

Echoes

By

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FADE IN:

EXT.VIETNAM - DAY(OCTOBER 17TH,1967)

A fleet of Uh-1 helicopter gun ships fly high over the South China Sea making its way inland.The ships fly furiously through the hot-thin air.

The Uh-1 in it self was a man made war machine.Its only purpose during this war was to kill anything that wasn't a ally to the U.S forces.

INT.UH-1 GUNSHIP - DAY(MOVING)

COLE STEVENS,(22 years)is a mix between one of those scared shitless guys and one of which who wants to experience war.This is his first mission since coming to Vietnam.He heard all of the stories while back home,guys going out deep into the jungle never to return again.

On the Huey with him are other members of his squad.You can tell that Stevens is a new guy,his face is still considerably fresh compared to the other guys who look like they haven't showered in days.

STOKES(23 years),his skin is stained with dirt and blood.He was just like Stevens a couple months ago,young and unaware.But now he is foolish and brave both at the same time.A couple months in "Nam" will do that to you.

STOKES
(talking to Stevens)
Hey,loosen up a bit.

STEVENS
Huh?

STOKES
You gotta loosen up,your to stiff man.

STEVENS
I'm just trying to focus that's all.

STOKES
Focus on what?let me tell you something man...(grabs a pack of cigarettes from his pocket)fuck im all out.Hey Lawson you got any smokes.

(CONTINUED)

LAWSON(22 years)Short black guy,nappy Afro.Tosses Stokes a fresh pack.

STOKES

Like i was saying,don't focus to hard,that way you end up making mistakes,and a mistake out here will cost you your life.Its all about reaction and emotion.

STEVENS

What you mean?

STOKES

Let me show you something.

Stokes pulls open his flak jacket,showing Stevens his wound.He was struck in his chest just inches away from his heart.

STEVENS

Jeez!that thing looks brutal.

STOKES

Yea happened about two months ago,we was ambushed outside of this small village in Saigon,I forget the name.But anyway,this place was basically deserted,all of a sudden I hear gunfire,I look down and two of my buddies were laid out.

STEVENS

Dead?

STOKES

Yea fucking dead,just like that man,so i start fumbling around im looking for cover,its chaos everywhere.Guys are screaming for help, but fuck wasn't much I could do any how.

STEVENS

So what did you do after that?

STOKES

I'm trying to load up my M16,and the fucking clip wont go in.I was thinking to damn hard.I was like a sitting duck waiting to get shot.Next thing you know im on the floor,all I hear is "Stokes is

(MORE)

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STOKES (cont'd)
Down"...I'm thinking to myself who
the fuck is Stokes.

Stevens chuckles a bit.

STOKES
Then im like,oh shit that's me.Woke
up about forty-eight hours later.

STEVENS
Damn.

STOKES
I know.But the morale of the story
is,when your out there don't think
about what you want to do,just do
it.

STEVENS
Thanks for the insight.

STOKES
No problem,here let me give you
something.

Stokes reaches into his pocket pulling out a coin.It looks
to be from France.Its old and worn.

STOKES
I got no clue what it says,or where
its from,but my closes friend gave
it to me just before he was killed
in action.

Stokes hands it to Stevens,Stevens examines the coin.

STEVENS
Nah that's alright man,you cant
give me your good luck charm.

STOKES
No,no,you keep it,it should keep
you safe.

STEVENS
Thanks.

STOKES
Yea I need no more good luck,just
two more weeks and ill be out of
this hell whole.

Stokes gazes out of the moving Huey, now making its way towards land.

EXT. SMALL VILLAGE - DAY (SAME)

This village is nothing more than some dry land and small bamboo houses. Children play with a deflated soccer ball. The villagers wander about in a slow lifeless motion.

Inside one of the village houses, a group of NVA soldiers talk to a boy.

INT. VILLAGE HOUSE - DAY

IN VIETNAMESE

NVA SOLDIER#1

Listen, we're gonna hold these guns here alright. Is there anywhere you can hide it.

BOY

Yes, put them in here.

There is a hole in the ground.

BOY

Right here is good.

The NVA soldiers stash about three AK-47s and two RPD's in the hole. The boy then covers the hole with some wood, then he puts an old rug to conceal it.

NVA SOLDIER#1

Don't worry we won't be gone long, will be back in about a day or two.

BOY

What if the Americans come?

NVA SOLDIER#1

Fuck the Americans, will set some traps outside of the village.

The soldier pats the boy on the head. The boy's name is CHIEN (17 years) he stands about 5'5. He looks clean considering the fact his village is one big trash heap.

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CHIEN

Good luck!

The soldiers exit the house making there way towards the jungle.

Chien doesn't know his parents,he raises his little brother BAO (6 years)on his own.Bao is all he has left,so he will stop at nothing to protect him.

CHIEN

(talking to his brother)

Look at what I got for you.

BAO

What is it?

CHIEN

Ahhh!!!

He pulls out a old dusty doll,Bao loves it,he smiles from ear to ear.Chien picks him up giving him a big hug.

EXT.SMALL VILLAGE - DAY(SAME)

Chien now works with his friend QUANG (18 years)he is strangely tall for a Vietnamese boy(about 5'9 or so).He and Chien often joked that he was half American and the war was simply a matter of soldiers looking for a lost American child.

QUANG

So what did those soldiers want?

CHIEN

Nothing much,just to hide some guns.

QUANG

Did they pay you?

CHIEN

They say when they return I will be taking care of.

QUANG

Hiding weapons for soldiers,whats next your gonna join the military.

CHIEN

(gets serious)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHIEN (cont'd)
Hey,don't joke like that,ill never
fight,who will take care of my
brother if I die.

QUANG
I will,you brother loves me.

Bao looks at Qaung with a mean face.Chien laughs.

EXT.FOREST - DAY(SAME)

American soldiers now at their designated LZ,the only way
out is to jump.The only problem is,its about a 15 foot drop
from the Huey into 10 foot high grass.

The helicopters hover over the wet forest.

INT.GUNSHIP - DAY(HOVERING)

STEVENS
Shit we gotta jump this?

LAWSON
Scared of heights white-boy?

Lawson leaps down without fear.Stevens takes a deep breath
then he leaps.

FNG McCOY(18 years)scrawny,blond hair,blue eyes.Is almost in
tears by now.

MCCOY
I dont think I can do this,I want
to go back home.

SGT.HUNTER,(28 years)athletic,even through the dirt and
sweat covering his face,you can tell he's a handsome young
man.

HUNTER
McCoy you got two choices.One, you
can jump your skinny behind off.Or
two I can throw your ass off,pick
one soldier.

McCoy jumps,followed by hunter.At least 40 soldiers were
helilifted into the forest.

Once in the forest,there visabilty was blocked by the
grass,they were also standing in about a foot of muddy
water.

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HUNTER

Awe,fuck these boots were brand new.

ARRGhhhh!A loud scream.

STEVENS

What the fuck?

HUNTER

Freeman check him out.

PAUL FREEMAN(26 years)the medic,he looked more like a scientist,he sported huge glasses that covered the majority of his face.

FREEMAN

Its,McCoy.

HUNTER

Shit!

The squad stands around McCoy examining him to see what wrong.

MCCOY

Its my leg sarge,I dont think I can Walk.

FREEMAN

Let me get a look.

HUNTER

You cant walk,is that right?

MCCOY

No it hurts bad.

McCoy is obviously over exaggerating.

HUNTER

Hand me your weapon soldier.

McCoy reaches for his gun,and gives it to Hunter.

HUNTER

Thanks,now leave this son of a bitch right where he is,the NVA will find him,probably cut his balls off and feed it to him.

McCoy's face goes from pain to shock.

MCCOY

What! you cant leave me here,call
back in the chopper to come and get
me.

HUNTER

I aint calling in shit,lets go boys
lets get a move on we aint got all
day.The sun's about to set,and im
pretty sure will get some rain
tonight.

MCCOY

Okay,okay,dont leave me.

LAWSON

What a bitch!

Hunter hands McCoy his weapon and pulls him up,the rest of
the squad continues to move ahead.

HUNTER

Now you listen,don't be wasting my
time out here,you hear me?

MCCOY

I hear you sir.

HUNTER

Good!now haul ass.

McCoy limps forward.

EXT.FOREST - DAY(SUNSET)

The platoon maneuvers its way through the forest.With plans
of heading north.

EXT.FOREST - DAY(STEVENS POSITION)

Stevens and a big fellow by the name of JACKSON(22 years)
are the point men.They cut through the tall elephant grass.

STEVENS

This is crazy,it feels like
something is crawling on my skin.

Jackson pays no attention to Stevens,he just continues to
maul down anything in his way.

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STEVENS

So how much longer you got left?

Jackson says not a word.

STEVENS

(confused)

Okay.

JACKSON

Wait,dont move.

Jackson speaks,he cautiously stops Stevens in his tracks.

STEVENS

What?

JACKSON

I said freeze,don't move.

Stevens looks down,he notices a 10 foot snake laying in front of him.

Slowly Jackson raises his machete,then BOOM!

JACKSON

Got ya.

STEVENS

What the fuck!

Stevens is in total shock,he has just seen a man decapitate a snake with one swing,Jackson takes the snakes head off.

He grabs the head,picks it up,raises it as if he had just won a gold medal.The rest of the boys give him a big Whoo-ahh.

HUNTER

Enough half-ass'n Jackson,lets pick up the pace.

Jackson stuffs the snakes head into a bag,which surprisingly is filled with at least 5 other dead snakes.

INT.VILLAGE HOUSE - NIGHT

IN VIETNAMESE

Chien and his brother lay quietly in a small room, Chien feeds his brother with a piece of bread.

CHIEN

Here now eat up Bao, you'll grow up
and be strong like me.

Bao smiles, he offers piece of bread to his older brother who by the looks of it, has already sacrificed his meal to make sure his brother eats as much as he can.

CHIEN

No im good, you eat.

Bao nods, stuffing the rest of the bread inside his mouth.

CHIEN

Once the war is over we will be
alright, and you will get to go to
school and see all of your
friends. Soon it will be over.

FADE OUT: