

Camel "Drafted"

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Nude's thoughts were interrupted by a knock at the door. The postman muttered something about wishing he could go too and handed over a yellow envelope. It was a command long overdue that called for healthy, young men.

In reply to your request,
please find...
I hereby protest.
To the ways and means you use
you know...
I cannot refuse.

So I'll take this vow
of Loyalty.
Fight for the right,
You have said,
To be free.

When this time has run its course,
I must..
Live without remorse.
For the deeds I'm bound to do,
I know...
it's all the same to you.

But I won't forget
the memory...
Taking a life,
for a life...
to be free.

Nude's life revolved around orders. He found himself pushed and pulled onto a crowded deck of uniformed figures who shared the same expressionless faces. Loved ones stood anxiously on the pier as the transport faded into separating mist.

Water and night seemed one. Nude was going to war...

Thunder cracked. Ramps hit the beach and countless boots assaulted the shore. His heart pounding, Nude stumbled headlong into the undergrowth in a desperate search for refuge. Sheets of rain drenched the sunless forest as the skies opened raging down on the tiny island. Panic-stricken, Nude staggered forward and fell unconscious. Raindrops spattered from the trees onto Nude's face. Startled and confused, Nude listened in the humid silence; he was alone and had no idea where he was. Worst of all, he didn't know what had become of his Regiment. The setting sun left Nude with the growing darkness of his fears. He made camp and slept with dreams of a dawn rescue, unaware that his Unit had already left the island. In wartime, one less soldier is hardly noticeable.

Seasons turned with time. Nude had given up the search for his Unit but continued to move through the jungle, bayonet poised, as if a thousand eyes were upon him. Home was a cave in a hidden lagoon with abundant vegetation and fresh springs. The highest point of the island provided shelter from annual monsoon floods and sanctuary for his soul. His military duties consisted of a monthly visit to the mountain top whereupon he ceremoniously croaked the national anthem and fired one precious bullet into the air. In the loneliness he endured, Nude found an inner strength that flowed with the rhythm of instinct.

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