

Chante Wolf



Objects for Deployment

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veteransbookproject.com

This book, Dance, Dodge and Duck, is my story of deployment to the first Persian Gulf War from January 10, 1991 to March 18, 1991. It is made up of journal entries, cartoon drawings and photos I took while there. The colored pages contain excerpts from published books that are important to expand my story. It has taken me nineteen years to find the words to convey the overall experience; how much it has changed my life and affected the way I view things today.

At first, I took pictures. But I quickly mailed my good camera home due to the sandstorms. A friend sent me a cheap point-and-shoot camera from which the photos in this book are taken.

During the times of sheer boredom, I began to doodle drawings based on the "Calvin and Hobbes" and "Bloom County" cartoon books I brought with me. Eventually, some of my tent mates chose the character that best reflected their own personalities.

These drawings and excerpts were used by the American Red Cross after the war to help their counselors understand the complex emotional roller-coaster that many veterans experience.

The journal entries are in their raw original form, written as the war unfolded around me. The verb tenses often change; sometimes I wrote as events were happening, sometimes after the fact. In re-reading them now, I see where I was back then - dancing between the sheen of reality and the surreal. This was how it felt. Days bled into one another. The fear of death mixed with boredom, heartbreak, homesickness, and insanity.

Prior to the war, I had served active duty in the Air Force for over ten years (another book in its own right). I had no opinion about the impending war. All I knew was that Iraq had invaded an unarmed country, Kuwait, and that the United States, always wearing the white hat of justice, needed to defend that poor little country.

I was aware that President Bush Sr. said it was about 'oil' and Jim Baker told us it was about 'jobs'. But I had no opinion about either justification. I was simplistic in my thinking about U.S. foreign policy and how our leaders use the military to solve world problems.

Protestors and conscientious objectors (CO's) came out on TV refusing to fight because of oil. Frankly, I thought the CO's were irresponsible for joining the military in the first place. They enlisted for the training and education, and then refused to fight.

It was not for any of the reasons above that I made my decision to go to my First Sergeant's office and volunteer to go before anyone else in my squadron. I was single with no children, unlike the rest of my squadron.

I had been brought up to play fair and treat others as I wanted them to treat me. This has been my moral compass throughout life, right down to my deployment to the Persian Gulf.

I never wanted to learn to kill people. That was not the reason I joined the military. I joined the military per the suggestion of my father, a Navy veteran who served during the Korean War. I wanted to be a photographer for National Geographic, but I didn't have a clue how to do that. I didn't think I was smart enough to go to college. That path didn't feel like a good choice and would have been a waste of my parents' money.

There I was in 1980 at 22 years old, with no husband, children or career path. I think I was making my father nervous, and that was the reason he suggested I join the military. He thought I could get training as a photographer and have the opportunity to travel.

I will always remember the bus leaving the curb and my mother, father, and sister, Robin, waving goodbye. That bus ride was life-changing. Eventually, it led to my participation in killing during war. It led me to the participation in the destruction of this magnificent planet that I wanted so badly to photograph.

From the very beginning of Basic Training , I came to discover the violence associated with the military and, later, war.

The very first night at Basic, our TI (Training Instructor), along with our Dorm Chief, went through everyone's luggage, confiscating anything that we could use to commit suicide or kill someone else with. You could hear a pin drop as they went from cot to cot. I thought: "Oh my God, what the fuck did I get into? What in the world would be so wrong that suicide was a normal response? Why did they need to protect us from ourselves and each other if this was such a wonderful job and training opportunity?"

After Basic, my Technical Training School was even more disorienting. That first weekend, someone died, a woman was raped, and there was a stabbing along with much drunkenness. Drunkenness like I'd never seen before. This experience, alone, was beyond anything I ever envisioned when I joined the male fraternity. On top of all that, when we left the base, the first things we saw as we walked out the gates were topless bars, pawn shops, tattoo parlors and motels where you could rent a room by the

hour. I'm not so sure that was my idea of becoming an equal in the land of men.

My military sisters and I had the sense that we really needed to be careful. The base commander, a four-star general, was inviting women to parties on the restricted side of the base. There were two instances where women from my barracks were raped. We heard them cry late at night when they got home. But none of us thought we could do anything.

This is where my anger starts, I know this is where my anger starts. Because I will never forget what it was like to hear the echos of their grief drift down the hallway.

Then came my turn. It was a Friday after class, while we were in formation getting our weekend briefing and duty assignments. I was called out of formation and told to report to the administrative desk.

There are only two things that get an airman pulled out of formation: either you were in deep shit or someone in your family has died. I thought it was the latter, since my aunt had cancer.

I left formation, walked into the administrative office and reported to the Staff Sergeant at the front desk. He escorted me deep into the building where I was to report to another male Staff Sergeant. When we got to the room, my escort left, closing the door behind him. This was now a precarious situation; after all, the person with more stripes has more power. There I sat with neither. I quickly began to sweat and got a bad feeling in the pit of my stomach. This wasn't going to be good.

The Staff Sergeant sat back in his chair, put his feet up on the desk, played with his crotch and studied me for a moment. Then he invited me to join him, my commanding officer and First Sergeant on an island off the coast of Biloxi. There would be plenty of beer and food; I'd be the entertainment.

I clenched my fingers tight behind my back and prayed that I would get out of there untouched. My mind raced for something to say, and it was at that moment I learned to dance.

I thanked him for the invitation and said with a forced smile that it sounded like a lot of fun, but I already had airline tickets to go home because my aunt was dying of cancer.

I felt sick to my stomach, but didn't want to throw up on his desk. I was sure my trembling hands had left a puddle of sweat behind me. All I could think about was that no one would hear me scream if he raped me. I've never wanted to go home as badly as I wanted to in that moment.

He pushed back his chair, stood up and brushed past me, touching both my breasts. He stood in front of the door. I followed him and stopped. His smoke-filled breath tickled the hairs on my neck as he pressed close into my body, "It's your word against mine, nobody will believe you!"

He held onto the door knob until I submitted to him. He looked down at my slick sleeve, then to his four stripes and sneered, "Your word against mine, nobody will believe you!" Then, he opened the door and let me go. I have no memory of what happened next or how I even got back to my barracks.

It soon became clear to me that I needed to hook up with some guy, just to stay safe. I hated that too. I really think a lot of us knew that's what we had to do.

I think that's around the time we realized we were either bitches, dykes or whores. Most of us were just trying to do our jobs and survive. And it was just the tip of the iceberg for me.

I have no idea what my father would think if he knew. He certainly wouldn't have suggested the military to me if he knew it was going to be like this.

"... In the Army, only 12 percent of those who had been sexually harassed used the formal complaint system, because they believed the reporting system was merely in place 'to protect the chain of command as opposed to assisting soldiers.'

"In effect, the system stigmatized an individual for reporting. Frequently, complainants find that their working conditions worsen once a complaint is surfaced. Soldiers who complain are often ostracized by other soldiers in their unit and/or by their chain of command, or find themselves being transferred to another unit. In effect, victims are re-victimized by the system. The individual soldier, as a result, often chooses to simply put up with the harassment."
- Dr. Mic Hunter, "Honor Betrayed"

I was a good airman. I worked hard and eventually became a shift supervisor. Our crew won many awards. For my dedication to the mission, I was sent before many recognition boards and won just about all of them.

On December 20, 1990, I won the base recognition board, and my reward was a flight aboard a T-37 training jet. On the day of the flight, it was cool and cloudy. The Captain giving me the flight was nice and let me steer for a bit.

Then, at 25,000 feet, he wanted to know if I wanted to do loops. I turned that down. I knew the pilots wanted their enlisted "joy rides" to come back puking their guts out.

Then, he leaned across my left leg, letting his arm rest seductively on my lower thigh. He looked at me with a smile. I couldn't run or leave. I just smiled and looked out the window hoping he wasn't going to push it further. After that, I did feel like puking and wanted the ride to be over.

I wonder what type of civilian career that qualified me for.



27 DEC 90

OH NO, - ORDERS TO SADIA ARABIA!



5 Jan. 1991: WOW - What a blow - I was just notified, 8:30 a.m., that I'm deploying to support Desert Shield on the 8th of Jan.

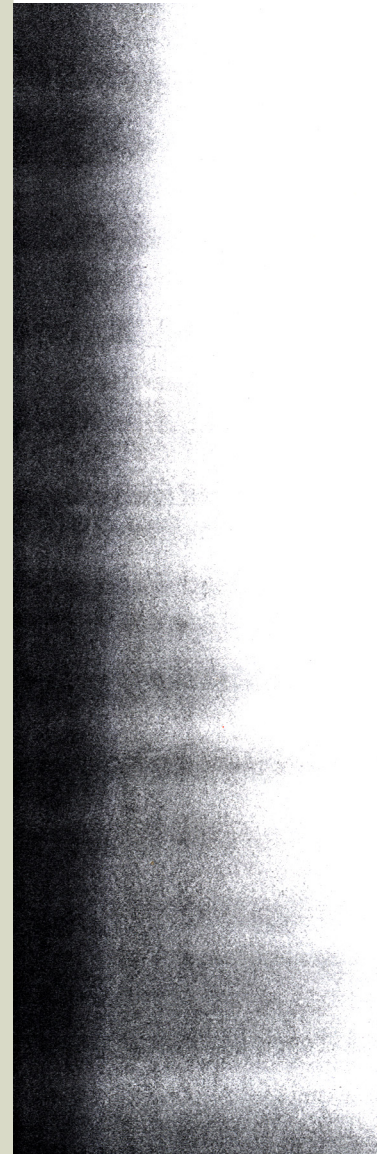
"I'm so sorry. They want you to deploy in two days, but I am working on getting you an extension," the Major kept apologizing. It took me a minute or two to get my fogged brain working so early. My first feelings where, "No Way!" I couldn't find the cradle to put the phone when he was done apologizing.

I wasn't on a base that was prepared for war. We trained pilots; my job didn't require that I have my bags packed, shots up-to-date and will written. Those tasks came in two days of out-processing and packing up my life to sit in storage until I came home, whatever capacity that would be.

Shit! That dream I've been having is now coming true. The dream seems like the end of civilization and just desert with sparse vegetation. Two men with towels on their heads are chasing me with a 50 cal. in their Jeep. I jump and roll and the Jeep flies by me. I feel like I just received my death warrant.

"Schools ought to be intent on presenting history from the point of view of progress and the growth of human civilization, rather than using it as a means for fostering in the minds of the growing generation the ideals of outward power and military successes."

- Albert Einstein, "Einstein on Humanism"



7 Jan. '91: WOW - I had another slap of true reality. It was confirmed in a mobility meeting today that I was the only one out of the group of 3 or 4 going to Saudi and taking an M-16, and 200 rounds of ammo. Lord, they must think I'm going to be in the thick of it! I could see from the faces of the others that I must have been white as a ghost.

I now print when writing a check and use a spoon for my food so it doesn't shake off the fork. My hands shake so. Long as I get pointed in the right direction, I will get where I need to. And long as my 'to do' list is correct, I will be on time.

Had to call my parents and sister. That sucked. My sister was hysterical.

Had to pack my life, find a home for my two cats and fill out my will.

What will happen to everything if I don't come home. I have so many things left undone. Who will tell my story? Who will understand the importance of my things and photos? Who will know my accomplishments? Does it really matter? But I

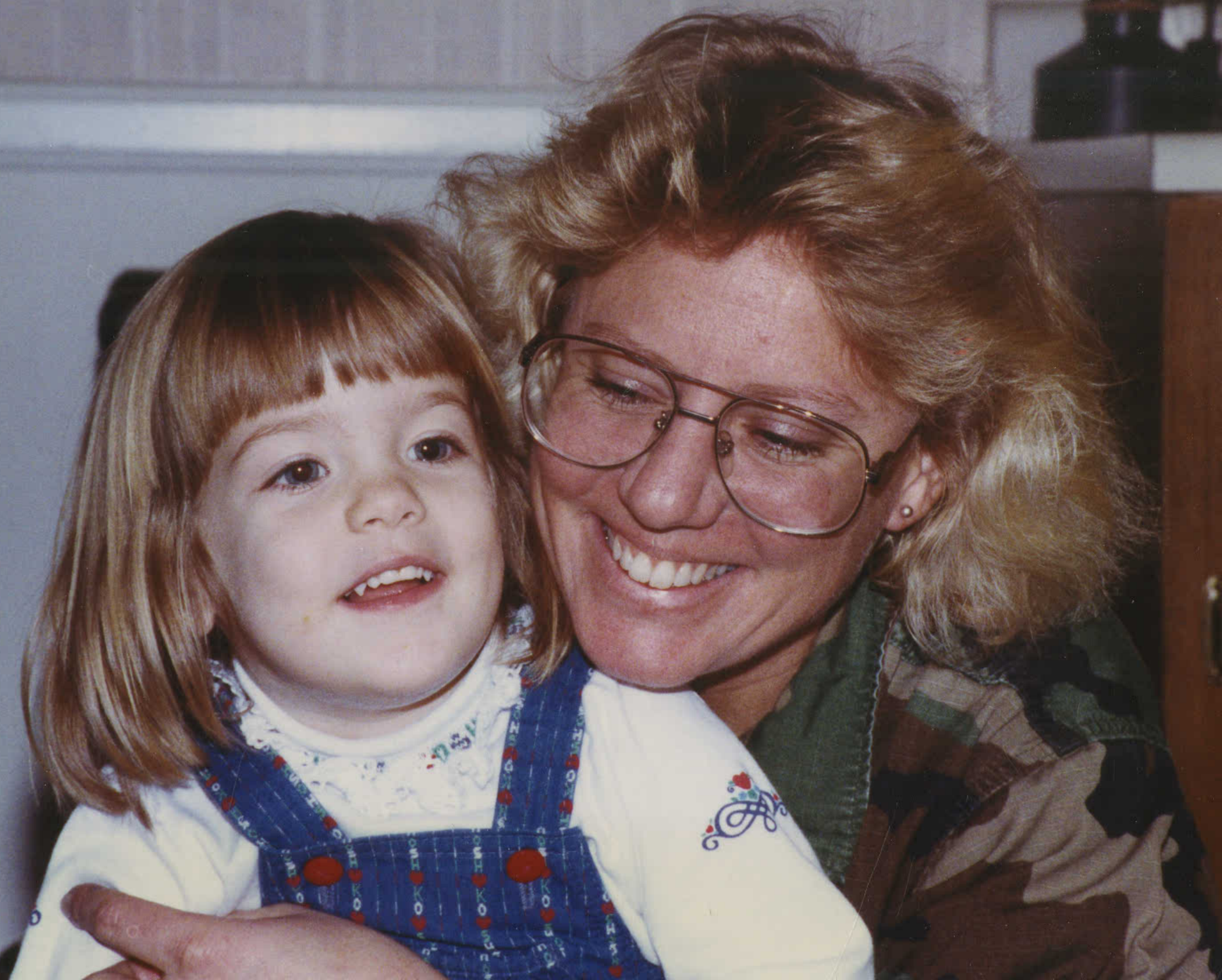
"January 9, 1991 - Secretary of State James Baker and Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz meet in Geneva. Baker hands Aziz a letter addressed to Saddam Hussein that threatens the destruction of Iraq should it fail to withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991. Aziz refuses to deliver the letter."

- Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf"

"The soldier above all other people, prays for peace, for they must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

- Douglas MacArthur





10 Jan. '91: Departure day, geez, I didn't want to get up. I just fucking love to travel alone in a civilian airport, lugging around 6 green A-bags, a gun crate and 200 rounds of ammo. Talk about looking like rambette in a pink sweater. 'Ain't she special!'

I was standing at the luggage carousel and almost for the first 10 minutes, nothing but green duffel bags, and gun crates coming down the chute, and very young men grabbing them. The woman standing behind me said, "Oh, my God! We are going to war!"

I watched my stuff get snatched up and had to go over to the young man in the green T-shirt with ARMY written across his chest. He just stared at me when I said, "You have my bags!" Guess he never seen a woman alone in a pink sweater go to war before!

I felt so frustrated, lonely and silly. I was so scared that I would disappear in the middle of nowhere. I hated traveling alone to war. If I could throw up and ease all the things rushing through my head and heart, I would do so.

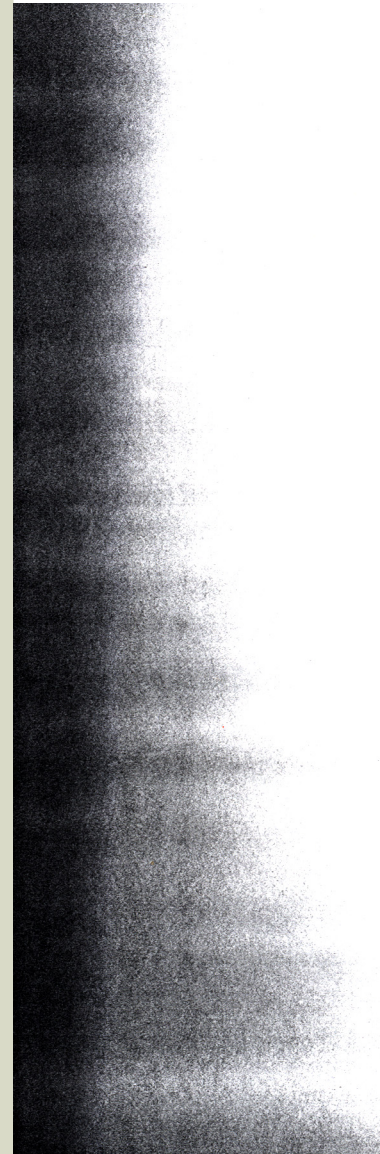
Cont.' - It took the taxi driver 3 hours to get to Dover. It was well past midnight and freezing. Geez, did this Arizona gal ever think it snowed in Philly? I was freezing!

10 Jan. '91: We arrived at Dover and were dropped off at a hanger. The diesel fumes formed white clouds that swirled around troops unloading from buses and vans. I dragged my bags away from the van and worried that they would get swept up by others before I could get them inside. The movements and number of troops was an awesome site. Once inside, there were nothing but pallets, troops and weapons. I swear that as I dragged my bags inside, everyone inside stopped and looked at me in shock.

"Oops, wrong party!" I said jokingly as I went back to drag the rest of my bags and gun crate inside the hanger. I am sure I was a sight to behold, a woman in pink going to war. And I didn't even know where I was going because my fate was sealed away in an envelope stamped, "TOP SECRET."

"We are humiliated in combat. The lofty words that inspire people to war--duty, honor, glory--swiftly become repugnant and hollow. They are replaced by the hard, specific images of war, by the prosaic names of villages and roads. The abstract rhetoric of patriotism is obliterated, exposed as the empty handmaiden of myth. Fear brings us all back down to earth.

"Once in a conflict, we are moved from the abstract to the real, from the mythic to the sensory. When this move takes place we have nothing to do with a world not at war. When we return home we view the society around us from the end of a very long tunnel. There they still believe. In combat such belief is shattered, replaced not with a better understanding, but with a disconcerting confusion and a taste of war's potent and addictive narcotic."
- Chris Hedges, "War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning"



Cont.' -

About 2 hours later I was marking my bags in a hurry, fearful they would get swept up in the tide of troops coming into and leaving the hanger.

A very tall Marine approached me from behind, "I would be very glad to uncrate your M-16, ma'am, while you change into your uniform."

Then it hit me how much I was making them nervous hanging out wearing my civilian clothes. Pink is not the color for war.

"As General Schwarzkopf readied CENTCOM for war against Iraq, Saddam Hussein summoned Ambassador (April) Glaspie to his office in what seems to have been a final attempt to clarify Washington's position on his dispute with Kuwait. Glaspie assured him: 'We have no opinion on Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait ... [Secretary of State] James Baker has directed our official spokesmen to emphasize this instruction.'"

"Aided by the press, the United States sought to demonize Saddam Hussein in order to sell the war to the U.S. public. After several years of close diplomatic, economic, and military cooperation between Baghdad and Washington during the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam Hussein was suddenly a tyrant 'worse than Hitler.'

"Bush said on September 11, (1990): '[W]e cannot permit a resource so vital [oil] to be dominated by one so ruthless. And we won't.'

"Thus, Baker introduced a new fear: the loss of jobs. 'To bring it down to the level of the average American citizen,' Baker said, 'let me say that means jobs. Because an economic recession worldwide, caused by the control of one nation - one dictator, if you will - of the West's economic lifeline [oil], will result in the loss of jobs for American citizens.'"

"November 8, 1990 - With no material change in the crisis, President Bush changes the deployment from defensive to offensive, doubling the number of troops in the Gulf to 400,000."

- "The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf" - Ramsey Clark

11 Jan. '91 0200hr - I jumped in with a Civil Engineering group after I discovered they were shipping out to the same place as me. I introduced myself and my predicament, traveling alone, and right away they gathered their gear and told me they had rooms in billeting - wow! A bed to finally sleep in... the process took us two hours.

Myself and another woman shared a room with a Navy vet who had been at Daharan. She said that Saddam had been launching SCUDs their way and told us about the alarms and getting into their chemical gear. She had also been raped and was on medical leave for breast cancer. She looked like shit and chain-smoked.

2 hours later, a loud banging on our door woke us up; we were dressed and out the door in no time flat. They were screaming that we were leaving in 20 minutes.

I was shaking so bad I could hardly put my clothes on and I felt like puking my guts out.

Once we got to the hanger, our flight was cancelled for 14 hours. We had to lug our

Cont.' - guns back to the Armory in blowing snow.

Sigh. We decided to just tough it out in the hanger. I now know what it feels like to be homeless - and how important cardboard and newspapers are to keeping out the cold from the floor.

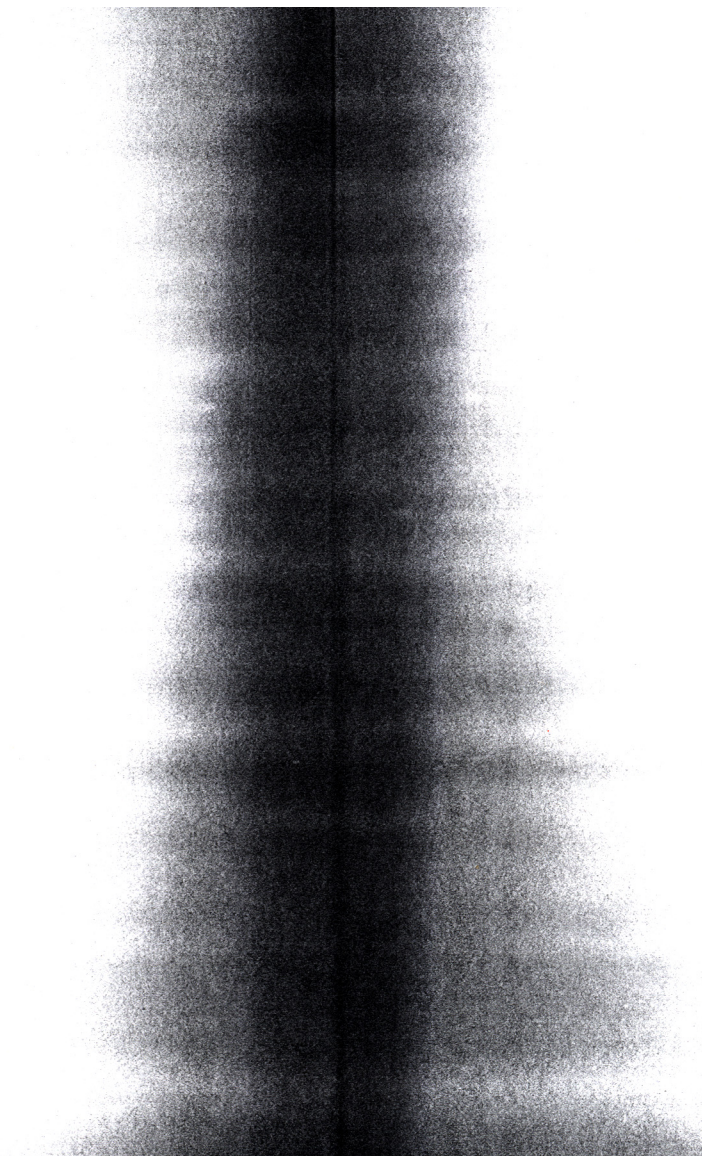
Most folks sleep, play cards, listen to music, write letters or journal. Others have gone into base to the chow hall for real food, not just Domino's (who is making a killing) or gone to the NCO club to get drunk - which I never wanted to do, nor had it crossed my mind really.

I met a Tech Sergeant, an Air Traffic Controller who knew my good friend, Dick. We hung out through the day and his company helped calm me down a bit. We went to the chow for my first hot meal in a few days. I also stocked up on hygiene stuff and tampons. I got a few more writing pens and paper, thinking my trip could get really interesting.

Cont.' - For the most part, I really feel that I will make it - I have a strong sense of survival and in a sick way, I am looking forward to the challenge.

However, they keep telling us we are shipping out only to cancel and it is making some of us really nuts! I am waiting for someone to start shooting folks just to get the fuck out of here!

12 Jan. '91: Still here in Dover. You really get a taste of what it must be like to be homeless. I'm exhausted. My long-johns are two sizes too big. It take me 20 minutes just to undress to pee. My pockets bulge so much that I now have big tits. They are filled with a combination of paperwork, pen/pencil, sunglasses, cigs. One pocket is dedicated to mini shampoo, baby powder, tampons, toothbrush and paste, aspirin and eye drops. Another pocket has a tape recorder, address book and comb. Lower pockets are filled with anti-chemical shots, pills, gloves. The other pocket has 4 ammo cartridges. I am ready to go. My gas mask is clean, there's water in my canteen, and a brand new out-of-the-crate M-16, flack jacket and helmet in my bags, ready



Cont.' - for shipment. The latrines are hard to take. They flip a sign for the gender of the current occupant. Gag! Now all we do is wait. Our minds race with images of wars gone by, and the bloody carnage left behind. What will our war be like? Will Saddam use chemicals? Will we retaliate with nukes? Will we run out the back of our C-130 with guns blazing? Why wasn't I trained for combat?

12 Jan. '91 - Midnight: "Get your fucking hands off my gun! " I had this Air Force Staff Sergeant's shirt in my left hand, with my right poised to pulverize him.

"You don't touch what isn't yours, especially somebody else's weapon! I don't know if we will or won't go to war, but this is real and not a game, my life depends on this gun, you son-of-a-bitch! If you touch someone else's gun in the war, you're gonna get a bullet between the eyes, you stupid son-of-a-bitch!"

I threw the Staff Sergeant backwards and he fell on his ass, then got up and ran away. The two young Marines I was playing cards with watched in horror and kept out of my way.

Cont.' - The jackass had taken my M-16 apart out of boredom. The voice in the back of my head kept repeating, "don't hit him, don't hit him!" But boy-oh-boy did I want to fucking kill him ... I have NEVER been so close to doing so!

One of the young Marines came up to me and said, "I would be happy to put your gun back together, ma'am." A few moments later, "Gee, I thought you were gonna kill him!" He stuttered.

I went out for a smoke and shook so bad I could hardly light my cigarette. I haven't slept a total of two hours in the last two days and I am ready to kick some ass. I can only imagine what war will be like. I have never been a physically violent person, so there aren't many times when I've struck another person. Maybe this night showed that I can take care of myself - if and when I have to.

1625 hrs. - Well, they finally got their shit together and the air crew got their 18 hr. rest. Shit, I wish I could get more than 2 hours at a time!

Cont.' - As we sat on the bus ready to go to the plane, I noticed our luggage pallet. Nestled in the middle was a lone silver bullet (coffin). Sitting next to me was a young airman who was so excited to travel outside the country. She was going to England. Then I asked her what her duty was, she said Mortuary Affairs. She was excited to go to England and I wondered if she really knew what the job entailed? Tagging toes and cleaning the dead for their last trip home. It sent shivers up my spine, she was only 18. God's speed!

1925 hrs. - We heard they called for an additional 80,000 body bags.

God I am so fucking drained on so many levels. "Welcome to Hotel California, you may check out, but you cannot leave." I just can't be feeling too much here, if I let in my heart, I will go fucking nuts!

Time to shut out, shut off and cast deep into a protective chamber all of who I am as a human being - hell awaits my blood.

Good night, United States - Hello, Saudi Arabia.

15 Jan. '91 -

1730 Saudi Time: Whew! I finally arrived at King Fahd Airport.

I still can't get the image of the silver coffin in our luggage pallet, or the young woman who would be cleaning the dead bodies, out of my mind.

As I processed in, no one at Command Post knew who I was. Great! I fly 10,000 miles alone to a TOP SECRET destination, a day and a half before the deadline for the war, and no one fucking knows who I am!

It dawned on me an hour later that I called the wrong folks. Boy do I need some sleep, a shower and some food!

As I tossed my bags into the back of the Nissan truck, a stroke of turquoise lightning shot across the sky, like the arm and fingers of death choosing it's next victims.

Cont.' - I was assigned a tent with 8 other strangers who have been here since August. I felt awkward and wanted to run away and hide, but I didn't.

Instead I apologized for their needing to rearrange their living areas to make room for me. They seemed pissed at first, but eased up when 'Tent Mom' walked in.

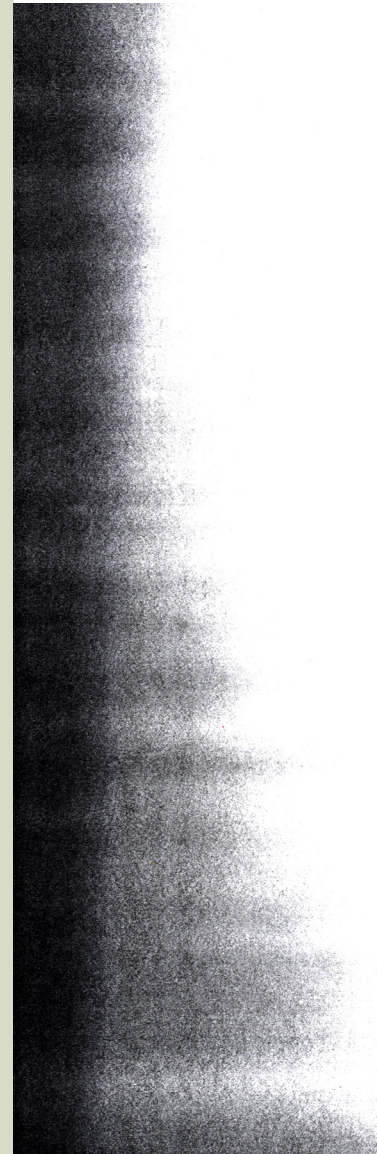
Tent Mom took me to the showers, then to the chow hall for some scraps where she laid down the rules about some of the women being bi-sexual and in relationships. I just shrugged my shoulders and told her I didn't have an issue with that. I just wanted to live through this and get home in one piece.

Once back to the tent, the others helped get me ready for rain and possible chemical attacks and what the sirens sounded like. I was told we were about 80 miles south of Kuwait, and that there had already been an incident of terrorism. A foreign national had put crushed glass into one of the food bins at the Saudi chow hall.

"Most national myths, at their core, are racist. They are fed by ignorance. Those individuals who understand other cultures, speak other languages, and find richness in diversity are shunted aside. Science, history, and psychology are often twisted to serve myth. And many intellectuals are willing to champion and defend absurd theories for nationalist ends."

"The chief institutions that disseminate the myth are the press and the state for the lie in war is almost always the lie of omission. The blunders and senseless slaughter by our generals, the execution of prisoners and innocents, and the horror of wounds are rarely disclosed, at least during a mythic war, to the public."

- Chris Hedges, "War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning"



Cont.' - They told me we were only 80 miles south of Kuwait. We are surrounded by the 101st Airborne and the Patriot missile batteries.

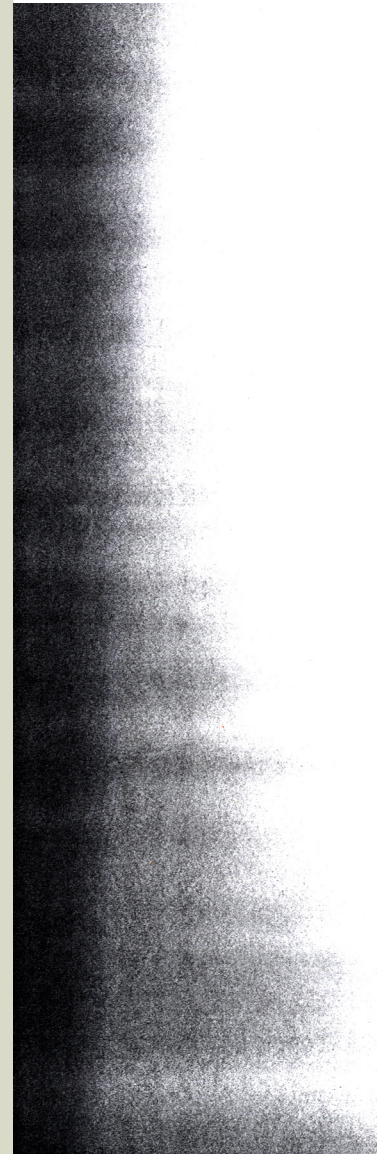
I slept for only three hours.

The next morning, I checked in with my new squadron and met my ex-husband's best man, Bobby. We went to the Saudi chow hall and got all caught up with stuff. Back at the squadron, I found out we had one too many folks assigned - one had to go south to the tip of Saudi Arabia. Because I was older than the other extra (he was 18) I told him to go - he can fight another time. He was so scared.

King Fhad is an international airport still under contruction. That is why my destination was top secret. Our communcations building is also not done and there are two Phillipino workers doing the construction, under armed guard.

My skin seems burning,
The bow Gandiva
Slips from hand,
My brain is whirling
Round and round,
I can stand no longer;
Krishna, I see such
Omens of evil!

- Translated by Swami Prabhavananda and
Christopher Isherwood 1944, "The Song of
God: Bhagavad-Gita"



16 Jan. 91 - I discovered that there were two other friends that I worked with in Spain that were at Fhad, Fritz and Ronald. Both were ATC, but Ronald got out and went to officer's training and became a C-130 navigator. Bobby and I went to see Fritz, he was so glad to see me, but kept repeating, "I am SO SORRY you're here!!"

Well, the shit must be getting close, they ordered us to start taking the anti-nerve agent pills and issued us weapons. Though the Reserves and Guard were issued weapons without ammo, we at least got the ammo too. We went from DEFCON 4 to DEFCON 2 in one afternoon.

My stomach has started the acid rolling and I feel sick. But we are still moving forward to get ready for war. We now have to wear all war gear and the dread in everyone's face is not easily hidden behind all the gear.

Got two quick calls back to the States to Wendy and then my parents. I couldn't say how tense shit has gotten. I really wish I could be home and not here, 10,000 miles in this god-forsaken sand pit killing each other.



"The wasteland was a dry expanse of sand,
thick, burning sand, no different from the
kind

that Cato's feet packed down in other times.

"O, just revenge of God! How awesomely
you should be feared by everyone who reads
these truths that were revealed to my own eyes!

"Many separate herds of naked souls I saw,
all weeping desperately; it seemed each group
had been assigned a different penalty:

"Some souls were stretched out flat upon their
backs, others were crouching there all tightly
hunched, some wandered, never stopping,
round and round.

"Far more there were of those who roamed the
sand and fewer were the souls stretched out to
suffer, but their tongues were looser, for the
pain was greater.

Cont.' - "And over all that sand land, a fall of slowly raining broad flakes of fire showered steadily (a mountain snowstorm on a windless day), like those that Alexander saw descending on his troops while crossing INdia's torrid lands; flames falling, floating solid to the ground, and he with all his men began to tread the sand so that the burning flames might be extinguished one by one before they joined.

"Here too a never-ending blaze descended, kindling the sand like tinder flint-sparks, and in this way the torment was doubled."
- Dante, "The Divine Comedy: Vol. 1: Inferno"

"Since the completion of the first atomic bomb, nothing has been accomplished to make the world more safe from war, while much has been done to increase the destructiveness of war."
- Albert Einstein, "Einstein on Humanism," 1947









PEACE

JAN. 17 1991-

17 Jan. '91: WAR HAS STARTED!

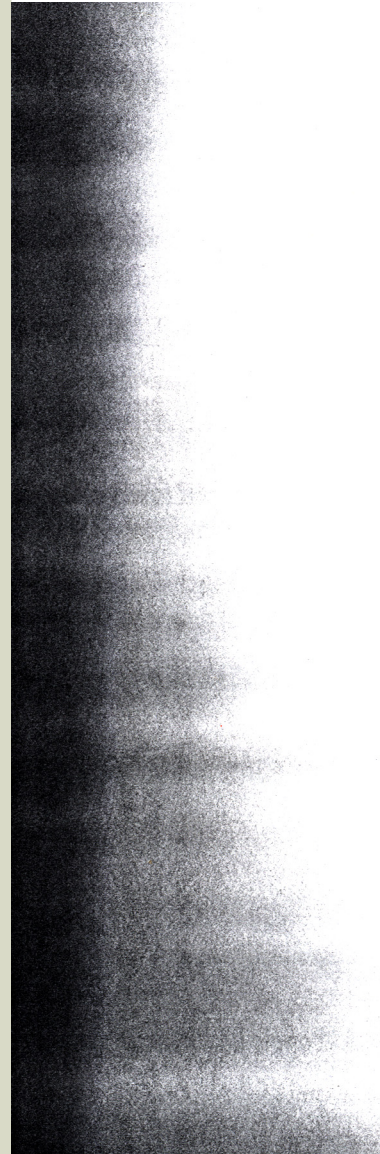
No Shit! Nothing like getting a rude awakening of sirens blaring and the voice over the loud speaker yelling, "Alarm Red, Mop 4! Alarm Red, Mop 4! Alarm Red, Mop 4!"

Then someone went running by outside and screamed, HIT THE DIRT! HIT THE DIRT!

Our light bulb flickered and swayed with the movement of the tent and everyone scrambled to dress in their chemical suits. Jen, 20, kept running back and forth to the front door, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God! We're at war!"

At first all I could do was pace back and forth, but Tent Mom got us calmed down. I was the first dressed, as I sat on my cot, with my gas mask jiggling in my hands ... it was suppose to be the first on and I just couldn't get my hands to work. Jill and Mary put their hands on my shaking shoulders and helped me get it on.

"As he perceived this fact, it occurred to him that he had never wished to come to the war. "
- Stephen Crane, 1895, "The Red Badge of Courage"



Cont.' - If I thought I could do it quick, I would have thrown-up.

As we all hit the door to our tent at the same time, we all went silent, fearing that chemical weapons had been used. After diving into the night sand box, we checked in with each other, then looked skyward. Breathing like Darth Vader, wishing we all could be some place else.

"At Iraq's Multhanna State Establishment, some 65 miles northwest of Baghdad, underground pilot plants intended to produce the chemical warfare precursors dimethyl methylphosphonate and dimethyl hydrogen phosphate sustained little damage. But the main production facilities at Iraq's biggest chemical warfare production site were destroyed as 17 tons of sarin nerve agent rose skyward on superheated air. Soviet chemical weapons expert I. Yevstafyev issued a national warning, stating that the 'strikes on chemical and biological weapons facilities on Iraq's territory could rebound on us and cause damage to the population of our country.' But the desert wind was blowing the other way.

"By mid-afternoon on the 17th, low clouds still covered much of west and central Iraq as patchy ground fog gave way to 20 knot southerly winds.

Cont.' - "Radioman, Tommy Harper recalls more people running into the CP to report that, "a fine mist had fallen over the camp." Some soldiers "were complaining of numbness in their lips and fingers. One man even pulled off his mask, complaining of not being able to breathe.

"The unit's NBC man came into the bunker and told Harper: "Not a fucking thing happened last night - is that clear? No MIG bombed us, and it's not lying belly up in the Gulf. No decon teams. Not a fucking thing happened."

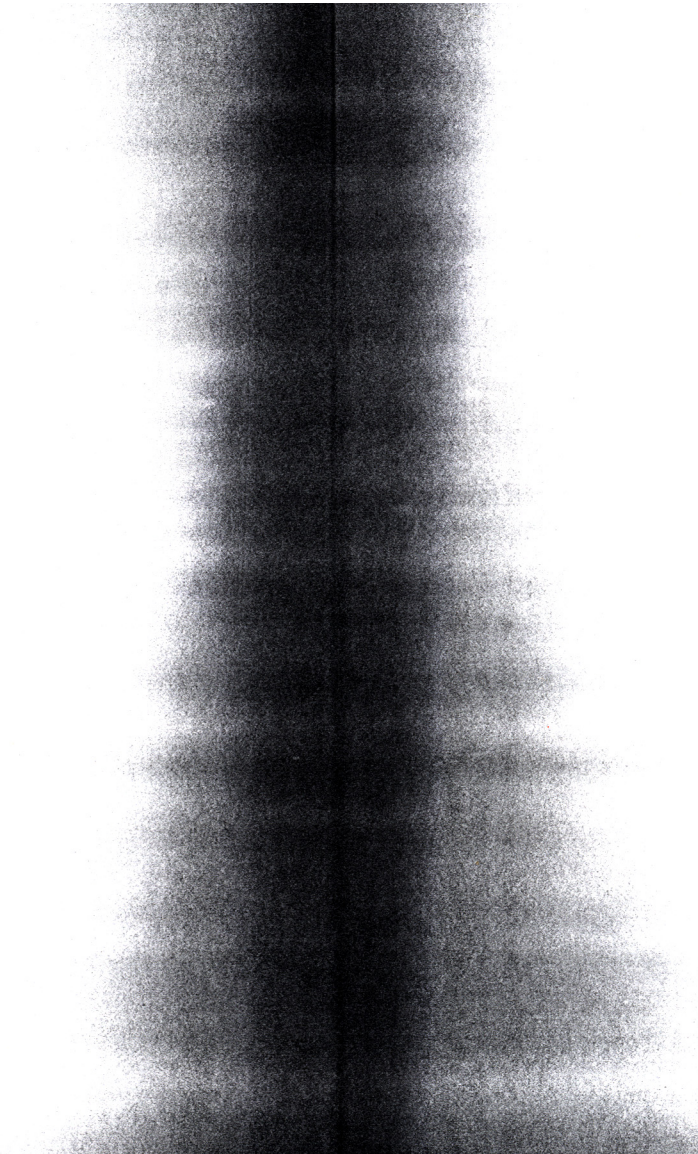
- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"

Cont'. - What seemed like eternity, was only 10 minutes when the women's Captain approached us, "All clear everyone, all clear!"

We tore off the funky gas masks, hugged each other and lit our cigarettes. Then the ground vibrated as one by one our F-16's took off. The mixture of blue and orange afterburners re-stoked our courage and we yelled with the others in our camps for the pilots' safe return.

From that point on, the noise never stopped. A-10's, C-130's, F-16's, F-15's, C-141's, C-5A's and Apache Helicopters flew 24/7. Sleep was seldom, restlessness continuous and our hearts placed into a safe place. I felt I couldn't keep a photo account, so recently I mailed home my camera. I want to get out of this alive and I have my journal.

For hours afterwards, we smoked, listened to the radio broadcasts and looked high overhead at all the aircraft heading towards Iraq. What scared us was that we were in SCUD range. I am very proud to be a part of the U.S. Air Force!



The next morning a few of us went to chow a bit early, 5:30 am. I saw a very young woman sitting by herself and as we left, I put my hand on her shoulder and checked to see if she was okay. I feel bad for the young soldiers, they should not be the warriors.

In all the confusion going on, I accidentally sat on my glasses, crunch! The others got a good laugh at me, glad I brought a spare.

The next morning, we all anticipated more alarms. So we made plans in advance, like going to the latrine - you just have your mask ready and wear all your gear. It turns out, getting all put back together for women takes longer than for the men. To save an extra second or two, we ended up cutting off our t-shirts to our waistline, then we didn't have to tuck them in.

As Jill and I headed to the laundry, the alarms went off and 'RED ALERT' blared over the loudspeakers. We ran drawing our masks like swords to the nearest bunker. Once there, we helped each other with the outer hood covers and gloves. We sat looking skyward, expecting incoming.

"While B-52's departed many hours earlier from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana and elsewhere for nonstop flights toward their targets and cruise missiles were launched from vessels on the Indian Ocean and the eastern Mediterranean hours before, the attack was timed to begin as people living on the East Coast of the United States watched prime time evening news on January 16. Nineteen hours after the deadline, Iraq was hit almost simultaneously with hundreds of missiles and bombs. Within an hour, 85 percent of all electric power generation throughout Iraq was destroyed. Several thousand bombing sorties cut the major arteries of the nation's vital services within 48 hours.

"The evidence that this assault was planned for years before Iraq invaded Kuwait cannot be doubted. That a decision to provoke Iraq into an act that would justify the execution of those plans is clear beyond a reasonable doubt. The ease with which the Bush administration frustrated all efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the dispute it had created reveals the tragic failure of international peace-keeping mechanisms, the UN, the U.S. Constitution, the media that failed to inform the public, and

Cont.' - "finally the people themselves, who watched war coming for nearly six months, but did not act to prevent the slaughter.

"Although the Pentagon portrayed the Iraqi armed forces as a dangerous threat, in fact, Iraq had never been capable of inflicting injury on U.S. forces, or even of defending itself. As retired Israeli Major General Matti Peled wrote:

"The Iraqi Army was not an unknown quantity. After eight years of war in Iran, it was very clear that it was not a threatening army, it was not a first-class fighting force. But the United States spread throughout the world the legend about invincibility of the Iraqi Army, knowing full well that it was not true. But this gave the U.S. a justification for conducting what it called "strategic bombardment" of the entire area of Iraq, demolishing their entire civilian infrastructure."

- Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf"

Cont.' - Geez, my stomach is never going to be the same. Between my nerves, the anti-nerve agent pills and little sleep, how can the body negotiate digestion? I did react a bit more calmly, but shit, I've never had the beejesus scared out of me so many times in my life - at least not all at once.

It seems odd to me that mankind can't come up with anything better to do with our lives than to destroy only to rebuild again; we are like ants.

I just don't want anyone to be treated like Saddam has treated his own people, no one should ever have to endure that kind of treatment. He also fired SCUDs at Israel. If they retaliate and the other Arab nations join in, we could be sitting right dab in the fucking

Cont.' - middle of it all - and Israel has nukes! I don't want to become part of the glass parking lot that will be the result. Right now I don't feel good at all about our situation. Shit, we wouldn't know who was who and who was on our side!

Then the reports on the radio said that Israel launched planes through Syria - not confirmed. No one that I've talked to feels any different than I do - including the men - all are very quiet. Boy is my stomach churning for butter!

I will make it back! If the journalists can, so can I - all of our stories are important - and maybe this time people will listen and work harder to resolve issues before death and destruction. No more generations of war veterans and all the aftermath that will cut through their families and society!

"From his position near King Fahd International Airport, Rocky Gallegos, a Lance Corporal with Bravo Battery, 2nd Light Anti-aircraft Missile Battalion, watched what appeared to be a SCUD missile being shot out of the sky by a Patriot missile almost directly over his head. The explosion 'blossomed like a flower.' The missile tumbled. Spitting flames, it exploded again when it struck the ground.

"Almost immediately Gallegos experienced a 'very strong raunchy taste, like a very bitter burnt toast' in his mouth. A sudden headache assailed him, and he felt like throwing up. About 10 minutes later, when the alert finally sounded and they were ordered to put on their masks, Gallegos found it painful to look at bright lights.

Cont.' - "By the time he was assigned to drive his NBC officer to check the chemical detection units, the thoroughly miserable Gallegos was afflicted with diarrhea. At the fourth or fifth unit they visited, the NBC noncom came back with a written note. Shoving the paper into his pocket, the sergeant abruptly ordered Gallegos, 'Get me back to camp. Now!'

"At 0550, General Schwarzkopf's Central Command logged two British units 'reporting positive H [mustard] readings, using M-9 detection paper.' The incident was especially troubling because there was a shortage of American MOPP-4 gear throughout the Theater of Operations."

- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"

Cont.' - I just wished I had gotten some type of combat training - if we are overrun, I would have no idea what the fuck to do - except shoot everything that moves!

20 Jan. '91: Last few days we had alarms 2-3 times a night, talk about no sleep! We ended sleeping in our uniforms and chem-suits. Many of us are so jumpy.

Jill had gotten some whiskey from a pilot on the flight-line (she does communications on the planes). It's a life saver. We are supposed to be dry, but one of the base commanders had 50 cases of Scotch unloaded when he got to camp. Do as I say, not as I do, I suppose.

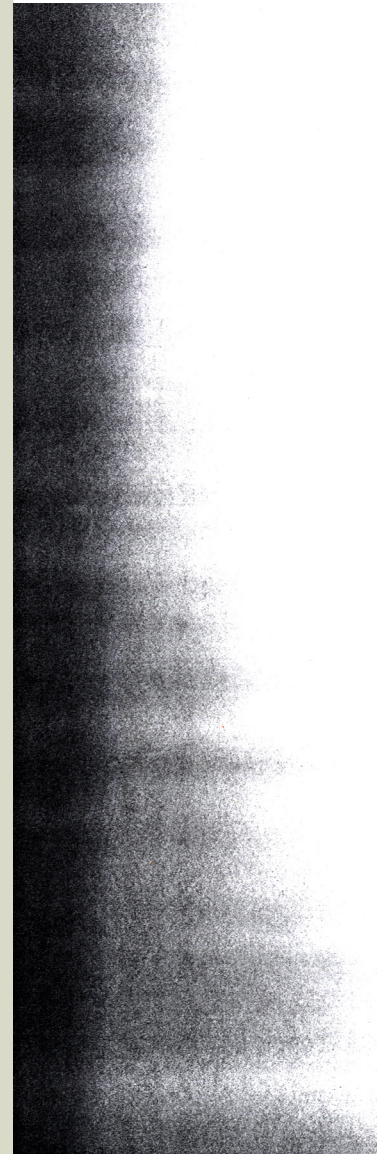
I am getting to know the women better. Some told me about experiences of waking in the night to find a man standing at the foot of their cot.

Cont.' - I had to give my journal to Tent Mom. It had to pass to others for open reading, there was concern about how much I was documenting due to the sexuality of some in our tent. I was okay with that, and certainly understood since in the past I had to turn in one of my subordinates for being gay. The last time I had to do so, the OSI sergeant slid my arrest warrant across the desk as she said, "Glad you came in today, this is your arrest warrant we had ready for you tomorrow. I certainly hope this doesn't change your mind about transferring to OSI."

I basically told her to shove it up her ass and that I would never join a group that witch hunted people based on fear and ignorance.

"General fear and anxiety create hatred and aggressiveness. The adaptation to warlike aims and activities has corrupted the mentality of man; as a result, intelligent, objective and humane thinking has hardly any effect and is even suspected and persecuted as unpatriotic."
- Albert Einstein, "Einstein on Humanism"

"Demoralize the enemy from within by surprise, terror, sabotage, assassination. This is the war of the future."
- Adolph Hitler



Cont.' - My heart just sinks when I think of chemical weapons that will kill so many innocent animals and humans. And here Saddam kills his own with chemicals, and forces young kids and farmers to fight his flippin' 'Holy War!' How can a religion accept such violence?

Had a good dinner - chicken and rice - but I am losing weight. Guess all the nerve agent pills - we have to take one every 8 hours - are doing something to my body. Most of us have bad gas. And with wearing all our chemical gear and extra shit, our suits are starting to get funky. We only have 3 sets each and they can't be cleaned. When we're done wearing one, we have to toss it.

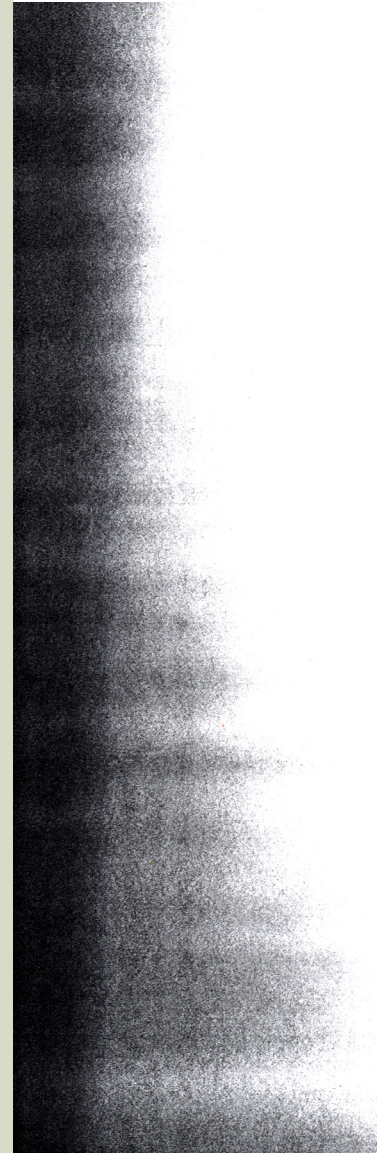
They have issued one weapon per tent because some Iraqis busted through the border. Everyone is really paranoid. My tent buddies decided that I would be the one with a gun - guess they trust my judgement, which is nice. I don't think any of us got any combat training, after all, we are the Air Force. We are really concerned about terrorism now.

RED ALERT



"As dawn's first light percolated through an oily sky, Navy Reservist Nick Roberts noticed a thin yellow powder coating tents and vehicles. Other Seabees were already avoiding an area near the port's commercial entrance cordoned off with yellow 'chemical-hazard' tape. They were encouraged to give the place a wide birth by the sight of fenced-in animals. Though apparently unmarked, the entire herd was dead."

- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"



21 Jan. '91: I went to bed and about an hour later the sirens and MOPP-4 were broadcasted over the speakers. All of us were scrambling, not too fast, just quickly, to put on our gear, then we heard an earth rumbling ... BOOM-BOOM ... everyone looked up at the same time.

Of course, I couldn't get the elastic untangled off my gas mask my hands were shaking so. I really tried to stay calm, but my body had a mind of its own. Jo and Jen came over and helped me. After we got our gear on, we hit the bunker. I couldn't help wondering about the little kitten I saw the other day and where it went. After what seemed like a long time of quiet - we went into condition YELLOW - MOPP 0 - we hugged each other and smoked and joked.

A couple of the guys said that while they were at the Rec Center watching the Super Bowl, they saw two SCUDs fly across the sky,. Then they said that's when the alarms went off. Around 0100 hours, the sirens went off again. We all went back to bed in our chemical (zoot) suits. We expect more SCUDs tonight. Sweet dreams!

STEEL MAGNOLIA'S

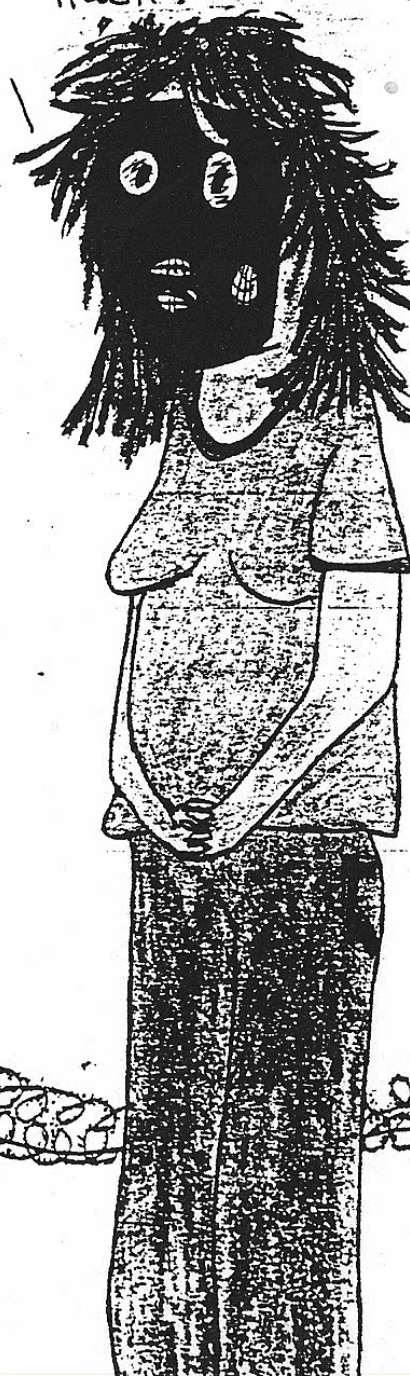
... IN THE PERSIAN GOLF (NO, NOT THE GOLF COURSE!)

mump, mump
mpit, orgnamp

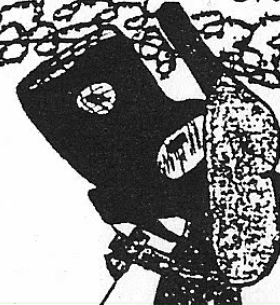
HUGH?

mumPH, PHHT
mumPHT, IDIHT
mmmm

HUGH?



mm-mm
Harri/umph
Snak m



What Was that

Boom -
Boom ?



22 Jan. 91 - Jen told me tonight that she had talked with a couple of pilots who said that the base commander had paid a local farmer for his camel herd, that they then used for target practice.

It made us both sick. How can we do that? Didn't they get enough practice stateside?

The sound of the jets, cargo planes and helicopters never stops.

They have started to tar the sand between the tents - god, I hate that smell!

Do we have to pave every inch of this planet? I don't even want to know what we are doing with all this bombing and how many animals we are killing - besides the poor camels.

I hate this war.

"Contaminate a third or more of the sand thrown high into the atmosphere with sarin, tabun or mycotoxins, Jim Brown points out, and you have created a CBW [Chemical Biological Warfare] agent able to travel long distances, penetrate protective gear and remain relatively stable in a desert environment, instead of dissipating quickly. This toxic fallout would also arrive over allied positions in low enough concentrations not to cause immediate casualties.

"High-altitude winds continued to blow from Iraq into Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the Czech Federation soldiers continued to identify 'borderline life-threatening concentrations of the chemical agents perite and sarin' in King Khalid Military City (KKMC)."
- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"

"At 1540 on [January] 20th, the Czech chemical detection specialists reported tabun, soman and sulfur-mustard agents at King Khalid Military City (KKMC).

"Just outside al Jubayl, thousands of dead sheep, goats and dogs litter the highways. Blue bags, standard U.N. equipment for victims of chemical or biological attack, covered their heads.

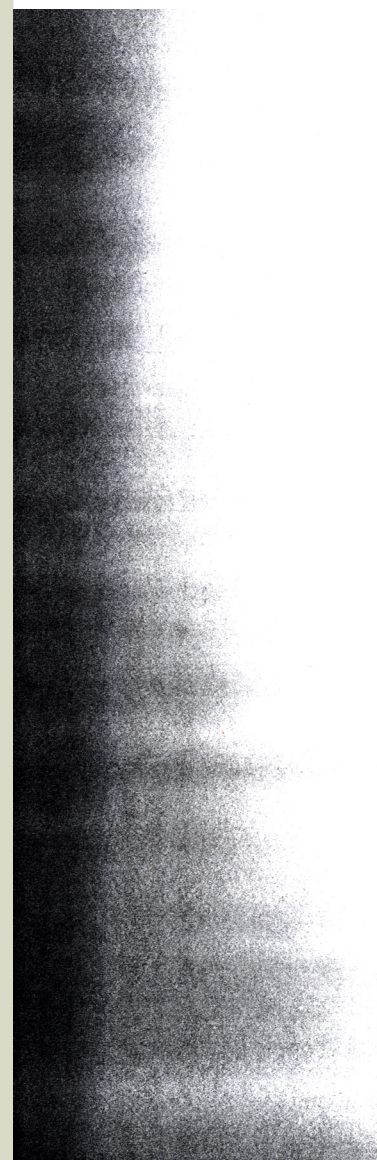
"The following day, Lance Corporal Rocky Gallegos was back out patrolling the area around King Fahd International Airport, where the previous day's explosion occurred. Gallegos and his team saw at least half a dozen dead sheep and a couple of camels that appeared to be very sick. Gallegos himself wasn't feeling so good. His headaches, nausea, diarrhea, and sensitivity to light would get worse before he finally departed Saudi Arabia.

"At 0400 Saudi time on January 21st, Army Lieutenant Phoebe Jeter was watching a green radarscope when she heard, 'Okay folks, we have a SCUD alert' in her headphones. A sudden blip showed a tactical missile coming

Cont.' - in. The heart of the only woman to launch Patriot missiles during the war began to race. 'All around I could hear the BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! of other Patriot batteries starting to fire,' Jeter recalls.

"The van began to rock.' For five interminable minutes, SCUDs, Patriots and debris filled her screen like popcorn. She put her gas mask on. Outside the radar van, soldiers were comm-enting excitedly about a sky that looked like Star Wars. The Patriots had downed four SCUDs.

"Later that night, John Sewart, a road master in the U.S. Marine Reserves watched a SCUD penetrate a Patriot air defense battery and exp-lode over the Port of al Jubayl. A siren sounded, and the Marines donned their protective gear. After some time passed, someone supposedly gave the 'all clear.' The Marine reservists removed their gas masks only to discover a strange odor lingering in the air. The smell soon dissipated. But people began heading over to the port's American Hospital for cough medicine and headache tablets."
- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"



Cont.' - My cousin, Bob, I found out, is stationed at KKMC. Was hoping to be located close since I traveled alone to the war. Heard they had a lot of action lately. Glad to be where I am. Not sure I really want to be where all the action is. God's speed, Cuz.

23 Jan. '91 - We had a grenade go off in the Army part of Tent City - then an A-10 misfired a hellfire missile just missing the ammo depot, hurting 2 people. More stories about the reactions of folks floated about... seems the ones who are cocky and all ready to kick ass are the ones that need to change their pants or need to be pulled out from under the table or cot.

Then there are those who stand up to the challenge and grow with their courage. Those are the ones that strapping Marine told me about in Dover.

"Never let anyone handle your gun but you. Keep your gas mask at your ready and don't let your suit out of your sight. And stay the hell away from those who are really wanting to fight and kill people, they will get you killed faster than the enemy!" He was right.

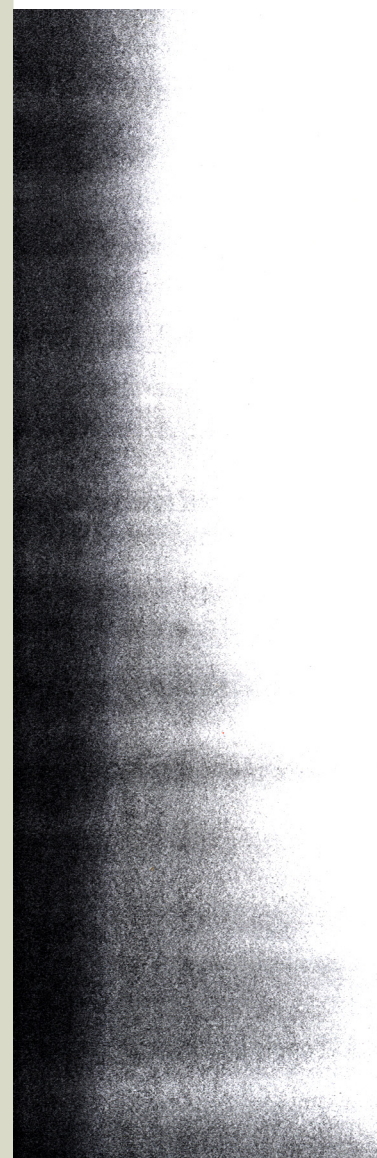
"When his Hercules touched down at al Jubayl on 24 January, 1991, Canadian medic David Prestwich didn't know he'd landed on what U.S. Senate investigators would later confirm was an active bio-battlefield.

'You saw what was at the end of your nose,' he recalled. "That was all you knew.'

"By the time they got the C-130 unloaded, Saudi Arabia had turned from exotic supposition into an endless expanse of dirt. Prestwich found it 'a desolate place.' Even the sky seemed alien. Iraqi troops had set alight storage tanks and oil wells at al Wafra field in southern Kuwait and at the al Shuaiba refinery complex just north of Mina al-Ahmadi.

"As an ominous widening pall from a thousand burning oil wells spread across the sun, an ocean of fine sand clogged uniforms, M-16's and immune systems with equal impartiality. Insects attacked like insurgents. Some carried Sand Fever. Like everyone else, Prestwich bought some DEET to keep the bugs at bay."

- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"



23 Jan. '91: Yeah, the old man is really starting to piss us all off. He started early yesterday again, about 2200. Off go the sirens. I had just laid down for about an hour. I hate to get waken up that way, and I had a bit of the shakes too. Hate when that happens! By the time we made it to the door, we got the 'All Clear.' Then around 0400, the sirens again, no shakes, but, boy, I am either hungry or my stomach is on the fritz again.

After my shower - the lighting wasn't too good - I tried what I thought was body lotion that the Air Force had given me. It was DEET. Too late to shower again, so I sat with that shit all over my body until the next morning.

By the time we all got to the office at the Communications Building, the sirens went off again. I worried what to write my friends and family. The phones were down so no one had any good communication with home. No one wants anyone to worry, so we just write home bullshit, tongue-in-cheek stuff. Sometimes at night, after we are out of Alarm Red, I'm so emotionally drained that I just want to cry, but I can't. Guess my body will let me know when its time.



24 Jan. 91 - Before leaving work, the night shift told us they saw 2 more missiles fly over and that Dhaharan had gone into condition BLACK (under attack).

Yep another long night. But we only had one alert around 2000 hours. When I got up, I couldn't remember how many alerts we had - the days seem to flow into nights and nights into days - I only know the date, not even the day of the week, it doesn't much matter, there isn't any such thing as a weekend, just your day off, and that day is just like the day before and just like tomorrow.

You get up and if you feel lucky, you make a dash to the showers. You eat breakfast, go to work, write letters, watch the news, snack, write, look at magazines, doze, get your stuff together, go to your tent, chit-chat, go to bed ready for the next alert, wondering when it will be your lucky day for a SCUD to land on you.

You are vigilant for the best place to dash when the alarms go off and when the shit really lands, where the deepest hole is to dive in and kiss your ass good-bye!



Cont.' - What we all miss the most is the simplicity of life - family, friends, laughter and joy - it sure as shit ain't here. Most of the Army has left - it makes me feel naked and vulnerable.

25 Jan. 91 - Well, when I got to my tent from work, Pam and Jen talked me into going to supper with them and a guy from work. It was very uplifting, fun and silly. We cut up all the way over to the chow hall, singing, "lions, tigers and bears, oh my!" A guy I worked with walked by and just shook his head, grinning. We were really ridiculous at the chow hall.

When Jill and Alex came in, Jen and I walked over to them and pretended to be rich bitches at a fancy restaurant. We just absolutely needed to know where they got their cute green outfits.

When we got back to our table, we thought about hiding Alex's cot in the latrine. It was a great release and everyone handled the fun just fine. Jen took a picture of them carrying the cot out of the latrine. Now we are waiting for payback.



Cont.' - Later about 1100 am, the sirens went off, Jen took a picture of us posing in our chemical suits.

26 Jan. '91: It was my turn to escort the two Phillipino workers today. I had to take them around the camp. M-16 on my lap. Could I kill them if I had to? Yes! Did I think about it? No!

I have lost more weight, but I have my head on straight and my site's set for getting out of this alive and not disappeared.

Fuck you Saddam! You morons set the oil on fire. It is smokey, dusty, rainy and the wind seems to never stop .. it is just amazing ... sand as far as you can see in either direction. What a fucked up place to kill each other over.

Our alarms go off and 9 out of 10 times SCUDS have been launched. We don't always put on our gear, and figure we have a better chance staying in our tents. The on-again, off-again peace talks are making us crazy.

Lost 2 more A-10's. That makes 3 planes so far. Hear back from the pilots about the sheer des-

"On the 22nd [of January], the writer of the 'Dear Mom' letter observed many dead and dying animals while patrolling the perimeter of Camp 13. Members of Seabee Roy Morrow's unit who had been hit by a SCUD near King Abdul Aziz air base two days before, now began to suffer from rashes, diarrhea, and fatigue. Morrow's numbness would persist for a week. The aching joints, he says, began a couple of weeks later.

"William Brady was now too ill to carry out his duties. He had been taking the nerve agent pretreatment pills since about January 27th and had been getting severe headaches from them. Three days after the attack on Log Base Alpha, the sickened survivor of the SCUD attack on al Jubayl developed a high fever. His eyes began to burn, and 'taking a breath of air made his lungs feel like they were burning up.'

"Brady also suffered from diarrhea, open sores, nausea and a persistent runny nose. Two days later, he went to the 13th Evacuation Hospital. But no beds were available. The hospital was completely filled with people that seemed to have the same illness that he had. Brady's January 26th diary entry read: 'I'd rather die than feel like this.'"

- William Thomas, "Bringing the War Home"

"Under the law, PB could not be administered to individuals, even GIs in a combat zone, unless there was informed consent - that is, unless the recipient was told of the drug's potential risks and benefits.

"There was evidence that PB, when given in high doses to healthy humans - as it would be in the Gulf War - triggered a neurological response known as bromide intoxication, the symptoms of which included confusion, tremor, memory loss, stupor, and coma. After months of debate in the fall of 1990, the FDA waived its restrictions upon being assured by the Pentagon that it would provide appropriate information about PB to all military personnel. That promise was not kept, and the pills were handed out to all soldiers. They were to be taken - with no questions asked."

-Seymour M. Hersh, "Against All Enemies, Gulf War Syndrome: The War Between America's Ailing Veterans and Their Government.

Cont.' - -truction and the number of Iraqis surrendering and dying. Adam said he sees many of the pilots retching their guts out after their bombing runs - the stench of death is so thick.

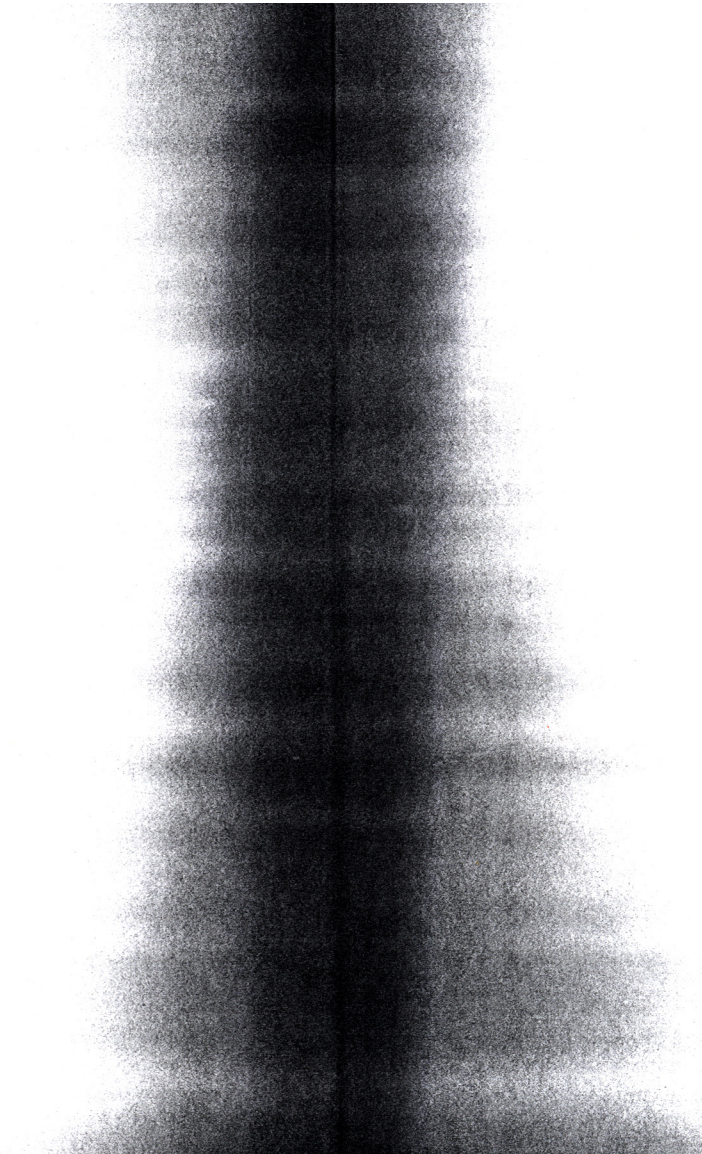
KKMC was shot at yesterday along with Baharain.

The anti-nerve pills (pyridostigmine bromide) are making us all sick. We were ordered to start taking them the afternoon before the war. We have the farts, and diahrea and other gastrointestinal shit going on. The guys from the flight-line told us to stop taking them.

They said that their commander stood in front of each of them watching as they took the pills, which made them begin to wonder if they weren't just guinea pigs.

They said that in reality we were all supposed to sign a waiver, that we had some kind of right not to take the pills.

Guess if everyone else is farting, then I'll fart too. I already brush my teeth outside by the



Cont.' - Wonder what it is in those damn pills ... are they really using us as guinea pigs? I tossed my pack of pills.

Then the gun accidents. One guy killed one of his bunkmates when the M-16 he was playing around with went off.

I wonder if that is the reason they couldn't make up their minds about giving us all guns when the war started in the first place.

When I got home, Jen had my space, my cot, headboard, night stand, sleeping bag, and laundry bag suspended from the ceiling! It was the most amazing thing and at first all I could do was just look at it. Then I laughed my ass off with everyone else.

What a hoot and a first-rate pay back.

The next night Tent Mom had all her stuff outside with signs "For Sale" like it was a garage sale. Much needed goofey humor in the midst of hell.

There are more flies than ever. Saddam has done good with his pesky Royal Guard.

"Iraq's eight major multipurpose dams were repeatedly hit and heavily damaged. This simultaneously wrecked flood control, municipal and industrial water storage, irrigation, and hydroelectric power. Four of Iraq's seven major water-pumping stations were destroyed. Bombs and missiles hit 31 municipal water and sewage facilities; 20 were hit in Baghdad alone. Sewage spilled into the Tigris and out into the streets of Baghdad, adding water-borne disease to the list of killers.

"For many weeks, people in Baghdad - without television, radio, or newspapers to warn them - were getting their drinking water from the Tigris in buckets. Iraq's telephone system was put out of service in the first few days of the war.

"One hundred thirty-nine automobile and railway bridges were either damaged or destroyed, including 26 in the Basra province alone. Major highways and other roads were hit, too, making travel a nightmare. Road maintenance stations were bombed to prevent repairs. All kinds of civilian cars, trucks, buses, and even taxis were attacked along Iraq's major highways.

Cont.' - "Iraq's agriculture and food-processing, storage, and distribution system was attacked directly and systematically. Half of Iraq's agricultural production came from irrigated lands, and all of the irrigation systems serving them - including storage dams, barrages, pumping stations, and drainage projects - were attacked. Farmers lost the ability to flood or drain land, cutting food production in half and causing widespread saltwater intrusion in Basra province.

"Iraq's oil industry was a priority target. U.S. planes hit 11 oil refineries, five oil pipeline and production facilities, and many oil tankers. Three oil tankers were sunk and three others set on fire. Bombs hit major storage tanks, the gas/oil separators through which crude oil passes to refineries, the distilling towers and catalytic converters critical to modern refineries, and the important K2 pipeline junction near Beiji, which connected northern oil fields, and export pipeline to Turkey, and a reversible north-south pipeline inside Iraq." - Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf"



27 Jan. '91: Jon told me about the two Lts. horsing around one mid-morning. One of them went to check mail and the other came out into the lobby where Jon was doing security for the intel building next to the flight-line.

The Lt. said, "Hey! Watch this! This will scare the crap out of Williams!"

Jon told me that the Lt. pulled out a chair and sat in the middle of the lobby, dropped the clip out of his 9mm, reholstered, and waited for his friend to come out of the post office room.

When he rounded the corner, the sitting Lt. drew his weapon and fired one round right between the eyes of his best friend.

One took a ride in a silver bullet, the other in a white jacket.

This is not a fucking game!! Do people not take this shit serious or what?

What a fucking moron! Happy War!

"To some people, carrying a gun was like having a permanent hard-on. It was a pure sexual trip every time you got to pull the trigger.

"The concept of sex as a process of domination and defeat is closely related to the lust for rape and the trauma associated with the rape victim. Thrusting the sexual appendage (like the penis) deep into the body of the victim can be perversely linked to thrusting the killing appendage (a bayonet or knife) deep into the body of the victim.

"This process can be seen in pornographic movies in which the sexual act is twisted, such that the male ejaculates - or 'shoots his wad' - into a female's face. The grip of a firer on the pistol grip of a gun is much like the grip on an erect penis, and holding the penis in this fashion while ejaculating into the victim's face is at some level an act of domination and symbolic destruction.

Cont.' - The combination of this intertwining of sex and death can be seen in snuff films, in which a victim is raped and then murdered on film.

"The force of darkness and destruction within us is balanced with a force of light and love for our fellow man. These forces struggle and strive within the heart of each of us. To ignore one is to ignore the other. We cannot know the light if we do not acknowledge the dark. We cannot know life if we do not acknowledge death."

- Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, "On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society"

29 Jan. '91 - Seems we have shower peepers and now some of us are missing our underwear. We don't send our stuff to the cleaners 'cause so many don't get everything back, so we wash by hand and line dry.

Tent Mom walked into the showers one morning at 4:30 am and this guy was just standing there watching a lone woman taking a shower. She didn't know he was there. After Mom asked him what the fuck he was doing and he muttered some lame excuse about fixing the plumbing (probably his), then he turned and ran away.

Some of the other guys told us to just laugh it off, no one was hurt. Right! They aren't the ones being watched by some other guy!

Word came by way of the women working the flight-line that the pilots were being shown porn films before ejaculating their mission. They also were given bags of 'no-doze' pills to keep them hyper on their bombing missions.

Cont.' - I never in a million years thought they would do such a nasty thing. Porn to get men excited to kill? Why do their wives support this shit?

Many of us women now carry knives and go to the latrine and showers in pairs or more. Our 'watch your back' alerts are on high.

A few days ago, word came around that an Army woman was gang raped. Some of the guys we hang out with were really pissed off about that and a few went to look for the men who did it. I was impressed by that. Most of the time I find myself feeling that I don't trust any one of them, then they do something like that.

It does surprise me that some men do care about the treatment of women. Most often I just hear and see bullshit from men, the nasty jokes, close proximity and unwanted rubbing, touching etc.

Cont.' - One night when I was stationed in Spain, I was with my husband at the NCO club and a Capt. in his flight suit came walzing through the club like he owned it and as he walked by, he grabbed my ass with both hands like my husband never did.

If I was more sure of myself I would have broken his fucking arm, but what could I really do against a captain?

Now when we go to the showers or latrine we either go in groups of two or more, and/or carry knives with us. We no longer have weapons, since I suppose the brass thought we were safe from invasion, so they took away our guns, except for the security folks.

Maybe they thought we would start shooting them like the fragging that went on in Vietnam, (which I can certainly understand! Especially if they are the ones that are also stalking us).

Cont.' - What did men do before so many women joined the military? Probably paid out the nose for their concubines and whores, like the ones they brought onto base in Spain anytime the pilots from another command passed through.

They were allowed to completely trash the Officer's Club, like \$85,000 worth of damage and the Commander brought in the whores from downtown (the same one my ex and his buddies went to) for entertaining the men.

We have had two quiet nights, until last night, the sirens went off at 2130, but no speaker warning. Weird.

I wish they would snuff Saddam so we can pack up and go home! They tacked on an additional 179 days and people are really bummed! What is in store for us tonight?

Sweet war dreams!





1 Feb., '91: Wish I could just plug into my head and have all that is swirling around inside be plugged down on paper. I am not a good writer and it gets frustrating to find the words that match my feelings and what is going on around us.

Did write 5 letters and took time to read through my journal. Doing the drawings that I am does help. I am surprised I can still draw a straight line as I haven't done so since I was in Jr. High.

We have decided to just drop the peeping tom thing, we have more important things to do, like keeping our asses alive. Most of the other women have just shrugged it off as no big deal. I think there is enough fright and survival energy in us to fight off a stalker. And I would love to cram the underwear they took right up their asses!

So far we have had 3 nights with no SCUDS, just the wacky alarms going off. Haven't slept for shit, don't eat much and woke up with a headache and bad leg cramps. Others have had similar symptoms. We all think it's too quiet. It's eerie. It is all like we are waiting for

Cont'. - the axe to fall.

Kris came home tonight and opened her mail, in which she got a Nigh-Quil bottle with Scotch inside. She shared and we talked about her pen pals, family and the jerky Master Sergeant she has to work with. He thinks of women as only good for one thing: on their backs. She laughed when she told me about the last alarm Black that happened on the flight-line and how he became a complete basket case. They had to pull him out from under the desk when the 'all clear' was called.

The Marine who gave me advice at Dover AFB before I shipped out was right, "stay away from anyone who brags about their excitement for war, they'll get you killed faster than any enemy."

The Master Sergeant I work for is always belly-aching about how he has to shack up with lower ranked men and that he deserves to have his own quarters.

What happened to being at war and working with everyone?



- JAN. 17, 1991 -

Cont.' - We had another alarm this morning and most people just piece-mealed their wardrobe with their sleeping clothes. It was quite entertaining and we joked around after the 'all clear' was called.

2 Feb. 91 - I started to draw on our tent's front door like some of the others have on their tents. There are signs pointing the way home to people's states and others have created unique lawn furniture - all in dark, sexual humor, of course.

I still watch my back though. I don't trust the Army or Marine guys so much. And I trust Air Force guys last.

Called my Mom and Dad finally. First thing Mom asked, "Well, have you met anyone yet?"

"Geez, Mom", I told her "I didn't fly 10,000 miles just to find a man!"

I think I really offended her, but she just doesn't understand that I am just trying to survive.



3 Feb. '91: Last few days has been quiet, no alarms. None of us can sleep and it is too eerie. It is a full moon, must be something with that. Some of us have been trying to figure out what makes us women and how do we negotiate with that in a war zone. I lost one of my earrings and came unglued, like an earring made me a woman. But then there are some of the women who paint their nails and worry with their hair. For me I just want to get home alive, I don't give a rat's ass about my nails unless I have to use them on some guy in the latrine, shower or in the dark as I am walking home.

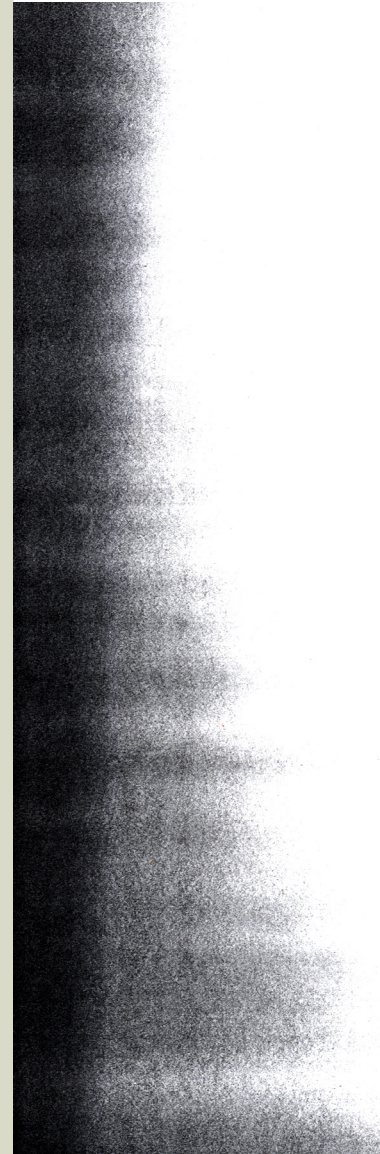
We have been getting care packages with liquor in them and lots of other good eats! This makes it all seem manageable.

We all met up after work, drank and shared stories from the flight-line, and bomb loaders. Some of the guys are real jerks and think women have low tolerances of pain and are basically weak. Tent Mom said the Master Sergeant who she works with was all talk just the other day. Then the alarms sounded and they were in code-black (imminent attack)

"In the absence of a legitimate threat, leaders (be they national leaders or gang leaders) may designate a scapegoat whose defilement and innocent blood empowers the killers and bonds them to their leaders. Traditionally, high-visibility weak groups and minorities - such as Jews and Black - have filled this role.

"Women have also been defiled, debased, and dehumanized for the aggrandizement of others. Throughout history, women have been probably the greatest single group of victims of this empowerment process. Rape is a very important part of the process of dominating and dehumanizing an enemy; and this process of mutual empowering and bonding at the expense of others is exactly what occurs during gang rapes. In war, empowerment and bonding through such gang rapes often occur on a national level.

"...gang rapes and gang or cult killings in times of peace and war are not 'senseless violence.' They are instead powerful acts of group bonding and criminal enabling ... "
- Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, "On Killing"



Cont.' - and they had to pull him out from under the desk. We all laughed about that one.

Someone showed me the two cats that have been hanging out in our tent city isle. Cats! Who would have thought they could live here in the middle of no where. Guess with the people and the mice, there must be cats.

"One of the most remarkable revelations in Watson's book, 'War on the Mind,' is his report of conditioning techniques used by the U.S. government to train assassins. In 1975, Dr. Narut, a U.S. Navy psychiatrist with the rank of commander, told Watson about techniques he was developing for the U.S. government in which classical conditioning and social learning methodology were being used to permit military assassins to overcome their resistance to killing.

"The method used, according to Narut, was to expose the subjects to 'symbolic modeling' involving 'films specially designed to show people being killed or injured in violent ways. By being acclimatized through these films, the men were supposed to eventually become able to disassociate their emotions from such a situation.'

"Narut went on to say, 'The men were taught to shoot but also given a special type of 'Clockwork Orange' training to quell any qualms they may have about killing. Men are shown a series of gruesome films, which get progressively more horrific. The trainee is forced to watch by having his head bolted in a clamp so he cannot

Cont.' - "turn away, and a special device keeps his eyelids open.'

"In psychological terms, this step-by-step reduction of a resistance is a form of classical (Pavlovian) conditioning called systematic desensitization. Remember that desensitization is a vital aspect of killing-empowerment techniques used in modern combat-training programs. In 1974, when I was in basic training, we sang many such chants. One that was only a little bit more extreme than the majority was a running chant:

"I wanna
Rape,
Kill,
Pillage 'n'
Burn, annnnn'
Eat dead
Baaa-bies,
I wanna
Rape,
Kill "

- Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, (Ret.) "On Killing"







4 Feb. 91 - Jeff went to Al Jabial for COMSEC today. When our shipment came in, we called folks on camp and they started to filter in getting their keying materials. One Staff Sergeant who came in was in a hell of a mood. Later, I found out that her unit lost an A-10 and she knew the pilot. The COMSEC that was on the plane was lost as well and we had to send out messages about that. She later apologized for being in a foul mood, but she needn't really, I understood.

Jeff later told me about the buses full of wounded soldiers he passed on his way to Al Jubayl. He said some looked really bad.

I thought about Ronald, another Air Traffic Controller who cross-trained after he got commissioned, into flight navigation. He is here with the C-130 gunships. Don't want to lose another friend in a plane crash like Anderson in Zaragoza. His C-130 ran into the Moncayo mountain. Killed everyone on board and our unit was tasked to go pick up body parts. I was a mess, but the guys stepped up and told me to keep down the fort. Then they had to come back and tell me all the gory details.

Cont.' - Seems we have the first female POW/MIA. Of course all the rumors were about what she and her sergeant were doing alone in the desert when they were caught. She looked so young, as most of the troops.

5 Feb. 91 - I can just see me when I get home. I will go outside to brush my teeth and find a pot to piss in. With any police or ambulance siren's going on, I will be diving into the flower beds. I am sure my dreams will be wild and I hope I get over the bad gas and body twitching I have developed from the damn anti-nerve agent pills we were ordered to take.

I still get the heebiejeebees walking through the Saudi Arabian chow hall and wonder if I am really getting chicken or dog or something.

Our unit is going to try and get more new uniforms including - get this - bras and underwear! I wonder if they are just curious about the women's sizes 'cause the guys have been here too long. Guess I'll really start worrying when us women get nightgowns!

Cont.' - Things have been interesting -the two women who are lovers in our tent and the closeness of the rest. Didn't have that at any of my other bases ... actually women tend to stay away from hanging out too much with other women, [or] else you're called 'Dyke, Bitch or Whore.'

7 Feb. 91 - JR talked about volunteering for Kuwait today. My first instinct is to do so also. I haven't seen enough, plus I want to help where its needed. I don't do much here but write, draw, play solitaire on the computer, smoke and wonder what the fuck this is all about and what I want to do when I get home in one piece, if I do.

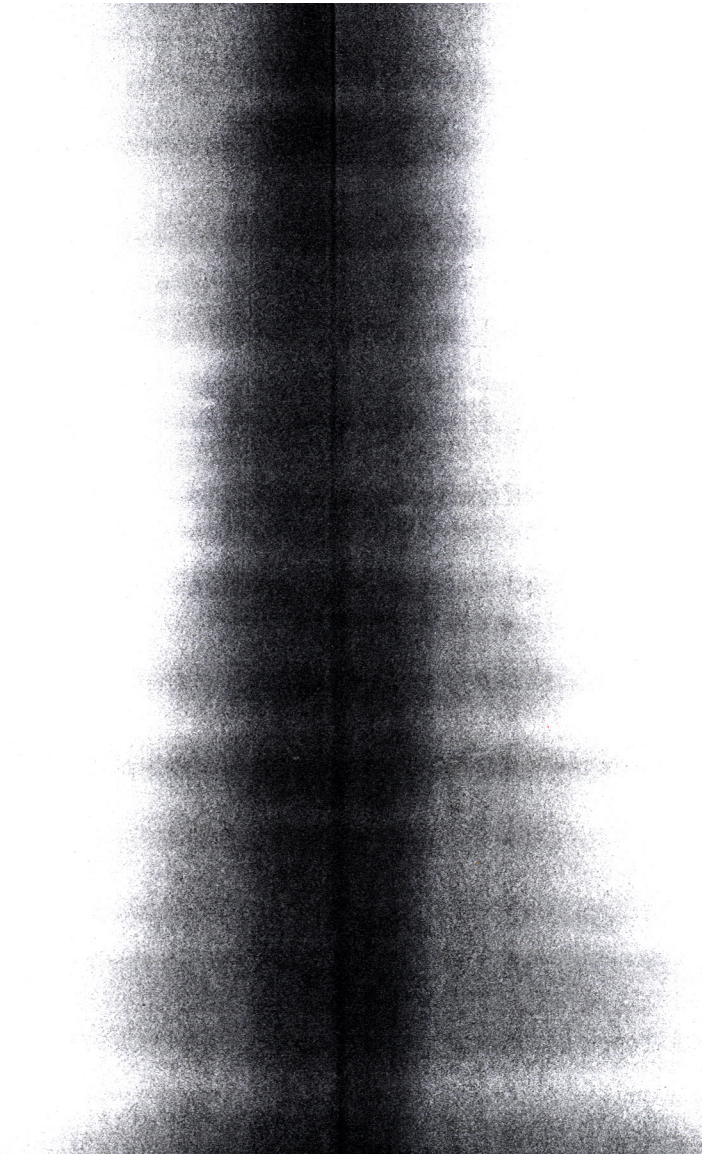
The weather has been cold and windy, and I have been having some really weird dreams. The most recent was about me getting home and finding an apartment that was too small for my things and then they kicked me out for making too much noise. But they took my cats first, then I was bawling like a baby in my truck.

Cont.' -The other dreams I have been having are so totally sexual. I don't see a face or even the whole body, but the man seems to know exactly what to do and, my god, that was damn near better than any actual sex I have had so far in my life. Strange that I have to come to war to have great sex - in a DREAM no less!

Chris and his friend Sammy brought by some sandwiches while I washed my uniforms in mop buckets. It was so hard to think or eat with all the fucking flies. They were so thick and fat you could hardly open your mouth. I have never been anywhere before where there were so many flies!

11 Feb. 91 - I have never seen so many flippin' flies before in my life! They just won't go away! Actually I think they are rein-carnated Iraqi Royal Guards sent here by Hussein, just to piss us off.

Keep thinking about home and how much I miss my cats, my Jeep and riding around in the desert. I look at the clouds and think of the Florida beaches I grew up on and wish to see



Cont.' - my family again. Mostly I just want to be left alone. I don't like hangin' out with a bunch of folks, which is why I don't play cards much with the guys down the hall. I do some days, but most others I rather just focus on my drawings, journal and letters home, not that I put much in those.

We lost a C-130 gun ship today, I looked to see if Drew was on board, but they haven't released the names of those lost.

When I got back home to the tent, Jill came over and pulled out a bottle of Jack Daniels. We sipped and shared some of our day, she is psychic. I was really down with the news of the C-130 and crew. She said one of the pilots gave her the gallon bottle. Nice guy.

Tent Mom came home and all three of us decided to do the showers early instead of tomorrow. I think we have all been down since Jen was sent home. We should be getting her replacement soon.

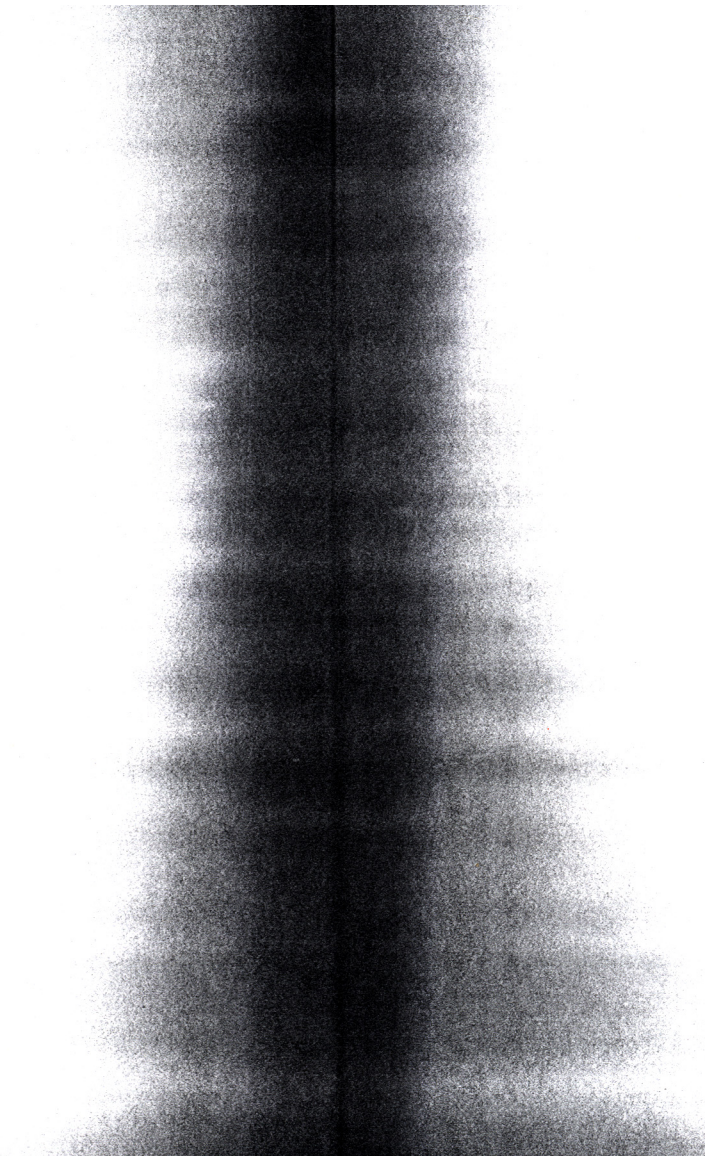


Cont.' - The Guard troops have been rotating every 6 months. Jen was much loved and a fuckin' hoot. They didn't get a chance to see her off, so I gave them a hug from her.

I also volunteered to go to Kuwait today and have a strange feeling I will go forward. We are only 83 miles from the border, so it wouldn't be a long trip.

14 Feb. 91 - 1000 - Got my hair cut off today by Ted, one of the power-pro guys. I just want it out of my face and it really hampers with my gas mask.

We feel that Saddam is really pushing his PR campaign by saying that we are bombing civilians on purpose! We do not intend on purposely killing children and others. Hussein moved his military and POWs to civilian places, hiding behind the innocent - his own people - then cries out when they get killed, claiming we are doing it on purpose. Shit, he is the one who has execution squads out to shoot his troops for trying to defect. He is the one who killed his military heads, even some of his own family. He is the one who



Cont.' - own people and uses them for human shields, not us!

Yeah, like we have enjoyed this killing spree! It has so totally pissed us off here. Let the person with a clear conscience be the imbecile that should spit on me upon my return, like they did to the Vietnam Vets. I will not turn the other cheek. I believe we should stop the madness, but freedom or not, I will not allow someone to spit on me and my service.

Jill handed me a beer and we talked about the protestors, the starving people in our country, bigotry and religion.

We also are worried about the shower peepers and how easy targets we were for possible terrorist actions. Seems few of us are taking things as serious anymore. Few of us put on our masks during our sirens or go to the bunkers for that point, nobody gets out of the escort truck when watching the sanitation guys come in, and all foreign nationals have free run of our Communications Building.

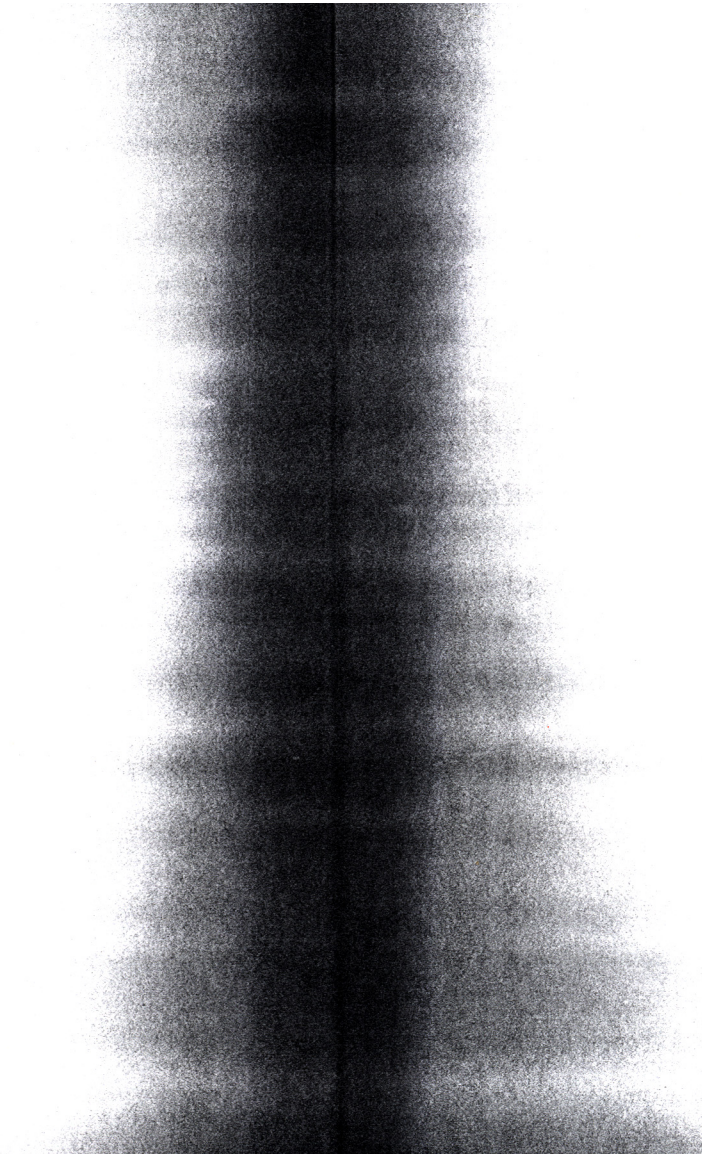
Cont.' - We have also had a rash of our underwear disappearing off our clothes lines. Jeff told me it wasn't a big deal, no harm done. I doubt he would feel the same if men were taking his underwear off his clothes line!

Just yesterday, I was coming out of the Port-a-Potty and watched a young airman who was guarding the Phillipino workers give his loaded M-16 to one of the workers.

My life passed before my eyes and I headed straight for him and the others. I was in 'kill' mode. My pace was quick and my hands balled into fists.

Soon as I got about 10 paces away, the worker noticed me and quickly handed the gun back to the young man and they took two steps back, raising their arms like to surrender. The young airman backed up to the wall right next to the door to our entrance.

A little voice in my head kept telling me, 'don't you touch him, don't you touch him!' I just star-ed a hole right through him as I walked past and straight into the



Capt. Huffly stood back as I told him what had happened and that I would kill that young man if I ever saw him do that again and asked the Capt. to remove him from the guarding duty. (I never saw that young man again).

We had another alert after I got my 2nd anthrax shot. A young woman had a hard time putting her mask on and I helped her, she was so scared.

Rumors started again about us women, my tent especially. They've been saying we're sleeping with loads of men and having parties, which is a lie.

15 Feb. 91 - I find that I just pace back and forth looking aimlessly at nothing, blank thoughts on my mind. I feel plenty though: anger, frustration, homesickness, and sadness for all the loss of life and those still yet to die. It is really hard to find a place that I can just cry, I don't do so in front of the others - I am not weak or a coward, nor am I a sissy, it is my own grief.

Cont.' - I am a part of the killing, even though I did not pull the trigger. I am a part of the generation that will sell their soul for power. But what I mourn most isn't the lost, the mistreated and the dead (here is where my anger and frustration come in). I've never felt such hate before in my life, and to feel that and how much I would like to vent that towards one human being really makes me no better or stronger. I would just try to relieve some steam, but would never stop.

We are waiting for Saddam to unleash all he has before the ground war. 'Intel' says that it may happen tonight ... all we do is sigh, shrug our shoulders and take in deep breaths, but we don't talk about it. We can't, it has to get buried away or we would go crazy.

Fuck you, Saddam! You sick pervert!

"War is an environment that will psychologically debilitate 98 percent of all who participate in it for any length of time. And the 2 percent who are not driven insane by war appear to have already been insane - aggressive psychopaths - before coming to the battlefield."

- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Dave Grossman, "On Killing"

"Before the assault was over, U.S. planes flew more than 109,000 sorties, raining 88,000 TONS of bombs, the equivalent of seven Hiroshimas, and killing indiscriminately across the country.

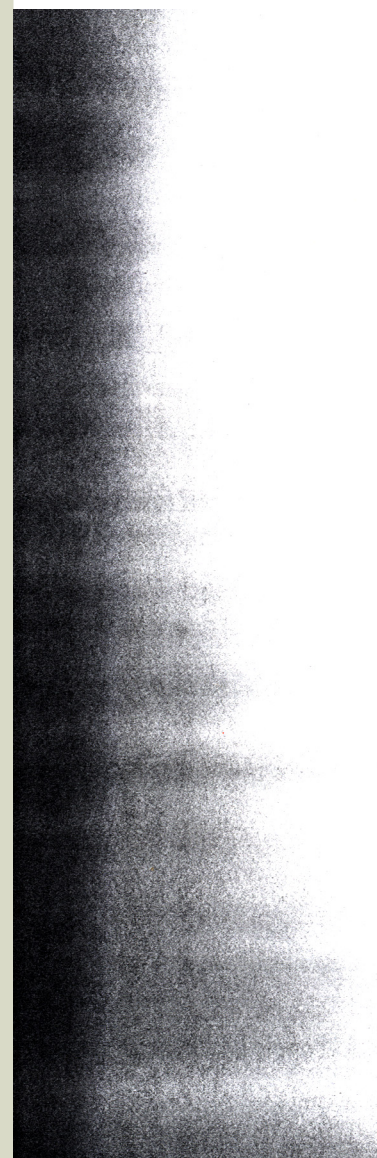
"What was visible was a nation with thousands of civilians dead; without water, hospitals, or health care; with no electricity, communications, or public transportation; without gasoline, road and bridge repair capacity, or parts for essential equipment; and with a growing food crisis.

"The bombing, as could be seen from the ground, was hardly surgical, but was clearly designed to break a whole country and its population for a long time to come.

"While proclaiming adherence to the rules of war, U.S. generals ordered the use of fuel-air explosives (FAE's), napalm bombs, cluster bombs, and the GBU-28 'superbomb' in ways that are inconsistent with international law.

"Fuel-air explosives are devices of near-nuclear power. Upon impact, they release a cloud of highly volatile vapors that mix with air and detonate. One type of FAE covers an area over 1,000 feet long with blast overpressures of 200 psi (pounds per square inch). Humans can withstand only up to 40 psi."

- Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time"



Another woman caught a shower peeper and grabbed his shirt, getting his name. She was going to the Security Police and then her first shirt about it. When she yelled to some guys walking by, they just stood there and watched him run away. Most of the guys think it is no big deal, that it is just out of fun, but we don't feel that way. Nothing a 2X4 wouldn't fix.

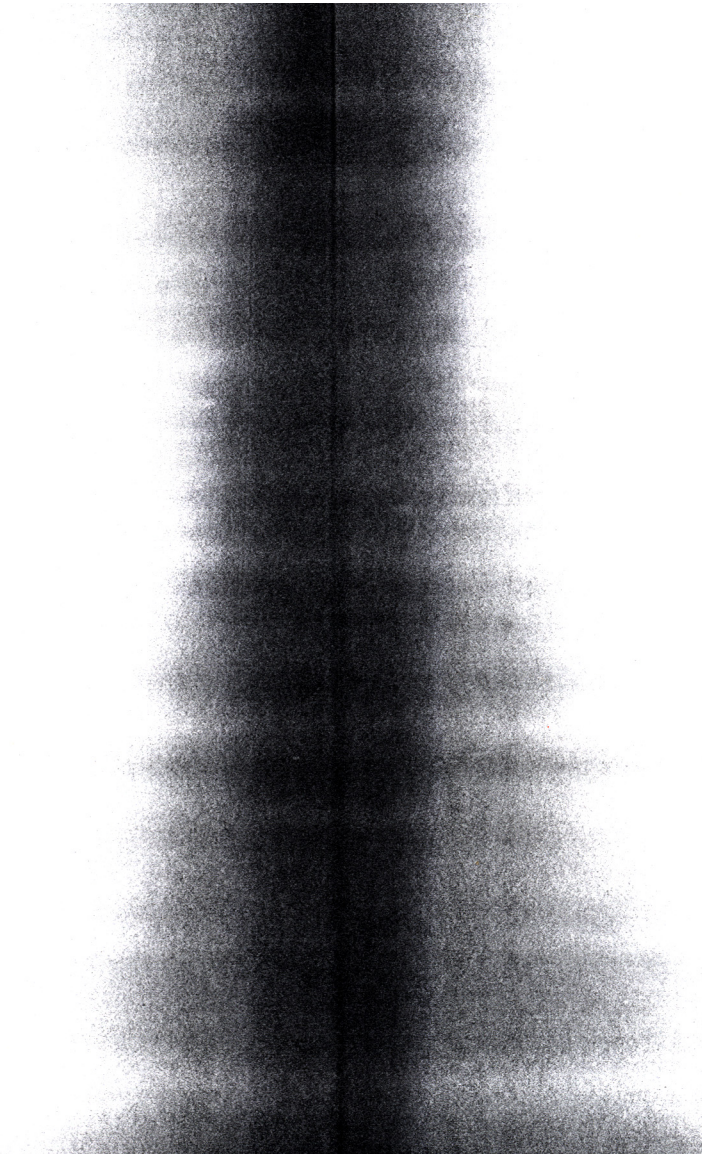
Saddam now says he wants to talk peace and pull out of Kuwait. I think it is bullshit propaganda. He just wants sympathy. But Bush is holding fast, Yes! Way to go Bush! Now we are told on the radio that Saddam is hiding behind schools, graveyards, and hospitals. What a bastard! All through the tent was a unanimous cry of outrage!

More and more, our hatred grows towards Saddam. It is unreal. Saddam thinks the U.S. are the bullies. Maybe everyone needs to look closer at him - that includes the protesters, and worse of all, the consciencious objectors. Have they forgotten we are helping get Kuwait back to the people he said he would not invade, rape, steal from and execute?

Cont.' - Such a small issue for civilians I suppose, but in the military, women don't really want to become a guy. We only want to show that we are just as capable and not on this planet for their sheer pleasure and baby-making. We want respect and to be treated with dignity. We are not dykes, whores or bitches - though we can fill those boots - we are much more than just another body in uniform.

I know that the dainty part of us goes out the fucking door with our gas masks, chem suits, M-16's, vests and helmets. And the other thing we lose is privacy; we brush our teeth together, shit together and change and rearrange tampons together ... but then again we have a job to do, we aren't here for the entertainment! I just don't want to get lost in the sea of men!

Tent Mom found a mouse today and told me I couldn't keep it - dang! Guess I can't keep the baby camel either. But then I don't think about the animals, the herds of camels our A-10's used for target practice, or the ones up on the border, or the marine animals with the oil spill.



Cont.' - Hussein is a twisted mother fucker! War is war and not a time for pleasantries or prettiness. War is hell, and we've managed to create hell on earth. I just wished we didn't send our kids to do our fighting and dying for us. I think it should be the adults who are over here and the people who are all for war. Grab an M-16, bubba, and get your ass over here!

17 Feb. 91 - The ground war should start soon. I can see the fear in the eyes of the others.

Went to the chow hall and watched this young man get harassed by some of his buddies. I could tell he didn't see anything funny about their kidding around. One guy said he could-n't wait to get home and go hunting, and that in the meantime perhaps they would go hunt-ing camel instead. I just hate being around those military types, the super macho buffs with tiny penises. After the chow hall, I just hung out on the bunker in front of our tent. Some folks were throwing a football around. It is cool. All of us are anticipating a SCUD attack tonight. If our PATRIOT missiles go off, we fear the fallout



18 Feb. 91 - The brass must be getting bored. They are back on their rampage about 35-10, which is out the window. What the fuck, we are at war, who gives a flaming rats ass if I wear my hat, or my uniform is fucking ironed! At this point, no one gives a shit! If we get a direct SCUD, won't be nothing left to worry about!

20 Feb. '91: I hate this fucking no-job situation - what a waste of money and effort! We are here to do what? My Msgt. is the laziest, belly-aching, boasting, stupid son-of-a-bitch! Do I want to re-enlist? For what? After this, I have had enough! 10,000 miles to sit on my ass and swim in bullshit!

The rest of the day I struggled with homesickness. What a mess. As hard as I try, I just want to be home with my cats, Jeep and a stiff drink.

I drew three pictures today and then transfered the drawings to pieces of wood that Liz cut up for me from scrap wood. That helped keep me focused on something else. I think between my journal and the drawings, my sanity should hold fast until I get home.

HEY, LT.'S ARE
PEOPLE
TOO



Cont.' - Been considering helping the medics up in Kuwait once the ground war starts. I don't want to sit here and draw when I could be helping our soldiers.

My body aches and I am so fucking tired all the time. Don't feel like writing anyone. What would I say? I am scared out of my fucking mind one minute, bored the next. Not to mention what we all don't dare talk about.

As I walked back to my tent tonight, I could hear the Muslim chantings through the loud speakers floating over us. A chill ran down my spine as I wondered how many alarms tonight.



21 Feb. '91 - 2:20 AM - We have had 2 alerts, one at 5:20 PM, and now. I keep thinking, 'Is this it? Will the last thing I hear be the whistling, sizzling hot scrapnel as it tears through our tent and then into flesh like a frenzied shark in bloodied water?'

Conversations and images race through your head. Suddenly I want to be a child again racing down the beach and bobbing up and down on a raft in the Gulf of Mexico. I keep watching the clouds and imagining that I am back in Florida and that does help my sanity, but sometimes it isn't enough to push aside my intense fear and dread.

9 out of 10 times we have alarms, SCUDs have been launched and passed over our tent city. Now we have invented the Fhad Option - we no longer put on the awkward chemical suit, we just leave on our sweat pants and shirts and add the flack vest, helmet and gas mask for decoration. Tonight a few of my roomies took photos.

The weather has been nice for the most part, then smoky, dusty, rainy and the smell of burning oil - dumb mother fucker, Saddam!



Cont.' - They set the oil wells on fire, that will affect the whole world!

KKMC was hit twice yesterday and Bahrain last night. We heard 420-450 Iraqi soldiers surrendered yesterday and we lost 2 more A-10's. Everyday, we count the number of returning and they do a missing man formation for those lost.

We often hear reports of heavy devastation, lost souls surrendering or dying. Often the conversations sway into the neverland of death, life and life after the war. I've also talked about my own fears and got some good feedback as to how to tend to them.

23 Feb. 91 - Bush gave the ultimatum - out by noon today - sounded more like something out of a cowboy western than from a president. Way to go, Bush!

Went with Ken and Jon to their place and vodka time! I rambled on about my life and he his. I slept really good when I got back to my tent.









Cont.' -

At 5:20 AM this morning we were woken to our sirens, then a 'BOOM-BOOM!!' Those SCUDs were really close! After chow, we were walking back towards the trucks for our ride to work. The sky was a murky brown from the oil fires. It was really eerie.

The flies are driving me crazy - they are just so thick and fat little buggers!

Went to the MCC phones with Cheryl and Morely - she just got off maternity leave when she was deployed - a baby, 5 year old and a husband she left behind for this war.

USAF STANDARDIZED ALARM SIGNALS FOR THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES			
WARNING OR CONDITION	SIGNAL	MEANING	REQUIRED ACTIONS
ATTACK WARNING	 3-5 MINUTE WAVERING TONE ON SIREN OR OTHER DEVICES ----- 3-5 MINUTE PERIOD OF SHORT BLASTS FROM HORNS/ WHISTLES AND OTHER DEVICES	ATTACK IS IMMINENT	PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO DESIGNATED SHELTER OR TAKE OTHER APPROPRIATE PROTECTIVE ACTIONS.
PEACETIME EMERGENCY WARNING	 3-5 MINUTE STEADY TONE ON SIREN OR OTHER DEVICES	PEACETIME DISASTER THREAT EXISTS	BE PREPARED TO TAKE IMMEDIATE SHELTER OR OTHER APPROPRIATE PROTECTIVE ACTIONS. TUNE INTO LOCAL RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS FOR EMERGENCY INFORMATION. LISTEN TO PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS FOR ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS.
ALL CLEAR	DECLARED VERBALLY BY LOCAL OFFICIAL AGENCIES THROUGH LOCAL RADIO, TELEVISION, PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS, ETC	THREAT CONDITION TERMINATED	RESUME NORMAL OPERATIONS OR INITIATE RECOVERY IF APPLICABLE.
CHECK LOCAL PROCEDURES FOR VARIATIONS			
Distribution: F			
AFVA 355-2 20 July 1984			

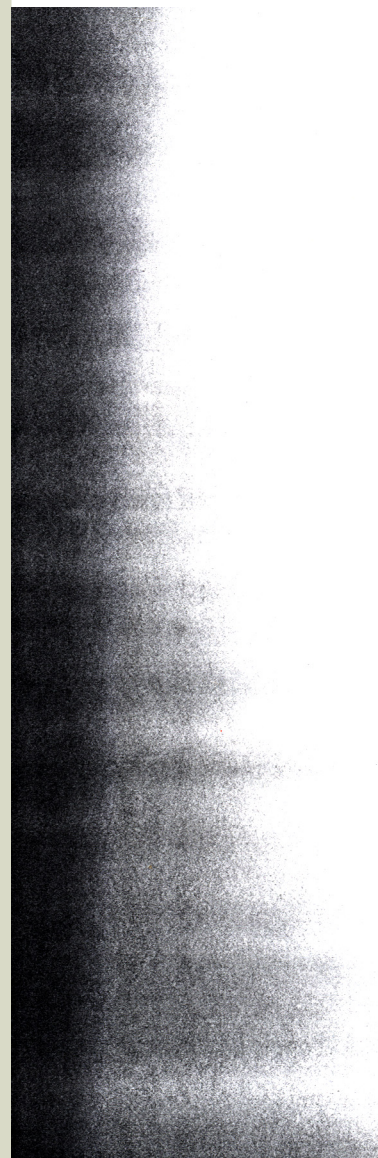
"Kimo Hollingsworth had served in the 8th Marine Regiment during the war; he was also suffering from Gulf War Syndrome. [sic] His unit was involved in the minefield breaching operations on the first day of the ground war. His unit's chronology:

"24 February 1991 G-day: 0631 B Co., 1/6 reports possible nerve agent in first minefield in Lane Red 1.

"0635 B Co., 1/6 is at MOPP level 4, FOX vehicle confirms positive sarin nerve agent and lewisite mustard gas, vic [vicinity of] Lane Red 1.

"0730 regiment S-2 reports to 2nd Marine Division that Lane Red 1 is considered contaminated for the first 300m only."

- Patrick Eddington, "Gassed in the Gulf: The Inside Story of the Pentagon-CIA Cover-up of Gulf War Syndrome"



24 Feb. 91 - Well, Alarm RED at 4:40 am, the ground war has begun. Bush announced on the radio/TV, that he was leaving the power to the generals to use all available force, including ground troops, to free Kuwait.

Everyone was really quiet at breakfast and small groups huddled around their radio's most of the day. Later, Jon called and said that so far it had been a cake-walk. But that seemed more unnerving and too easy - was all of the hype just that?

The pictures I have been doing, I started to put them on 8x10 pieces of wood, and have been quite a hit with the folks in my adopted unit. Later, I took a ride with one of the guys from the unit to go looking for the two SCUDs that landed much closer than thought - 4 miles - which seems far in civilian terms, but close in military terms. We drove and drove through the desert - which was a nice get-away from my normally mundane day. We even drove by a dried up Oasis which was cool.



Cont.' -

Later, 2143 hrs. we had another Alarm RED. While waiting in the bunker after a quiet day, I wondered if now was the time the dip-shit would unload his last ditch effort against us. From Baghdad, the reports were that we had 11 casualties, and that the soldiers were wallowing in their own blood, and crying at their demise. How interesting to listen to Hussein's bullshit.

25 Feb. 91 - 0845 - Alarm RED - SCUD was intercepted just after King Fahd camp on its way to Daharan. An interesting close to a quiet day.

Got a piece of one of the two SCUDs that missed our camp - what a nasty bugger - it is about 2" long and an 1" 1/2 wide. I thought about what it would look like flying through the air at 300 miles per hour, tumbling - not an experience I would like to have at all!

We got reports today that an anthrax outbreak has hit hard up north. We heard from folks who travel often up north and back, that they've seen hundreds of dead camels along the road. They weren't sure it was a natural outbreak or induced.

26 Feb. 91 - 0130 hrs - RED Alert!

Last night I went to Jon's side of Tent City and we went to chow then he was showing me around and talked. We were standing on the tennis courts right next to the siren talking about family and going home when the god-damned thing went off!

Scared the ever-loving shit out of me. I must have jumped 5 feet up and grabbed Jon's arm as I started to run and fumbled with my mask and started to bolt. Jon touched my arm and tried to calm me down.

I put my mask away and he talked to me as we walked through the middle of hordes of folks running for their bunkers. He started to explain to me that a chemical threat was way far fetched due to weather conditions, and of the amount needed and that it would take literally hundreds of them to do anything to a large number of us.



25 FEB 01

AFTER SCUD

Cont.' - I began to relax and watched everyone run, some with toothbrushes in their mouths. It was so surreal, like people were moving in slow motion. We continued to walk back towards his trailer. It felt liberating to walk instead of run, to control my fear and not let it control me. Then I mentioned that it would be neat for me to actually see a SCUD fly over, like many of the others got to see.

We were about 100 feet from the corner of his trailer when, BOOM! A SCUD landed somewhere not too far from us.

The guys standing up on the steps of their trailers cheered and said they saw it fly over and explode. I felt really disappointed to have missed it.

Cont.' - The next morning, I found out that it killed 27 reservists and wounded more than 100.

This afternoon, we had a commander's call and our Capt. told us that they had had a 3-minute siren warning but no one left the building for their bunkers like we are suppose to. He said that he was told the individuals were packed and ready to go home, and that they had become complacent.

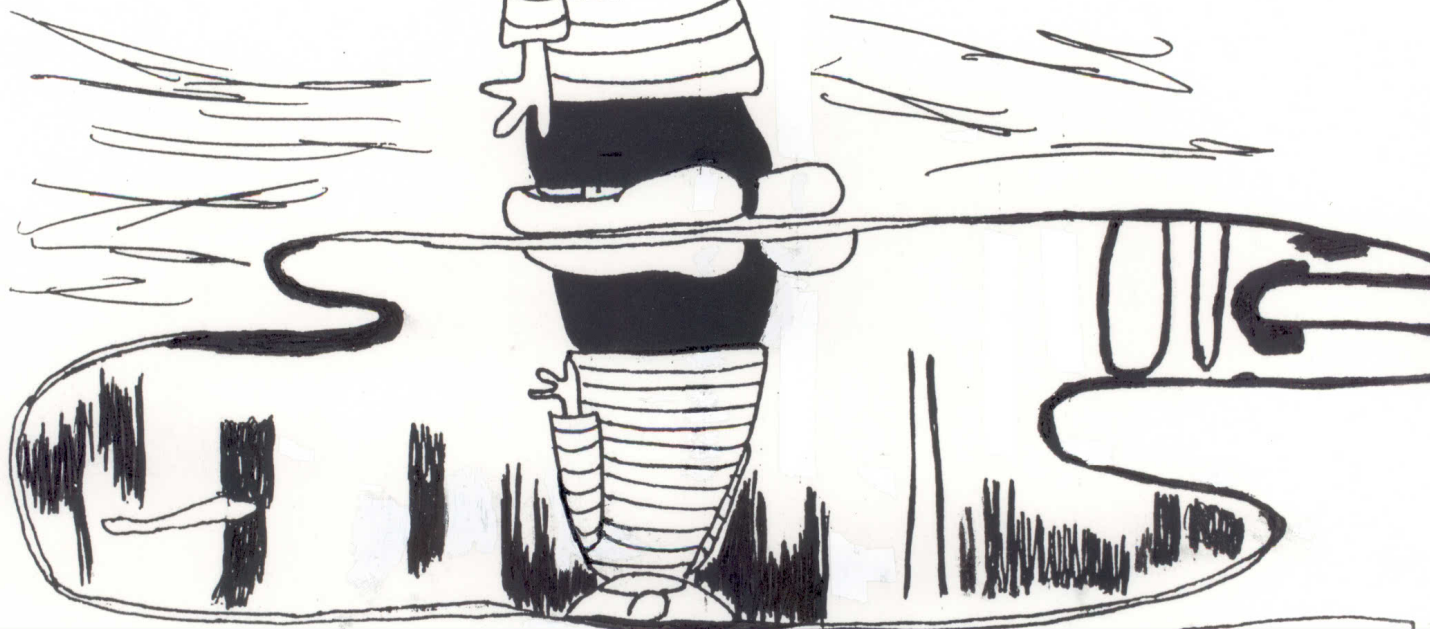
Our Capt. also told us about the ridiculous number of gun accidents. One account was a commanding LT. who was demonstrating in front of his squad what not to do with a 9mm gun. He dropped the clip, and pointed it to his head and pulled the trigger, blowing his brains out in front of his command. He forgot to check the chamber.

Sounds familiar - what a fucking moron!

Went to see Jon at work and he got me through the phone to talk stateside - everyone was very worried that I had been in Daharan.



i don't wanna
play this anymore





YECK, I hate P.M.



29 Feb. '91 - Boy, was it windy last night. We thought the tents were going to be cleared for take-off! Every morning, who ever gets up first makes the coffee for me, Jill and Tent Mom. While standing there with my cup of java, I saw the 'tent kitty'. I was so glad to see it alive. Guess it is a sign that things are going back to normal, what ever that is.

Tent Mom came home with the news that we were going to get our tent inspected for alcohol and porn (like we would have porn)! Now I don't know if I want to do 8 more years of this shit ... people being in your business and telling you what to do and think. Will have to really think about it when I get home.

1 Mar. 91 - Well it's Friday, my night off, and tomorrow a freebie. Guess I'll wash my uniforms after I chase them around the tent once or twice!

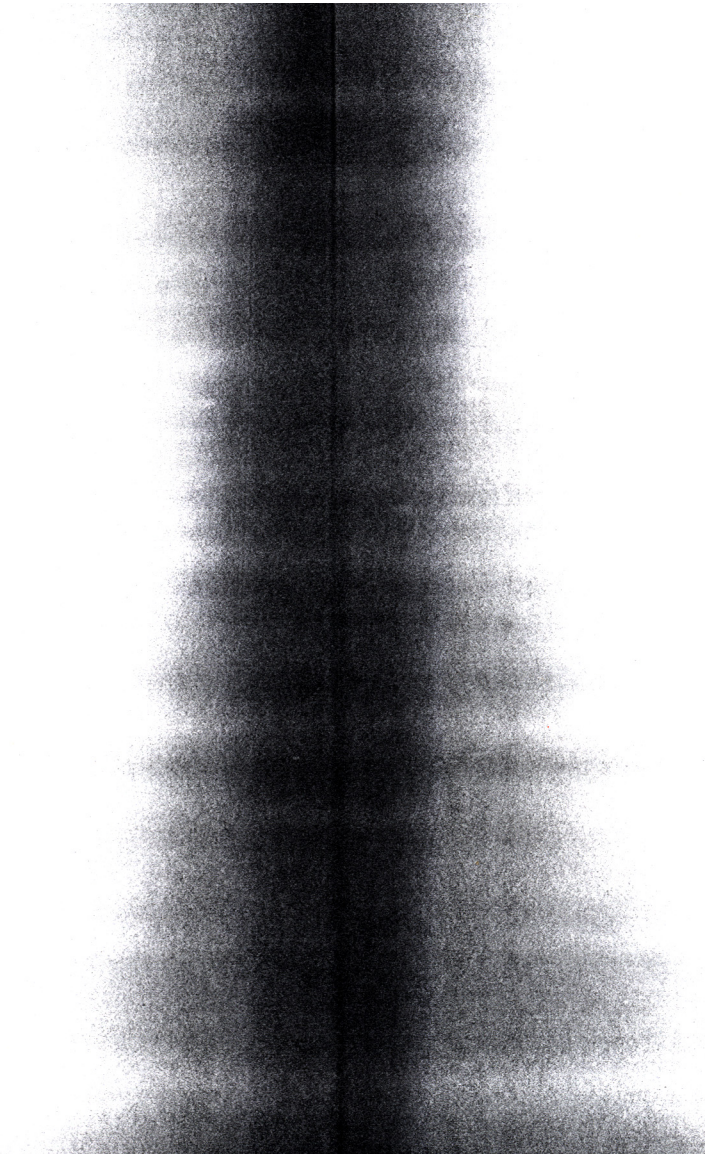
Looks like Saddam is trying to find asylum in another country - I hope he gets shot down, bastard!

Cont.' - All day was icky, the oil smoke hovered over the entire place, it stinks and you get this thin coating mixed with sand all over you.

Got a message that Comm will go home with the wing... 2 to 8 weeks, maybe shorter!

My boss told me tonight that he had talked to an Army Capt. who is aiding in the investigation of the Daharan SCUD attack. It turns out, the people who were killed and wounded did not hear any alarm. There was either a cut wire or a short, so no alarm was sounded. He said that it was a horrible sight; some people were literally cut down in the showers, and in their rooms. He said he saw one guy who lost both legs and arms and was still alive, begging someone to take the photo out of his pocket and to notify his wife that he loved her dearly.

The Capt. said that most of the injuries were loss of limbs. He also said that they had just gotten in country, not leaving and were most all from the same Guard unit out of Philly.



Cont.' - I've seen a lot of misuse of funds, and rank, as well as kindness and strength. Paranoia runs rampant in a few, and courage blooms in others. Everyone involved either directly or indirectly will be changed forever by this experience.

The moon is out and it's a yellowish grey with the lingering haze of oil smoke. What a way to close out this war. Perhaps a symbolic picture of what just passed and what may yet be in store for us in the future.





2 Mar. 91 - The smoke has cleared out with some residual. It is warm and breezy. It has also been really quiet for the past few days. No F-16's, A-10's, C-130's buzzing about. No more paving the sand either. There has been some helicopter activity as they keep bringing in more and more Iraqi POWs for medical treatment. Word is we have close to 300 and they're in bad shape. They are dehydrated, shell-shocked, starving and some were bleeding from their ears from the constant pounding of our bombing.

It is almost too quiet, unless there is a thunderstorm. The other night, I literally lept out of my cot with a crack of thunder, yelling 'Shit!' outloud. Didn't help that I was dreaming of being bombed. I layed there for a bit, then went outside for a smoke. Couple of the other tents had people sweeping out the water from the downpour.

Cont.' - They started to destroy our ammo without warning and I must say it scares the shit out of us.

The winds have been so strong, the tent just pops and rocks and shakes and the flags outside just snap and crack.

Boy, I thought Zaragoza, Spain was windy, but this place is always blowing up a storm by night-fall. Great for drying clothes, but I now get headaches - not those creep-up kind, but instant head bangers. I am not the only one either. A lot of folks at work have been getting them. Weird.

After chow tonight, I went walking around. It felt great to stretch out some. On my way back, I noticed a young Airman trying to feed a starving dog some hotdogs. The poor dog was scared to death, and the guys driving by tried to run it over, yelling, "You fucking Saddam lover, go to fucking hell!"

What a bunch of macho idiots! On my way back to my tent, it was all I could do to keep from losing it. When I got to the tent it was even harder. I love animals sometimes more than us humans, so it could have been that and the combination of my whole trip here.

Everyone has found their way of escape: either reading, playing cards, writing, drawing, jogging, working out or watching TV or movies. I've found I have absolutely absorbed myself into drawing and it has helped make the days zip by. If I get someone to smile, then my day is made.







6 Mar. 91 - Got woken up with another loud 'crack!' - Shit I hate when that happens! A lot of people were starting to pack up and pallets were getting stacked. Excitement filled the air. Then we were told to turn in our flack vests, weapons and ammo.

Then, the bombshell was dropped; 4 to 8 more weeks. Whoa, talk about kicking the chair out from under you! Everyone was just bummed beyond words. 4 to 8 weeks of absolutely nothing to do is not my idea of vacation.

I held off getting too disappointed and upset until I got back to the tent. It had been raining really hard for the past half-hour and when I got there, the women had a plank covering one area that was goopy under the tent. When I got to my area, I panicked, thinking some of my drawings and other things had gotten ruined. Then I saw water coming out from under my cot, and I lost it.

I held off until the 3 visiting males left and I just broke down and sobbed. Kris came over to see if I was okay and I kinda jumbled shit about the pending inspection back home at my base and how no one helped me out at all

Cont.' - and that I may not make it back to finish the work needed, and on and on about my pictures. I just whailed on and on. Then Jill came over with a shot of whiskey and told me to take all the time I needed to get it out.

A while later, I came out from my area, all red-faced and puffy-eyed, but I felt so much better. Then we just talked for a while. I slept like a baby.

The next day at work, everyone was really down and out. Talk about morale doing a nose dive. I just can't see doing 8 more years of this shit. What I just came through was nothing like what we had exercised and wrote regulations for... war wasn't at all what they told us it would be. It is all just destructive bullshit that accomplished absolutely nothing! Too many chiefs with big egos and careers to protect and not enough common sense.

7 Mar. 91 - Who knows what the hell is going on. Nothing but rumor after rumor of when we are going home. Top officers are showing little rally for anyone other than their own troops.

Cont.' - Kinda like pushing their way through the crowd to get on the planes first. 'Me first, I want the TV coverage and the parades!'

Wish you could get one straight answer, so many rumors. I don't know why the group commander won't let the guys go who are not needed and have wives who are either expecting, or who have just given birth, go home? I'll stay, no problem but let the others go home to their families.

Got to remember to clean my A-10 shells and SCUD piece so the dogs checking bags don't alert over them. I want my souvenirs!

Jon gave me a coin that was given to him by Gen. Schwarzkopf when he came through and inspected security. He said it was better than his own. Jon wanted me to have something special.

What a yucky day! A brownish, stinky fog once again has enveloped us.

Got a message to now turn in our chemical equipment - yeah! Fine by me.

9 Mar. 91 - My days continue to bleed into the next and so do the things I do. It is almost like being in a between-world state.

It's amazing to listen to the guys who brag about never playing with their weapons. Well, let me tell you that is bullshit!

As we were tearing things down and packing up the over one hundred M-16's and hundreds of thousands of ammunition, Jeff, my step-child, was helping Matt empty the ammo cartridges by dry-cocking the M-16 INTO the AMMO can!! I asked them if they were nuts! Then I walked outside. I have had enough scares to last my lifetime, I don't need to get blown up by stupid young men!

When I got back inside, I was told what my brilliant boss did, the guy who was really scared of weapons. He picked up a 9mm, took the clip out, put it on safety, asked if it was safe, then without anyone looking, proceeded to dry-shoot it towards the ceiling. What a fucking moron!

Cont.' - One thing I have noticed is that women tend to have a huge respect for weapons. I never heard of any story about a woman blowing her brains out showing her troops what NOT to do!

The oil smoke is rolling back in again - it's 1030 hrs.

I feel stronger in myself than ever, and better with my priorities. I don't feel near as intimidated by other people, nor will I let it happen.

Last night, Jane gave me a black hand-crocheted bracelet made out of parachute cord that she and Kris had been working on. It is great, made into box knots. Kris burned her fingers melting the tied cords together. So it is like our rite-of-passage gift. Then they showed me how to make one and took a photo of me with the cord in my teeth.

We stayed up until 0130 hrs.

It is really quiet this morning except for the banging of doors, a distant fork lift and the low hum of C-130's on the flight line. People

Cont.' - are tearing tents down and the bunkers, washing clothes, running and playing volleyball.

Jon and Ken are in Kuwait already. And Jon sent word back that I not come up into Kuwait.

He said there are booby-trapped buildings, burning bodies and dogs eating the dead. He said that since the cease fire, there were 6 Marines killed by booby traps. He told Jo that I should just get the hell home and live a good and happy life! I didn't need to see this and the Death Highway. All of those words didn't help Jo feel any safer for Ken.





Cont.' -

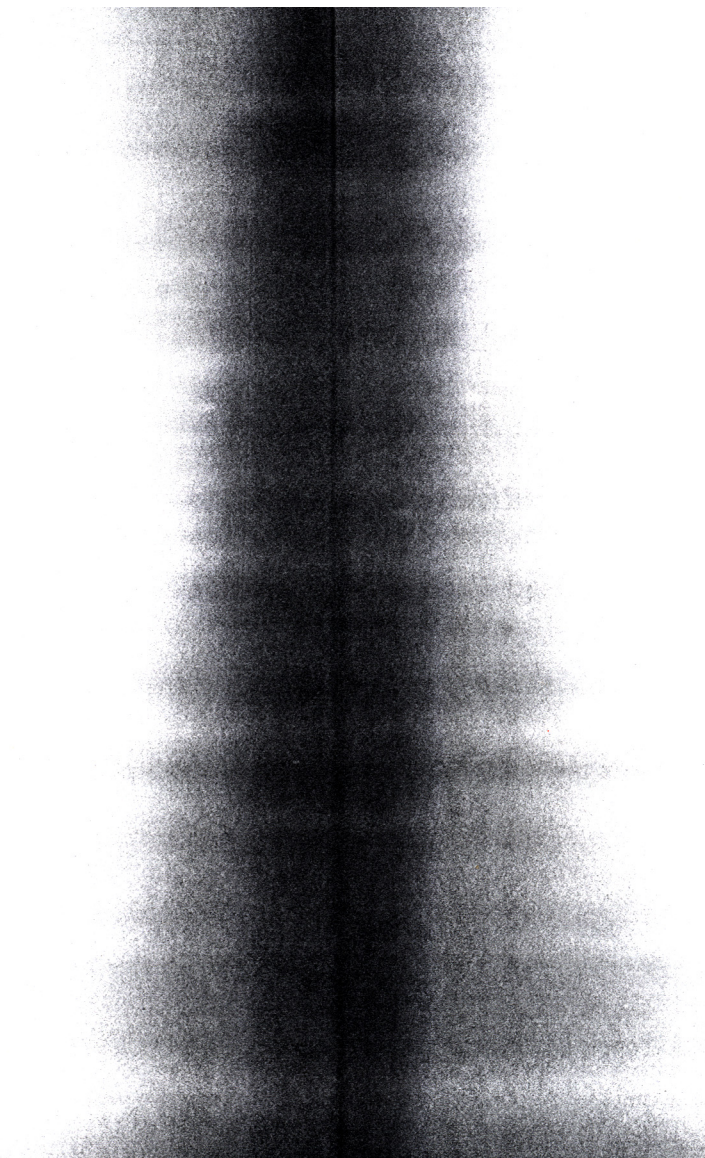
I think the hardest part of all of this is watching all those troops coming home to hoopla and cheers. Many of us get so choked-up, we have to leave the room.

Yesterday, Tent Mom went to Daharan with a few others she worked with to go shopping for souvenirs. When she got home, she told us about the dozens and dozens of piles of dead and burning camels alongside the road, probably from anthrax breakout.

Now on CNN, the dumb fuck Hussein is threatening to use chemical weapons against the rebels who are rising up against him, with the intitial provocation being from Bush.

Now, Bush, I think, is pushing his luck and threatening back to start bombing him again.

Can we call it quits, gentlemen?



11 Mar. 91 - Everyone is so anxious to go home, we are driving each other crazy. It's like we stayed together just for the game and really didn't like each other. But now the game is done and we are looking out for #1 and that #1 wants to get the fuck home.

Rumor is that the Medics are taking their time cause they are a week short of a short tour, and that holds up everyone else. (Not to mention that they now have over 300 new patients - in bad shape).

Chris stopped by and we talked about the weapons and bombs we used and other pilots' stories.

I think everyone wants to get the fuck out of here before the sick mother-fucker starts to use chemical weapons.

Tempers are on the verge of exploding, and it would only take a small thing any time.

It's warm and still breezy and nippy at night, got the season changing for sure.

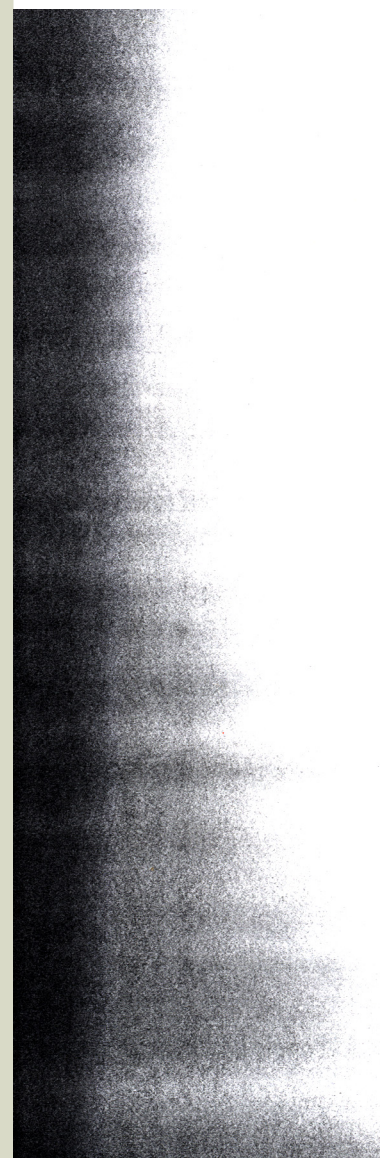




"Napalm bombs are incendiary weapons containing a mixture of gasoline and benzene {a carcinogen}, with aluminum or polystyrene soap as a thickener. The materials fire up quickly after they disperse. The burning gel envelops large areas, igniting anything in the way. Pentagon spokespeople denied using napalm against Iraqi troops, and claimed it was used only to burn off the oil that Iraqi soldiers had filled trenches with as a defensive measure. But one Marine officer admitted, "Napalm was being used against Iraqi troops as it was against the enemy in Vietnam."

"It was clear that Allied aircraft had attacked the highway {Highway of Death} with cluster bombs-the spent casings were laying all over the area. Cluster bombs are designed to break up into hundreds of little 'bomblets' to saturate the target area, spewing out specially formulated metal shrapnel to maximize damage to both man and machine. They leave tell-tale pockmarks in the area of impact.

"The Americans and British used cluster bombs on both troops and civilians."
-Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time"



11 Mar. 91 - Cont.' - Kris talked about our using FAEs (fuel air explosives) - which he called the cheese-burger bombs. They are dropped and before they hit the ground, they release a fine mist. Then, the bomb ignites and sucks the air out of the area before the explosion - so it sucks out the lungs of the enemy troops, then blows them into bits. He said it covered two football fields. He also said the other type of bomb we used, besides cluster bombs, was the Daisy Cutter. It was used in Vietnam to clear landing areas for C-130s. He told me it would easily clear 3 football fields worth of area.

Suddenly, the images of the Iraqi troops that came to our camp came to mind. We pounded the fuck out of men who had already fought a bloody 8-year war with Iran and now they got pounded again by our awesome technology. Then I thought of the camels along the roadside.

I went outside for a smoke and got him to change the topic.

God, I want to go home in one piece.

11 Mar. 91 - Cont.' - Earlier in the day, I went with the radio crew to Al Jubayl to help them tear down their radio equipment for the medical crew there. We stayed for about 40 minutes. Geez there was nothing there and they had the same bare-bones tents and latrines the Army did at our camp.

On our trip back to base, we passed by tank after tank, both American and British as they were moving to planes that would take them home. There was sparse Saudi housing, just tin sheds really. We passed by the largest desalination plant in the world - which was cool and a Harrier floating in mid-air.

We spotted some camels and pulled off the road, first thinking we would get shot, but we went up to them and petted the camels. They reminded me more of horses, with the same mouthing movement when searching for a hand out. One poor animal had its eye hanging out and had a raspy breath.

Latest news was that my departure date is set for April 26th.

12 Mar. 91 - Wow, I just got done helping tear

Cont.' - down some of the TRC 170 van. We had to tear down the camoflauged netting and the antenna pole and clean it all. Then we had to pack and box up all the equipment (after steam-washing it).

By the end of the day, I am bone-dog tired. But I had the greatest time. I actually feel that I have done the most constructive thing since I've been here.

Earlier, a message came down and my boss requested four of us be shipped home. So I could be getting home sooner, but I won't hold my breath.

13 Mar. 91 - This afternoon, we were told our papers got signed and we leave tomorrow. All day, I've had such a mixture of feelings. I will miss everyone, though, that's for sure: the girls in the tent, our talks, fun, cries, frustration, anger, disappointment, and homesickness. We had a shared bonding experience that many others back home have never had and will never understand, probably as long as I live. Not only our bonding, we shared a part of history. That is something no story,



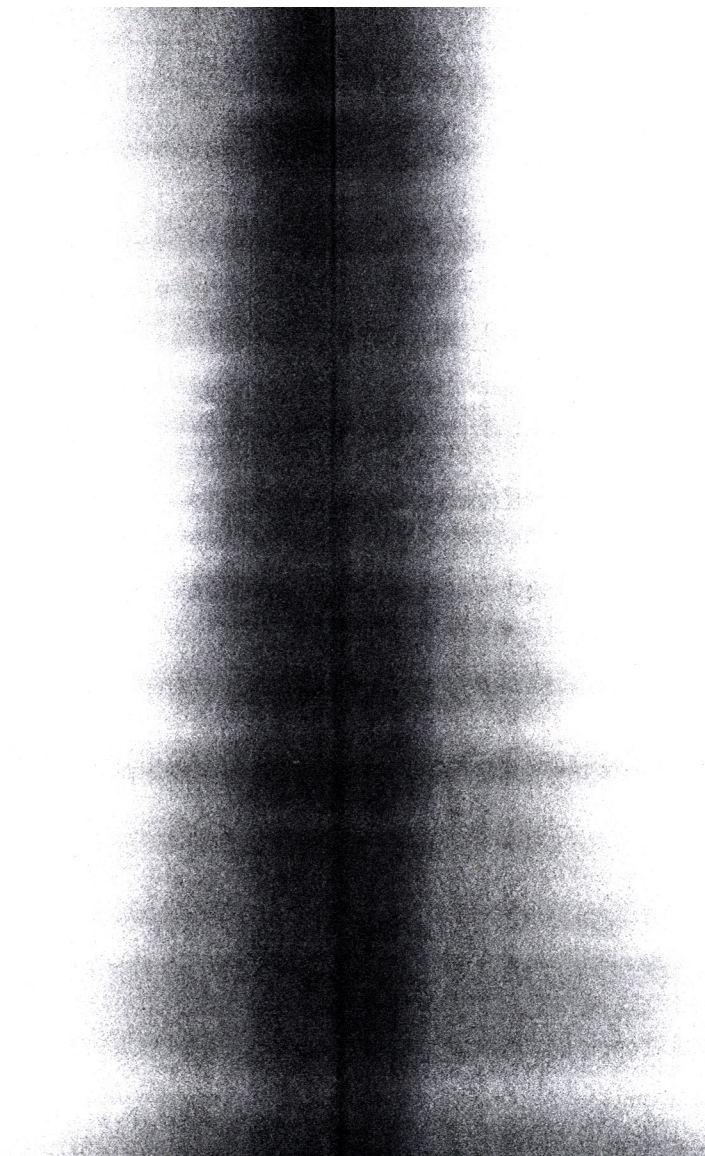
Cont.' - pictures, drawings, or journals could ever truly be able to describe to anyone without the experience.

I came home and packed my stuff up, washed my last bits of undies (that weren't taken off the line) and took pictures with the others. Then, we exchanged numbers and addresses.

Then, Kris and Heidi water ballooned me pretty good.

Chris stopped by to say good-bye, then Tent Mom, and Jill, with Jeff on their heels, had a puppy in his arms.

He said he was over making a phone call at the MCC tents, and there was this soldier from the 101st standing next to them with tears in his eyes, begging for someone to take care of the puppy. He said that he had picked her up while in Iraq. She's creamy white with brown spots and about 2-3 months old, what a cute little bundle. She won everyone's heart here. Chris and Tent Mom are going to try to find her a way home to the states. I feel for that poor soldier. Chris also said he was about to take her out to the desert and shoot her.



14 Mar 91 - GOING HOME !!!!!!! It's 1241pm, we out-processed, said our tearful good-byes, and are in this huge tent the size of a hanger, which is used for the outgoing manifests back to the States. In the front of it is a customs set up for checking bags and making sure no live cluster bombs, sand, weapons, etc. get on the plane. The guy at customs said they had a few pallets blow up because the guys from the Army were trying to take home unexploded cluster bombs. He also said that one guy had a dead Iraqi's arm and a AK-47 with ammo.

We picked out our spots and got settled for the long wait. How different the expressions are on the faces of all these people on the way home, and the stories each person must have to tell. I'm sure each person will leave a small bit of themselves here, all ranging from friends, new loves, insecurities, hate and weakness. They take newfound strength with them. Whatever we take or leave, I hope it was what each one of us was searching for deep inside.

0525pm - Well, still here. Some of the group left, and more filter in. We should be next to



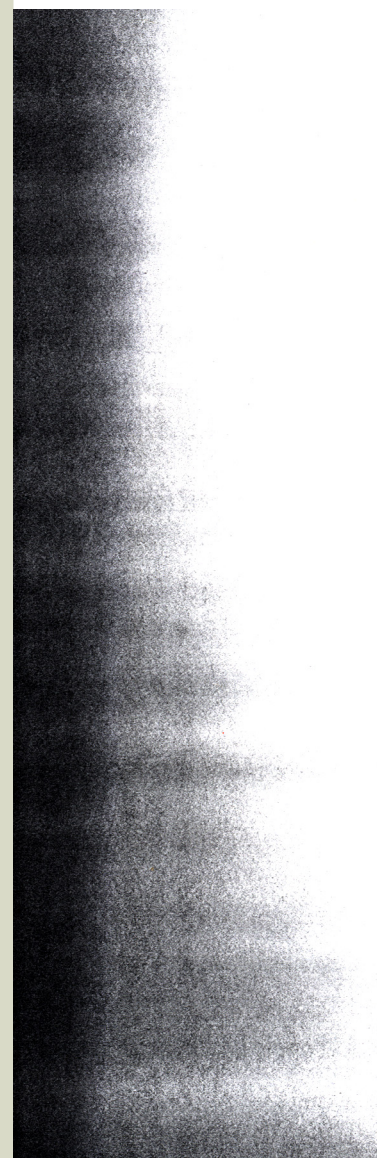


"On January 24, the day before President Bush accused Saddam Hussein of deliberately spilling oil into the Gulf, Baghdad Radio announced U.S. aircraft had hit two of its oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. U.S. bombing purposely targeted oil tankers and storage facilities in the Gulf. Saudi scientists estimated that 30 percent of the oil spill was attributable to this bombing.

"The front page of the January 26 New York Times carried a photograph of an oil spill on the coast of northern Saudi Arabia... The Times prominently quoted President Bush who said: 'Saddam Hussein continues to amaze the world... Now he resorts to environmental damage.

"The next day, the Times did mention Iraq's claim that the main spill resulted from allied bombing of two tankers. But it gave the most prominent play to U.S. accusations, comments, and speculation about why Saddam Hussein would commit such an act. In contrast, Britain's ITN Channel Four News reported on January 28, that the oil pollution on Saudi Arabia's northeast coast was the result of U.S. military action."

- Ramsey Clark, "The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf"



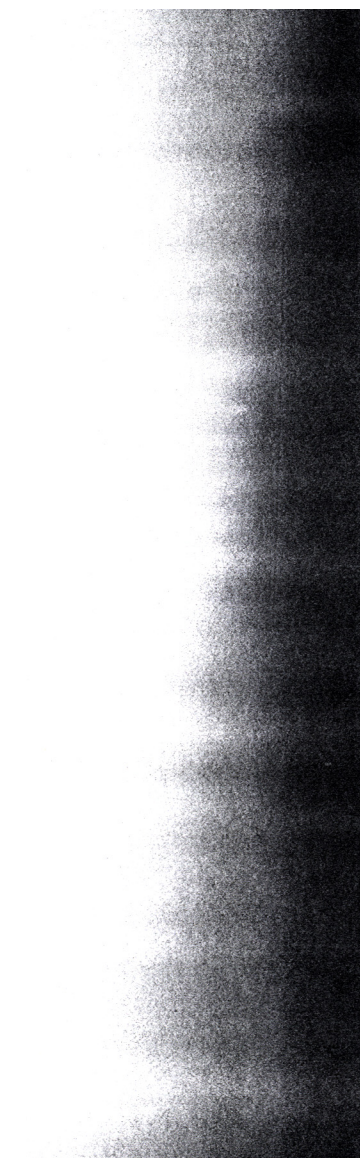
Cont.' - go. This reminds me of my trip over, except it's a lot more organized, and the people are a lot more cheerful. I'm always glad to go, but hate the long ride. This is an extremely long trip and if you don't have a good book, or something to write, or if it's too hot, or too cold, it can be a miserable 8 hour ride and I have about 3 of those. People around here are keeping busy, some people are telling stories, others are anxious to just get home. One of the guys from the squadron brought us some chicken dinners to eat, very tasty, drove everyone else crazy. Sorry. Back to waiting

15 Mar 91 - 0321am (Saudi time) Okay, okay, this is really trying my sense of humor. We've been in the air now for 4 hours. One thing that is consistent with the military is 'hurry up and wait.' We originally boarded the plane at 10:00pm, and waited by the flight-line until around 12:25am. We managed to squeeze on board this C-141, 73 people - in jump seats, with 3 aircraft engines, explosives, our luggage pallet, and 2 bathrooms. It's not too shabby. I am 'up close and personal' with one of the aircraft engines as I write this, trying to thaw out. Most of the passengers are medical

Cont.' - personnel. Once we took off, no cheers rang out, but you could hear silent comments of who could kiss our lilly whites that we should EVER have to return!

1124 am - Rhein Mein AB, Germany, here we are again - waiting. So far, we've been here in the terminal for 6 hours, it looks like we are on our way though. This plane is a C-141, looks like 90 passengers. Do wish the people in customs would make up their minds on what you can and can't take with you. While waiting for a plane, I watched some Army soldiers dump all kinds of ammo into the amnesty box. I also couldn't believe some of our guys dumped some of the empty shell souvenirs they had. Hell, the custom guys would have to tie me down to get any of my souvenirs. Empty shells don't hurt a thing. Live cluster bomb pieces, Iraqi weaponry, and hand grenades, well that SHOULD BE COMMON SENSE...right?

1345 hrs. - Just finished a short conversation with a small group of soldiers who were sharing stories and then the subject turned to 'booty.' I noticed I was the only woman on board... Arizona, 1115 pm - I'm Home!



"Chemical weapons are not living organisms; they are made through a combination of chemical compounds, some very common. Chemical agents generally come in four varieties: nerve agents, which attack the human nervous system; blister agents, which are designed to cause severe burns and or blistering to exposed skin and eyes; blood agents, which block the use of oxygen in every cell of the body; and choking agents, which attack the lungs and cause 'dry-land drowning.' In high enough concentrations, any of these agents will kill.

"Chemical weapons were used in World War I by all of the belligerents; by Italian troops in Abyssinia in the 1930s; by Japanese forces against the Chinese during World War II; by the Egyptians during their expedition in Yemen in the 1960s; and by both Iraq and Iran during their bloody eight-year war during the 1980s.

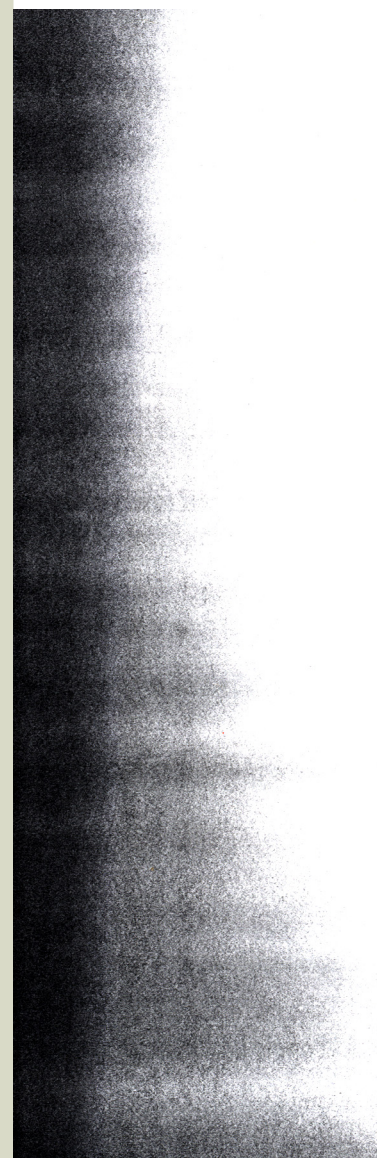
"The U.S. military deployed a number of chemical agent detection systems during the Gulf War. They varied from simple air sampling to laboratory-quality mass spectrometers capable of precisely categorizing the agent or agents detected. In many of the cases documented in this book, two or more chemical agent detection systems detected the presence of

Cont.' - "chemical agents in areas occupied by U.S. forces.

"Biological weapons are generally either pathogens (viruses, bacteria, mycoplasma, rickettsia, or fungi) or toxins. The pathogens can be naturally occurring (like anthrax) or, more ominously, genetically altered to produce specific disease-causing effects. Most pathogens are degraded by exposure to sunlight; toxins tend to be highly resistant to environmental effects, and are thus more persistent. Pathogens are generally highly transmissible, toxins somewhat less so.

"All biological agents are more easily disseminated than their chemical counterparts, and are much more lethal in smaller quantities than nearly all chemical agents. I believe that Iraq may have used similar weapons - either alone or in combination with chemical weapons - against Coalition forces during the Gulf War, primarily through the use of SCU variant missiles."

- Patrick Eddington, "Gassed in the Gulf"



Afternote: While I was stationed at Zaragoza AB, Spain from 1982 to 1989, I kept having the same dream of being chased in a desert landscape by two men in a military Jeep with a .50 caliber machine gun. It seemed to me that there had been some type of military/nuclear holocaust and that not many people had remained.

At one point, I had jumped and rolled down a sandy hill and hid under sage brush as the Jeep jumped the hill and sped past me. That is when I noticed they were of foreign decent with towel-like cloths wrapped around their heads and faces.

After they sped past me, I ran to a nearby abandoned grocery store only to find a broken vending machine with a few crackers left inside a broken box. The rest of the store was ransacked.

The photo on the next page was a spot I passed in Saudi Arabia after the war and was similar to that place in my dream.

It seemed to me that my dream was a premonition of sorts, thus the photo.





















Hmmm -
GOD, I'm LOVED ??



Walkway To
Terminal

Exit



Walkway To
Terminal

Exit

We're Proud

The night I arrived back to Arizona, my friends threw me a 'Welcome Home' party. I soon realized that I didn't really know many of the people there very well. Still reeling from the effects of my whole experience, I fixed myself a drink, made a plate of food and started to tell some of my story. My friend Margaret leaned over the counter, cutting me off in mid-sentence, and said, "You need therapy!" Then, she turned around and walked away.

I just sat there, dumbfounded. Then I picked up my plate and went outside to sit by the pool, where I stayed the rest of the night, getting drunk and fending off the sexual advances of one of the attendees.

My other friend who was not at the party because of a bad cold was much better and listened to my entire story without judgement or comment. However, she, her husband and daughter left for Germany 8 months later and I was lost again.

This was the start of my unraveling while the war continued to swirl around me. It showed itself in my mirror, haunted me in my dreams:

jets and explosions all around as the Grim Reaper floated next to me. The shadow, with a knife in his hand, stood in my doorway, another tapped on my window. But that was nothing but a dream or hallucination, right?

I still stayed in the Military. Why did I stay? I stayed partly because I believed what the military propaganda said about civilians not understanding the freedoms the military provides; but really there were no jobs. I stayed because if I had left, I really wouldn't have tried hard enough to find my fit in the military and I would have let others down.

Really, I felt alone in my hate for war and because I was a closeted homosexual - two huge things I felt I couldn't tell anyone.

So one night, I finished my Jack Daniel's, went into my room, pulled out my .357 magnum, put in 3 hollow-point bullets, pulled back the hammer and placed it to my temple. I had the trigger pulled half-way when my two cats came running into the room.

Even though I re-enlisted for six more years, it was becoming clear that I could not stay in an institution that was intent on the destruction of the planet as it sought the next enemy of the moment to justify its existence. Every morning, as I drove my Jeep to the base, I cried. I also realized that I could never be an open lesbian in the same institution that witch-hunted homosexuals. It was during this time that President Bush Sr. was downsizing the military and there were numerous offers paying people to leave.

I decided to take the money, go home and enroll in college. I left the military in 1992, on my birthday. Some of the very people who had welcomed me home then turned their backs on me or walked out of the room when I entered. I was fine with that, actually, because they had begun to tell me to shut up or suck it up - to get over it because it wasn't a real war anyway.

Mom and Dad welcomed me home and I eventually earned a B.A. degree in Interdisciplinary Social Science: Anthropology and Women's Studies.

I didn't come out to my family until 1996, but they were very good about it. I made a mistake with my sister and her husband by not telling them at all, they just found out the hard way. But that is a story for another time.

During my time in college, I had the opportunity to re-educate myself about the military, U.S. foreign policy and violence against women in the military and during wartime. This education continues today, 19 years later. I voice my opposition about the illegal and immoral occupations of other countries (including Iraq and Afghanistan), but I don't come to my opinion lightly. I come kicking and screaming. Before I could even go to community college, I had to take remedial reading, writing and math. I thought I was smart in the Air Force, but I was basically operating at a 6th grade level. All these "transferrable skills" the recruiters promoted really didn't feel so true, or "transferrable," after all.

The first half of this book speaks to my experience only. The second half is composed of photos I began taking in 2005. For most of my life, photography was something I loved. It was all I wanted to do; I envisioned myself being a

Cont.' - photojournalist. Instead, I ended up in an institution that did its best to destroy that vision. Photography eluded me because, as a creative person, I felt dead.

Now, I have become very involved with Veterans For Peace, a group I was introduced to at my ticker-tape 'Welcome Home' celebration in Phoenix, Arizona. I didn't join for many years; even after I became a member, I was still not an active one. Mainly, I didn't want to ever be around military men again. However, that changed after I moved to Minnesota and met the members of Chapter 27. After a conversation with one of them, I just sobbed. To know that not all military men wanted to be violent was the first step for me as a woman to heal and not hate all men.

After 9/11, I jumped into the Peace movement. In 2005, more and more war veterans were coming home and protesting the war. This is when I found a digital Nikon and went to work looking for what was dividing the country I so loved.

The title of my photography project is "Chronicles of Our American Conscience: Americans Working for Positive, Non-Violent Change."

The photos are of the Peace movement and of recent veterans testifying in Maryland for "Winter Soldier." The testimonies were about the atrocities committed against the civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan, fraud, waste, the abuse of private contractors (like Dick Cheney's Halliburton), sexual harassment, assault and rape against women in the military.

There are a lot of other things I would like to put into this book, but I will close here with a experience I had as a child.

I grew up in Clearwater, Florida and spent lots of time on the beaches, on my bicycle and dreaming of the places I had seen in my grandparents' National Geographic magazines. Often, I went down the block to a little creek that meandered between the houses and sat in the soft grass. It was there that I knew I was part of a very beautiful world that was much greater than me. And I wanted to participate in it in every way.

I now see that the military is disconnected to the rest of this planet, the majority of which is simply trying to survive. We are on this planet together. We need to love each other.

It is simple for me now: do no harm and take care of others, including the planet.

There are two very powerful emotions: fear OR love. We have the choice, no matter how bad it seems (because bad news sells better than good news and violent movies are more popular than love stories). We choose how we react to our experiences. After the war, I have chosen love.





"For members of the military and their families, America is a very troubled place right now. On top of enduring the anxiety of one or more combat deployments, upon their return home, these brave men and women are met not with compassion and support, but by a military culture that, in the face of all evidence, insists that their psychological injuries are a sign of weakness. Because of this, returning combat soldiers are discouraged from asking for help, and are forced to do battle with an underfunded bureaucracy in thrall to a partisan political agenda, and, perhaps most isolating of all, kept ignorant of an historical context that would help them understand that they are not alone in their struggles.

"Those of us who have tried to bring attention to the daunting number of war-related psychiatric casualties have been compromised in our efforts by a dearth of the kind of images and stories that would help us translate statistical information into human terms. I believe that one of the reasons we Americans have been so tolerant of what is being done in our names is that there have been so few human faces, voices and stories on which to hang our emotional understanding."

- Penny Coleman, "Flashback"

"Fear of death and injury is not the only, or even the major, cause of psychiatric casualties in combat.

"There are deeper underlying causes for the psychiatric casualties suffered by soldiers in combat. Resistance to overt aggressive confrontation, in addition to the fear of death and injury, is responsible for much of the trauma and stress on the battlefield. Thus, the Reign of Fear is represented as only one contributing factor in the soldier's dilemma. Fear, combined with exhaustion, hate, horror, and the irreconcilable task of balancing these with the need to kill, eventually drives the soldier so deeply into a mire of guilt and horror that he tips over the brink into that region that we call insanity.

"Other elements of psychiatric casualty causation, a metaphorical model representing and integrating the factors of fear, exhaustion, guilt and horror, hate, fortitude, and killing."
- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Dave Grossman, "On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society"





"When Mussolini and his mistress were publicly executed and hung upside down, the mistress's dress flopped over her head to display her legs and underwear. One woman in the crowd subsequently had the decency to walk up and tuck the corpse's dress between its legs in a show of respect for the dead woman: she may have deserved to die, but she did not deserve to be so degraded after death.

"Where did we lose this sense of propriety toward the dignity of death? How did we become so hardened?

"The answer to that question is that we, as a society, have become systematically desensitized to the pain and suffering of others. We may believe that tabloids and tabloid TV make us exceedingly conscious of the suffering of others as they spread the stories of victims.

"We are reaching that stage of desensitization at which the inflicting of pain and suffering has become a source of entertainment; vicarious pleasure rather than revulsion. We are learning to kill, and we are learning to like it."

- Lt. Col. Dave Grossman "On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society"





COR



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L/CPL ALEXANDER S. ARRA...
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CONSTITUTION
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OF AMERICA





"It is a condition of wisdom in the archer to be patient because when the arrow leaves the bow, it returns no more."
- SA'DI

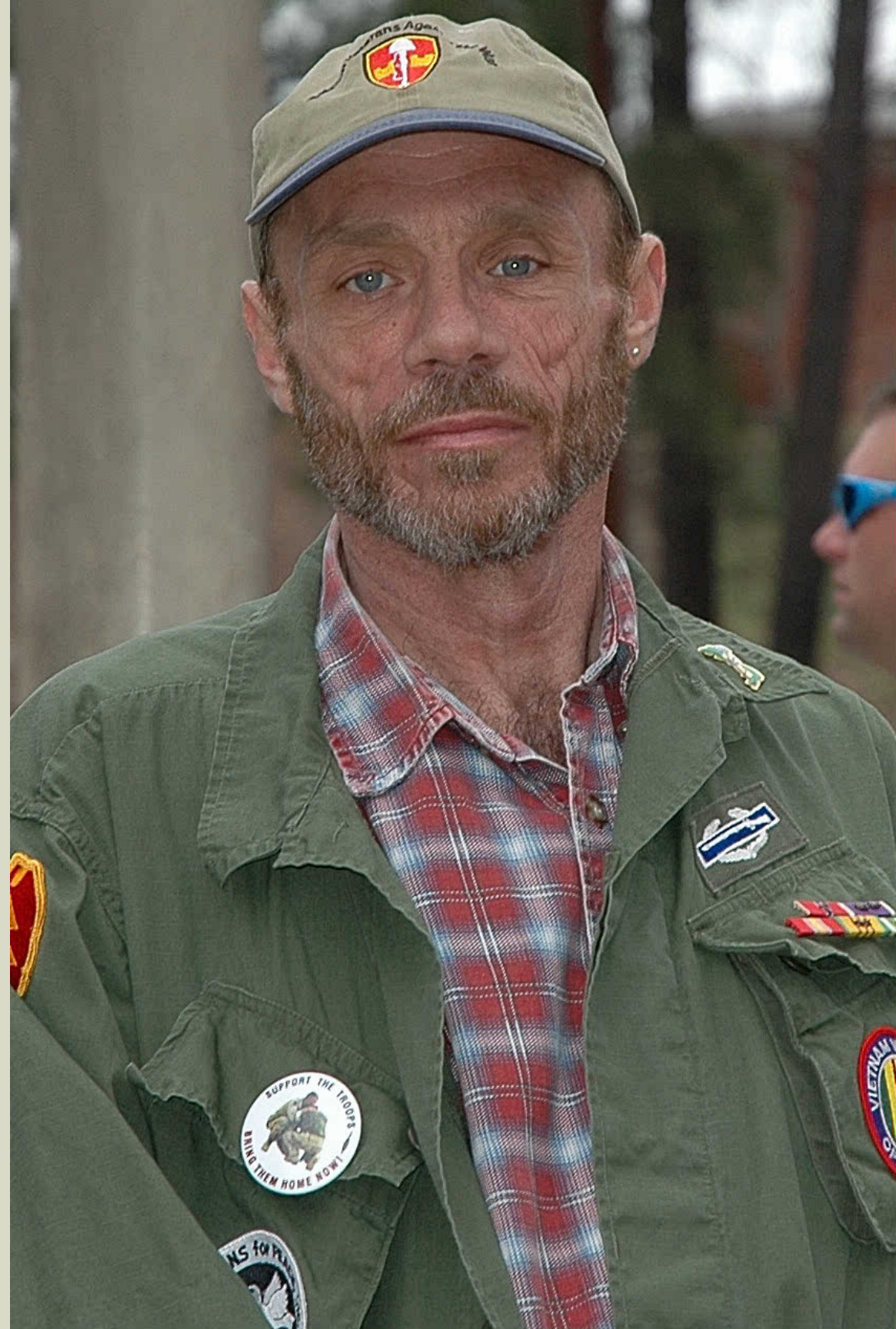
"It should make you shake and sweat, nightmare you, strand you in a desert of irrevocable desolation, the consequences seared into the vein, no matter what adrenaline feeds the muscle its courage, no matter what god shines down on you, no matter what crackling pain and anger you carry in your fists, my friend, it should break your heart to kill."
- Brian Turner, (Iraq War Veteran) "Here, Bullet"





"War is a Racket." In 1935, Smedley D. Butler, Major General, United States Marine Corps (Ret.), speaking just before his death, said:

"I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested."



1/3 of all
Women
GI's are
Raped.

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*"...to practice tolerance
and live together
in peace..."*

United Nations Charter Sign
June 26, 1945
Veterans - ... Los Angeles, CA





"War forms its own culture. The rush of battle is a potent and often lethal addiction, for war is a drug, one I ingested for many years. It is peddled by mythmakers - historians, war correspondents, filmmakers, novelists, and the state - all of whom endow it with qualities it often does possess: excitement, exoticism, power, changes to rise above our small stations in life, and a bizarre and fantastic universe that has a grotesque and dark beauty. It dominates culture, distorts memory, corrupts language, and infects everything around it, even humor, which becomes preoccupied with the grim perversities of smut and death. Fundamental questions about the meaning, or meaninglessness, of our place on the planet are laid bare when we watch those around us sink to the lowest depths. War exposes the capacity for evil that lurks not far below the surface within all of us. And this is why, for many, war is so hard to discuss once it is over.

"The enduring attraction of war is this: Even with its destruction and carnage, it can give us what we long for in life. It can give us purpose, meaning, a reason for living."

- Chris Hedges, "War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning"





"To answer the question about a common human nature, each of us must search our deepest selves. We must discover our own special uniqueness and distinguish it from that which we have in common with everyone else. One enlightening time to explore our deepest selves is the happiest moments of life when we experience joy and bliss. Another revealing time is when we face our most serious problems. Overwhelming threats, dangerous emergencies, and fatal illness expose our inner nature. When we experience physical injury, emotional trauma, social upheaval, spiritual crisis, and the loss of a loved one, we confront our innermost self."

- Ruth Whitney, "Feminism & Love"

"We know there is power in spirit that can answer our prayers and change our lives, but we may not be sure what to pray for, or how ready we are to have our lives changed, thank you very much, God."

- Christina Baldwin, "Seven Whispers"



VETERANS for PEACE, Inc.

NCO - Non Commissioned Officer (Enlisted) - All people who are not officers or warrant officers (depending on branch of service).

OFFICER - Someone who has a college degree or went through the Air Force Academy (depending on branch of service) and is a rank from O-1 (2nd Lieutenant)) through O-10 (Four Star General).

TI - Training Instructor at Basic Training - a place where we are taught to be obedient, non-thinking to a degree that we do not become smarter than our commissioned officers.

Cluster Fuck - No matter what you do, the mission, the civilian authorities, the military and all OIC (Officers in Charge) involved have totally fucked things up to the point you might as well either bend over and kiss your ass good-bye or just pack it up and go home.

Quagmire - See Above

FIGMO - Fuck it! Got My Orders! I am so going home and then to Disneyland. (This was written across many discharge orders, including mine.)



BOOKS - DVD - LINKS

- * WAR IS A RACKET - Maj. Gen. Smedley Butler, USMC (Ret.)
- * War is A Force That Gives Us Meaning - Chris Hedges
- * Bringing the War Home - William Thomas
- * The Fire This Time - Ramsey Clark
- * Against All Enemies - Seymour Hersh
- * On Killing - Lt. Col. Dave Grossman (Ret.)
- * War, Battering and Other Sports - James McBride
- * New Nuclear Danger - Dr. Helen Caldicott
- * Honor Betrayed - Dr. Mic Hunter
- * Lonely Soldier - Dr. Helen Benedict
- * Killing Hope - William Blum
- * Blackwater - Jeremy Scahill
- * Packing Inferno - Tyler Boudreau
- * Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace - Maxine Hong Kingston
- * Home By Morning - Lynda Van Devanter
- * Hell, Healing and Resistance - Dan Hallock
- * Bloody Hell - Dan Hallock
- * Here, Bullet - Brian Turner, Iraq War Veteran
- * Moving the Nation to Care - Ilona Meagher
- * Flashback - Penny Coleman
- * War and the Soul- Dr. Edward Tick

Cont.' - DVD - LINKS

- * Sir! No, Sir!
- * Why We Fight
- * Re-Think Afghanistan
- * Ground Truth
- * Body of War
- * Winter Soldier Testimony
<http://www.ivaw.net/wintersoldier>
- * Arlington West
- * Eyes Wide Open
- * Beyond Treason (DU)
- * Posion Dust

- * GI Rights Hotline - 1-800-394-9544
- * Grace After Fire:
<http://www.graceafterfire.org/index.php>
- * SWAN: <http://www.servicewomen.org/>
- * Combat Paper: <http://www.combatpaper.org/>
- * Iraq Veterans Against the War:
<http://www.ivaw.net>
- * Veterans Against Torture:
<http://veteransagaintorture.com/>
- * VetSpeak: <http://vetspeakblog.blogspot.com>
- * National Gulf War Resource Center, Inc.:
<http://www.ngwrc.org/>
- * Depleted Uranium: Wikipedia:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Depleted_uranium



Veterans For Peace STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others:

- (a) To increase public awareness of the costs of war
- (b) To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
- (c) To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
- (d) To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- (e) To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open, with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.



This book is dedicated to:

... Daddy, a Navy veteran who passed April 2, 2009 my other family members who served in the military ... and my cousin, Steve, who did two tours as a medic in Vietnam and eventually committed suicide. He once told me, "You will never know what it was like to try and put another man's brains back into his helmet."

... the women and men with whom I served and to those who are currently serving in numerous capacities.

... my friends and the women and men who have given their lives, may you now rest in peace.

... all the animals that have saved my life.



Thank you, first and foremost, to Monica Haller who founded this project from her heart to help her college friend, Riley. That first book launched a project that will no doubt expand beyond your wildest dreams and offer veterans a tool in which to tell their stories; veterans who normally do not have a voice, nor the privilege of rank and higher education. Your compassion, insight and nonjudgemental approach showed me that civilians in this country do care to hear our stories. Thank you, Monica, for your openness to learn from our experiences.

I also wish to thank my family for being there when I would let you. Thank you, Veterans For Peace for showing me that there are veterans who choose peace, and have the integrity to do so with their hearts open, engaging in democracy. For my dear deceased friend Fran Ford and the War Plays Project, Michael and Cynthia Orange, Chris Clauson and Sandi Bandli, Esther Ouray, Audrey and Freedom Farm Equine Therapy Program for Veterans, Combat Paper Project, Warrior Writers, Veterans in the Arts, Professor Gabe Horn, who inspired me to write my story, and to Kati, who lovingly helped me give up my guns. Thank you.



Bring Jason Home



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This book is the result of the author's courage and focus at the Veterans Book Workshop, where we work to make manageable and material personal archives of images, words and memories from the current wars.

This book is one of many made in the Veterans Book Workshop. Each emerged from different circumstances and each finds its own unique use. One veteran may reference this book regularly, while another may set it aside in order to move on.

Regardless of the ways they are used, no dust settles on these archives. This book contains a powerful living collection of data, memory, and experience that is so relevant it trembles. You must pay very close attention to hear its call.

We made this book for listening. Please accept our invitation. We made this book for deployment. Please pass it along and invite someone else to listen.

Thank you,
Monica Haller

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Chante S. Wolf served in the U.S. Air Force from 1980–1992 where she was trained as an Air Traffic Controller, then cross-trained into Top Secret Telecommunications/Cryptographic and Computer Security. Additionally she worked on the Honor Guard and the Base Exercise Evaluation Teams. During her 12 years in the service Chante was stationed at Keesler AFB, MS; McCord Air Force Base, WA; Zaragoza Air Base, Spain; Eskasheer, Turkey; Williams Air Force Base, AZ; King Fahd International Airport, Saudi Arabia for her deployment in support of the Persian Gulf War from January 10th to March 15th 1991. Chante currently lives in Minneapolis, MN where she is a photographer, an active member of Veterans For Peace, a volunteer at Freedom Farm Therapeutic Horse Riding (a program for women veterans), a facilitator with the Combat Paper Project, and a writer with the Warrior Writers and War Veterans Book Workshop.

