

WHICH WILL IT BE

(Companion to The Ambush)

There isn't so much as a hair
Which separates us.

Which sets you apart from me.

Yet, here we stand,
Armed,
At the ready,
On opposite sides of the river,
On opposite sides of so many seemingly important things ...

God, religion, money, taxes ...

All drivels,
Nonsense
Bogus, trumped-up, overheated poison darts
Meant to cripple
Numb
Blind
Maim

Making us incapable of seeing
The joy in each other's faces
When we hold our new-born
Hug our wives,
And thank Providence, however differently conceived,
For the blessing of peace, love and family.

There isn't so much as a hair,
A feather turned on edge,
A breath
Which separates us.

Which will it be, then?
Which will it be?

FRIENDSHIP

War. Battles. Firefights.

The wounded wailing ...

The dead, passed and gone.

I need - like I need life itself – to know you are standing there ...

By me.

With me.

At my side.

I don't need to like you – or you, me.

But I need, desperately, to be able to count on you – and you on me.

To be there,

When the chips are down

When the stuff hits the fan

When there's a price to be paid ...

Yeah ...

When there's a REAL price to be paid.

That's Friendship.

Please, don't use that word lightly.

Don't cheapen it ...

It's not a Facebook thing

It's real ...

You or I may not make it home

But it won't be for the lack

Of a friend at our backs.

That's Friendship.

GARCIA

You were just 17.

A kid, really.

Was it too much TV?

The absence of a father?

Which, made you like that?

That July, you were so eager.

Airborne Ranger,

Jump into the jungle

Kill every bad guy in sight.

Yet, come September,

off to medic training ...

It hurt – I could see it in your eyes,

Ill-at-ease amongst, all us “pacifists”

Oh, still wanting to jump,

Be a hero,

But with a now-dulled blade.

That November ...

remember?

In 5 short months

A killer, turned healer

Yea, still jumping out of airplanes.

But to save a life,

Not take one.

Still just 17, but ...

No more the big talker

Now a reader,

a thinker,

Just as much laughter,

But with a lot less sass

Yeah, seemed you’d found some peace.

I’ll never forget you, Garcia –

rough and tumble boy from the Bronx.

We lost track. Me to Walter Reed.

You, to god-knows where.

Did you make it? Are you still alive?

Oh God, let the answer be yes.