

## Mike and V.A Bonnie

by  
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Mike is an old and dear friend, we met late in the evening in 1968 on a river in Vietnam, I was the captain of a river patrol boat and Mike was a member of a four man marine recon team assigned to my command, we fought side by side, and he has saved my life more than once, Mike and I have developed a trust and friendship between us that can't be broken, we don't talk about Vietnam, instead I write about it and Mike tries to forget about it, trying to forget however doesn't work for Mike, the pains, angers and frustrations of the war are ripping him apart, I worry about Mike constantly, on the spur of the moment Mike will show up with fishing poles and tackle box, before I know what happened we are sitting on a rock somewhere, drinking beer and fishing with no bait, were lucky if there's even water, sometimes we end up in our favourite bar, Mike gets wasted and I try and keep in out of trouble, I know that Vietnam is really bothering Mike when these episodes take place, I'm the one he picks to lean on, When I ended up in the V.A medical centre Mike was there everyday to help me, he insisted that I live with him, so he could take care of me when I left the hospital, Mike hovered over me like an old mother bear and I mended quickly, now it is his turn, Soon he will have to go into the V.A hospital, it is only a matter of time, I will be there everyday just as Mike was for me, Mike and I don't talk much, we understand one another perfectly, we play cards once a week and poker in the back of a nameless bar, we fish together at least once a week, neither of us will go drinking without the other, It feels damn good to have Mike around, I love him.

Bonnie, she is a new friend, she is one of the few women I have been able to be friends with, she does not play any of those stupid games that most women play, Bonnie is honest, we met at the V.A medical centre in early 1981, she is an occupational therapist, Bonnie went out of her way to help me at a time when I was very ill, she knew nothing about the Vietnam war, Bonnie saw so many of us that was screwed up by it, however, that she became curious and began to probe me with questions, we quickly became good friends, Bonnie helps me to get the war out of my system, she is all together, I never worry about Bonnie, we make plans for weekends, sometimes Bonnie and I go away to be alone, she is my friend and I sincerely hope our relationship stands upon that foundation, I can be totally different with Bonnie, I can be myself, we sit together for hours touching and talking softly about the things that are meaningful to us, I can be gentle around her and if I feel like crying it's o.k, sometimes we fall asleep on the floor after a long conversation, later, I awake to find her coiled close against me with her arms wrapped tight around my chest and I am overcome with emotion, I lay very still and sometimes a tear rolls down my cheek and falls onto hers, eventually, I go back to sleep a very happy man.

Bonnie and I have a friendship based on trust, want and need, the need is mostly on my part, she and I talk a lot, rarely are we silent, when we go out it's not to drink or though we might have one or two, we frequent art museums and live theatre performances, Bonnie loves the mountains and so do I, we sometimes find ourselves high on the slopes and deep in the woods, we sort of experience each other that way, without Bonnie, I think I would be lost, with her my life is rich and I can feel again, she is breaking down the wall I built in Vietnam, I Love her.

Music Outro (The Doors - Hyacinth House)