A VIETNAM VETERAN’S QUEST

STILL…

NO AMERICA! **This is not a request for a parade. It is simply a letter to you from me, your downtrodden son. I’ve been thinking about you for years. I want to share my feelings with you now. To my country, the United States of America, I write these words. Listen to me as I tunnel back through time America. I’m in search of healing to quite my soul. I pray that you will understand why I need to reveal a footprint of my heart.**

AMERICA! **You denied me the identity of a warrior! You denied me the glory of a victorious Army returning from the battlefield of a long and lonely war. The home of the brave called me a coward for fighting in what was called an unjust and immoral war! Our Grand Lady by the sea hung her head in shame and refused to accept her tattered son! Her guiding torch betrayed me; I was abandoned and stood alone!**

AMERICA! **I sought relief for my sorrow in my soul and I found my Gethsemane. I cried in agony for the healing of my spirit. My tears soon became sobs of bitterness as I became aware of the depth of your deceitful heart! I prayed for your understanding but your heart was hardened by your ill-fated deeds. You didn’t even notice me America! Rejected I mended my wounded heart with steel and sealed it with the welding bead of rage. My fire for life was extinguished. I was lost in the darkness of your accusations and damned for being loyal to my country!**

AMERICA! **My bewildered stare was ignored, I was forgotten and swept aside, as if buried alive! My body rots with smoldering hate! My burial wreath is made from the wilted weeds of your neglect! America, you pay homage to the Unknown Soldier lying in his tomb. Why do I lie in an unmarked grave? Where is my honor? Where is my dignity? Where is your respect for me? Why do you label me as that crazy vet? What happened to your great compassion America? Where is your immense concern that once flooded this land of fifty states?**

AMERICA! **Do you recognize these words? You were the mother of exiles - but you wouldn’t sanction me! You are the liberty of the world - yet I remain imprisoned yearning to breathe free! I am your own tired and your own poor. I’m the wretched refuse on your shore to teeming shore. I’m a soldier deserted by his people. I’m the forsaken Veteran of your Vietnam War!**

AMERICA! **Your silent lips are thin and cold, the blue in your blood chills my bones. You wear a blindfold like Justice, your older Sister! Why don’t you want to look at me? Don’t you see that you carry the same scale? Is it visible only to me? Look at the scale and you will see that it’s not balanced, you keep the lead weight of arrogance and selfishness on one end, and on the other, the weightless feather of unconcern for the defenders of your freedom!**

AMERICA! **You stand indicted for your refusal to shine your light on me. You enlighten the world yet you keep me in the dark and feed me bullshit! What do you mean it don’t mean nothing? Where is your golden door America? Where are your** **loving words, your impassioned face and the golden beauty of your reflecting flame? Your mighty torch glows ever dimmer!**

AMERICA! **Your mild eyes are but hollows as your enchanted look of love fades to black. You have the look of the blind, the look of the lost. When I came home… no! When I returned from Vietnam your DEROS insured that I came back alone, no one was waiting and no one seemed to care. I didn’t see the red, white and blue waving in the air. Years later I just broke down! Your lack of affection finally cut deep into my spirit and weakened my body. I shuffled around confused and like a defeated enemy I passed through the gates of depression and entered the world of despair! I was sent to live in the land of Nod, I don’t know why…**

AMERICA! **In the land of misery where I live now I met Legions of American Veterans just like me! All suffering from the broken words; it don’t mean nothing! At night we pray; Lord, I lay me down to sleep, I wish I may, I wish I might, get the wish I wish tonight…Please God, no nightmare tonight!**

AMERICA! **The chain of slavery lies with its broken shackle at your feet, I drag around the ball and chain of addiction; it relieves the pain of living in a nightmare! I live in deserted buildings trying to figure it out, when I go to your zoo all you do is stick me with your Torazine!**

AMERICA! **You displayed countless yellow ribbons around the country when you paraded the Hostages throughout the land and showed them to the world. I watched the evening news with anger! Hot tears of rage began falling from my eyes. Hostility brewed in my heart and spilled forth from my mouth! America, you have the arctic coldness flowing through your veins! Why didn’t you long for me? Where was my welcome? I was your son too… DAMN YOU!**

AMERICA! **Uncle Sam will listen to you; tell him that I want to come home too. My body seems older that my forty years, why am I behind the times? Who am I America? You tell me, I don’t know any more, I feel like a prisoner in the land of the free! You’ve made me the tumbleweed of your shame; I’m** **detached from the root of life and blown about aimlessly by the callous winds of your indifference!**

AMERICA! **You accused me of doing wrong; your snide remarks and the smirk on your face made me want to strike out! I wanted to hurt you so bad, you just don’t know. I wanted to blow you away…as far away as you blew me with your rejection! Instead I withdrew and hid within myself; you call it alienation, I call it protection!**

AMERICA! **I’m tired of the guilt trip you take me on; I can’t even deal with the guilt within me! My loneliness inside gets harder to bare. Anxieties quicken my breath as thoughts of tomorrow come without hope. Death lingers in my mind from time to time…Free at last! Yes, free at last! I’m just so tired of the sunburst in my mind that makes me lift my arms to protect myself; I barely escape the blast of death! I remember the seconds of terror that seem to last forever. Why do they intrude and unravel my mind? Will I ever be free?**

AMERICA! **I seek my fellow brothers, they help sort things out, and just like in Nam, they care! Who else wants to understand the bum rap we brothers share? Who else is willing to take the time? Do you, America? I remember marching as a recruit in boot camp to the shouts of “Kill – kill - VC, kill - kill - VC!” Every time my heart beat it made me hate, “Gook! Gook! Stick around! Don’t run away, we need you in our body count!” What the hell, they weren’t real people anyway! Were they…? Is anybody listening out there? Do you even care?**

AMERICA! **You say I’m a walking time bomb waiting to explode, I disagree. If you knew who I was we’d all be free! Look at my tears America, they’re only frozen in time, they seek the fire of your passion, America! I need your warm breath on my soul. Your tender embrace would melt my sorrow and clear the redness from my eyes. I want to lay my head on your bosom America!**

AMERICA! **I want to cry out my pain, why am I so afraid? Take off your blinders of judgment and look at me. Hey! Wait a minute! I wonder, have you been crying? Why? Could it be for me? Is that why you have the blindfold on, to hide your tears from me? Could you be in pain too? Is guilt eating away at you? Are you depressed and lonely too? Please talk to me America.**

AMERICA! **Where are you? Can you hear me? I see you walking towards me but you’re still to for away; I can’t make you out clearly, what is it that you carry? Are the heat waves in my mind creating a hopeless mirage? Or are you the oasis of my daydreams? Are you bringing the cool, refreshing waters of hope to redeem my soul? America, I’ve waited so long, come quickly!**

AMERICA! **My motherland, oh that you could show me your true heart! The tender and compassionate heart that is still worth dying for! The ice sheet between us would crack in half. My frozen tears would melt into the softly falling rains of spring! They would become tears of joy! Your comfort would wash away my bitterness and my hate. I yearn for your blessing, America! Has a sliver of my grief pierced your heart? Will it trigger your love for me once again?**

AMERICA! **Do you remember when your old and rusty heart was in need of repair? Who do you think helped restore your copper beauty? My lady did the face lift and your sparkling new clothes soften your heart? When will it be my turn? When will you restore me to the table of your grace? I’m so tired of running.**

AMERICA! **You provided for my family when you taught me how to make war; will you provide for them once more? They don’t need much, a little bit of love will do. You see, now I need to learn how to live in peace, will you teach me how to do that too? America… can we let this thing between us lay? Can we let go and let God work it out? I ask you now, will you walk with me? Will you stand by me? Will you support me as I try to untangle the string of thoughts and feelings hidden in the yarn called Vietnam? Will you help me to recover and soothe the anguished spirit I left behind?**

AMERICA! **My Purple Mountains Majesty, I didn’t drop your precious flag! For your freedom I will always fight! My Anthem is always on my lips! I will always defend your colors, the flag of my beloved** **United States! You see, my home, my home sweet home, I STILL LOVE THEE!**

**SKYFALL**

**This is the end hold your breath and count to ten. Feel the earth move and then hear my heart burst again.**

**For this is the end I’ve drowned and dreamt this moment so overdue, I owe them, swept away I’m stolen.**

**Sky fall is where we started, ten thousand miles away when worlds collided and days were dark. You may have my number you can take my name but you will never have my heart.**

**Where you go I go what you see I see. I know I’ll never be me without the security of your loving arms keeping me from harm, put your hand in my hand and we will stand when the sky falls.**

**Let the sky fall, when it crumbles we will stand tall or we will all go down together at sky fall...**

**Written and sung by Adele London.** 