

# *Searching for Gurney*

By Jack Estes

## Excerpt

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*Portland, Summer, 1969*

JT WOKE, BUT THEY WERE STILL DEAD. Seventeen dead, two wounded, two missing. The dream stuck in his mind: rice paddies, jungle, tree line exploding. He got up, head pounding, pulse racing, thinking. Go to the baby's room.

In the hallway, he could see Marines facedown, others mangled and broken-boned. Anna's bedroom was scattered with the dead. Her crib was tucked in the corner, nightlight on the dresser, clowns and zebras dancing across her wall.

The soldiers disappeared.

He picked her up. He felt safe holding her in the darkness. Anna reminded him he was home. They sat in the rocking chair in front of the window. Soon the moon dropped below the trees, and he kept rocking her until morning.