

CG overlay: **The Marines responded with their heavy weapons and later called in air strikes to silence Viet Cong positions.**

Marine jets dropping napalm.

Dead and wounded on quiet battlefield.

FADE IN:

SFX: intense small arms fire, people yelling, the sounds of battle.

GEORGE: **But I encountered a lot of heavy fighting north of Da Nang along the Demilitarized Zone.**

SFX (cont'd): intense small arms fire, people yelling, the sounds of battle.

GEORGE: **But I remember this battle where a lot of Marines were killed, I mean lot.**

SFX (cont'd): intense small arms fire, people yelling, the sounds of battle.

GEORGE: **I was exhausted and tired and scared to death. I had never seen death before. I had never seen violence. I had never heard artillery, mortars.**

SFX: Artillery being fired

SFX: Low flying Marine jets overhead.

SFX: Gunfire comes to a halt.

SFX: Quiet of the battlefield, and helicopters can be heard approaching.

CG (overlay): **The Marines estimate that more than 600 enemy were killed, while U.S. officials said that American casualties were "light," given the size of the battle.**

Helicopters arrive, taking out the most seriously wounded.

Remote dirt runway in northern South Vietnam. A few C-130 cargo planes can be seen parked in the distance.

GEORGE on camera

C-130 on the ground

C-130 engines start.

Partial interior view of "empty" cargo hold.

GEORGE on camera

Many body bags in cargo hold.

C-130 rolls on to runway, speeds up and lifts off

GEORGE on camera

SFX: Helicopters landing and leaving.

SFX: Quiet, gentle sounds around dusk.

GEORGE (VO): **There was a dirt airstrip at this hell hole called Quang Tri where I would go out and...**

GEORGE (cont'd): **...try to hitch-hike a ride back to Saigon. And I ran into a pilot, and he was a pilot of a C-130. I said, "Can you give me a lift back to Saigon?" He said, "Sure."**

GEORGE (VO cont'd): **So, he and the crew went into the cockpit...**

SFX: C-130 engines start.

GEORGE (VO, cont'd): **...and, so I go into the cargo hold...I'm kind of, in my mind writing my story...**

GEORGE (cont'd): **...kind of here's going to be my lede.....and I look around and I see all these green bags, and ah, scores of them. And I was the only passenger, the only one alive...**

GEORGE (VO, cont'd): **...It suddenly hit me that all these (pause) are dead (pause) Marines (pause) I just kind of froze.**

SFX: Plane's engines wind up and begin take off. Rattle of plane's interior as it speeds along runway.

GEORGE (cont'd): **And I realized they'd all been killed in the fighting that I had covered... (pause)**

SFX: Inside plane, rumble of engines

Body bags in cargo hold of plane.

C-130 flies higher into the early evening sky

GEORGE on camera

Plane gets smaller and disappears into the night sky.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

A bullet-riddled school house in middle of a South Vietnamese hamlet.

Other views of the school house, the children, the Navy medic, the Marine guards, and the hamlet itself.

CG overlay: In the middle of this hamlet is a run-down, bullet-riddled school house.

CG overlay: During the day, the schoolhouse serves as a medical aid station run by a 20 year old Navy medic.

CG overlay: The plan is for the villagers and Marines to rebuild the schoolhouse and begin classes again.

CG overlay: Sixteen U.S. Marines guard it around the clock. The Viet Cong fire at it by night.

Marines on patrol

GEORGE (VO cont'd):...and I knew that most of them were young people, 18 to 21.

(pause)

They were being taken back to the military morgue in Saigon, in preparation for the return home.

(pause)

GEORGE: I'm thinking, right now as we're flying out of here, somebody is getting that dreaded knock on the door in Des Moines, Iowa or Pittsburgh. A Marine and a chaplain are showing up at that home to say, "We're sorry to inform you your son was killed."

SFX: Evening quiet.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

SFX: Voices of children playing.

SFX: Ambient sound as suggested by the images.

SFX: Explosion, off screen, of a mine.