

## **First Light**

Starlight - star bright - shadows in the night.  
I pray that calm will be  
That we may see  
The next first light.

Moonlight - too bright  
We fear will bring a firefight.  
If that must be - I pray to thee  
That we survive til next first light.

A distant sound brings chills of fright  
Eyes open wide - no sleep tonight.  
The sounds so slight are amplified  
It's long away from next first light.

We're young, and strong – this starlit night  
But do not boast with great delight.  
Hold back the tears - I must for years  
If I survive to see first light.

This patrol we must complete  
The enemy we must defeat  
And later time to eat - we might  
If we may see the next first light

Old we wish to grow to be - we dream of wives, of kids, and family  
We pray to thee with all our might - that we walk softly through the night  
And make no sound - we know the enemy is all around  
Intent to keep us from the sight of morning next - and new first light.

Complete our mission – on we go  
Searching for enemy - our hearts pound so  
And time stands still it seems – so slow  
When is first light? – We want to know

Our prayers we whisper - silently this night  
Once again please Jesus - let this end  
Please get us back among our friends  
Where there we rest and dry our feet and thank you for the grand first light

Along this treacherous ground we move – then suddenly a clicking noise  
And then the unmistakable explosive sound  
From point to six - the sudden chill – I'm falling down  
I pray the fluid on my brow is sweat - not blood.  
And that the fragments stinging so are dirt and mud.

Is this all a dream? – the noise is deafening – this cannot be  
A flash so bright - is our war over on this night?  
Is that our friend lying wounded there - why him not me?  
This is insane – it isn't right - we only asked to see first light.

Starlight, star bright, a brilliant flash.  
The evening sky we see and fear and now the only sound we hear  
Is but the ringing in our ears  
And our nostrils fill with smell of fire and flesh.

This is too soon, too young are we.  
Most are but teens - I'm not twenty.  
Another morning please - not much to ask - that all come home  
We've done our task - brothers we - yet each feels all alone.

And memories of that and other days  
After many years - won't go away.  
The sacrifices others paid - not I  
A lifelong grief - a heart to cry.

Unanswered questions why you had to die  
We hide the tears that none shall see  
We hide away in woods or room -  
The haunting thoughts of doom - why him not me?

Eyes open wide - we look about  
Not a word, not a shout  
But silently for all we plead  
We share with each - there is no greed - we really have a simple need.

Our prayer was answered - but not for all  
And those of us who lived shall always wonder why the simple prayer to last the night  
To take away the tears and fright - was granted we - not thee my friend  
And so...I pray that when my life must end

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As brothers we will walk again.  
Softly though - we'll make no sound  
Our buddies know that still with them we are around  
Our final comfort we have found.

No longer we will have to fight  
The war has gotten dim  
And finally peace may come to us when God has called us home to him  
To see the beauty of First Light.

With love he gives to us when time has come  
What we had prayed for all along  
With a warming smile and gentle song  
To us he gives our last First Light.

\_ - John J. Freeman SSgt. USMC 1964-1971 \_

Dedicated to all who served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marines  
SEMPER FIDELIS is Forever  
"The Walking Dead"