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## The Ballad of the Co Van My

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(T.C. Cooper & L.F. DeMouche plus others)

You have heard of mighty warriors, you have heard of deadly fights  
When broadswords clashed and cannon flashed through bloody days  
and nights;

There's many a fearsome fighting man in the halls of history,  
But they can't hold a candle to the brave young Co Van My.

The Russian revolution would have never come to pass  
If the Co Van My had been there to advise the ruling class;  
Ho Chi Minh would be a Democrat if they were on his team  
And China's dark ambitions would be a foolish dream.

Napoleon flourished briefly but his empire soon collapsed,  
Cleopatra's dreams of glory terminated with an asp;  
Caesar had his Brutus, but anyone can see  
These people would have made it if they'd had a Co Van My.

The ordinary Co Van can play a thousand parts  
From a deadly jungle killer to a patron of the arts,  
He will talk of epic struggles, days of blood and fire and sweat,  
He'll be written up in Newsweek, but he ain't seen a VC yet.

The only VC that he's seen cut grass at his mess hall  
So he took his trusty Pen double E and down he mowed them all.  
Now he has photographic proof of legions of VC,  
And he'll build a lie as high as the sky about being a Co Van My.

The sergeant-major showed him in and marched him to his room,  
Said, "Hang your carbine on the wall and if you hear a boom  
Rally to the bunker with your weapon and steel pot  
Or else hide in the handball court, it's the strongest place we've got."

L-19's leap skyward, to seek the weary foe  
They run the hills and ridges from Bong Sonh to Bung Ro;  
With a tiger in the cockpit and an aspirant in the back,  
They're the bravest men in Binh Dinh, 'cause the VC has no flak.

SPOKEN: The S2 is the intelligence advisor.

The S2 sits behind his desk and sighs and moans and flaps  
Chasing mythical battalions across outdated maps,

With "probably" and "possibly" and "indications are",  
He worries hell out of the men who try to fight the war.

He paints a picture of despair as he talks of the VC might,  
A crow of evil omen, only his eyes are bright  
He speaks of hordes and legion, and cannon hid in huts  
He scares hell out of Saigon, but Division thinks he's nuts.

At winning paper victories the S2 has no peer,  
As he sits down at the O club with his whiskey and his beer,  
He'll never lose a battle, he'll always win that fight  
But his TOC gets mortared every other night.

The JG's daily recon is the terror of the beach  
Calling naval gunfire missions on everything in reach.  
He sees VC in every hootch, supplies in every boat  
He's killed one hundred fishermen, twelve chickens and a goat.

The naval gunfire spotter is professionally proud,  
He's never hit a target, but his guns are awfully loud.  
"Delay fuse, right eight hundred," the cruisers pitch and lurch,  
"Cease fire, end of mission, boys, we got that VC church!"

His intelligence is six months old, his native wit is nil,  
For him, the trees teem with VCs and regiments crowd each hill,  
He has no kinfolk in the wood, there's naught for him to lose,  
So if in doubt, he'll always shout, "Send in B-52's!"

SPOKEN: Now we're going down to Saigon, where there was  
a special brand of Co Van My. The further they got away  
from the combat, the more heavily armed they traveled.

He wears a jungle uniform and he moves with a tiger's stealth,  
He keeps his weapons sharp and clean and he's careful of his  
health,  
He moves with a heavy escort, in danger every day  
And drives to Cholon twice a day to earn his combat pay.

His shirt is open to the breeze, his hat's down over his eye,  
A Thompson's slung across his back, there's a pistol on each  
thigh,  
Grenades are fastened to his belt, there's a knife in either  
boot,  
As he drives his forklift up and down the streets of Than Son  
Nhut.

The FAC rides forth to battle, a warrior without match  
In his monogrammed flight jacket and his F-100 patch;  
Put napalm on a hamlet and burnt the whole thing flat

Got a thousand non-combatants, and he's sorry about that.

from THE LONGEST YEAR, Bowen, Fish and Harmon

Note: Co Van My translates to " American Advisor"