



A Tribute to Al Avery

I was walking the halls of the College Inn
When above the normal din
I heard the announcer say
That a helicopter had been
shot down today.

I learned shortly thereafter
that Al Avery was one of the crews.
But no one would attend to the news,
For the students it didn't matter
That we had lost an aircrew, and on they'd
chatter.

But I had smelt
The air after a rocket attack and felt
The anguish of flesh torn asunder
In answer to the rocket's thunder.

Those students didn't comprehend
That we had lost friends;
True patriots who give
"That Others May Live."

I had seen Al at another ethos
After a rescue from Laos.
The tension in Al's face
Shows the intensity he bore in that place.

Al and the crew of Jolly 67
Went on April 6, 1972 into heaven!
They found that day their destiny,
And went to their place into history.

The heros they became
Were not recognized, and the blame
Is an American public
Which had grown apathetic.

And now, at last, they are buried
At Arlington National Cemetery, and are carried
In the highest esteem by the nation,
For the effects of their dedication.



For Al and the crew
Have again shown us what to do.
How the dedication to duty
Can lead us to unity.

I was going to send flowers
But they wilt away in hours.
A poem, however, with words will last
For future generations to learn
from the past.

Al, I bid you adieu.
This nation sometimes hasn't a clue
Of the sacrifice it takes for us to live
So that others may learn how to give.

It is raining as I pen these lines,
New storms are brewing in our times.
Let us hope future generations
Learn what it takes to live in peace
among nations--

AND WE MAKE WAR NO MORE!

John C. Ratliff
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