

## **In the Stone**

**by William Yale**

I was at the memorial the other day, when the boys carved my name into the stone, my God what a feeling. I've lived most of my life trying to obey the laws and doing the best I could by staying out of trouble. I thought I could put 40 years behind me and forget about it, but I was wrong.

When I retired from work I thought... "Well that's it, it's over," but I was surprised... it wasn't over. I have survived something a lot of men did not and now I find myself responsible for living a good life. And, I cannot do that without thinking about them.

Many of them died early in life, I loved them and nothing can ever change that. Those young men are my kin. I don't want you to report me, but I feel their presence around me from time to time; it's kinda like having someone standing over you, but when you look, there is no one there. It makes you re-evaluate what you really believe.

I became so disturbed by it, I went to my minister and he said, "It's ok Bill." I guess he thinks I'm okay. We prayed about it and I thanked him for his help. But I don't think it's normal to hear from those who have died.

When I looked at my name, there in the stone, I thought, "Who the hell am I?" I am just a kid who was in the dirt when the s#@! went off - I get to live and they got blown away. For many years I believed that I was special, that God was helping me somehow, but now I know I was wrong. He just wanted me to write about it.

I will join them someday and I accept the knowledge that we are all going home. Some just leave sooner than the others; I've got it now. Maybe he'll land on me when I get back over, I don't know. I believe in the blood, so I think I'll be okay. What could be more powerful than blood? It seems to be the only thing that men understand.