

Ten Minutes of hell

On patrol moving slowly cautiously through the jungle,
the point man raises his hand in a signal to halt then hunkers down..
We stop and drop to one knee, our weapons at the ready.

Our eyes, straining to see through the thick underbrush of the jungle,
listening with every fiber of our being for any noise, any indication the enemy is near.
Five maybe ten minutes we listen, the normal menagerie of jungle noise returns.
Then I see the point man shake his head as though unsure, then he signals to move out.

We stand slowly, and continue down the trail, me at tail end Charlie. Last man in the
column
rear security, damn I hate this position. I turn in all directions looking listening praying.
We have moved only about twenty yards, Suddenly the point man yells,
ambush and all hell brakes lose.

All around limbs and leaves are falling from the hail storm of lead
the North Vietnamese are putting out. The squad leader is hit, then the radio man.
I fire my M16 moving straight in to the enemy fire yelling as I was taught.

Suddenly a grenade explodes with a deafening sound.
The point man screams I'm hit, then the blooper man falls. We continue to advance into
the face of the enemies withering fire inflicting death on the enemy and screaming like
madmen.

On my right another Marine goes down.

As we move forward closing on the North Vietnamese position I can hear the angry snap
of the bullets passing me by. I can feel the sting as splinters of wood hit my face from the
trees that are being chewed apart by the fire of an unrelenting enemy.

I pick up the M79 blooper and fire some beehive rounds.
Now, only a yard or two from the enemies position, I can see their faces the look of fear
mixed with the concentration of battle.

I continue to fire beehive after beehive rounds into the enemy position, as more NVA fall.
The rest see that only death can come from continuing the fight. The North Vietnamese
break and disappear into the Jungle.

Three Marines dead two wounded, sixteen dead NVA three wounded. Waiting for the
Medivac helicopter to take the dead and wounded away. I am thinking, how did all that
pass me by.

Jack Neeley...Charlie 1st 68-69