

Johnny Cash, Singing In Vietnam Talking Blues

One mornin' at breakfast, I said to my wife,
We been everywhere once and some places twice,
As I had another helping of country ham,
She said "We ain't never been to Vietnam,
"And there's a bunch of our boys over there."
So we went to the Orient: Saigon.

Well we got a big welcome when we drove in,
Through the gates of a place that they call Long Vinh.
We checked in and everything got kinda quiet,
But a soldier boy said: "Just wait 'til tonight,
"Things get noisy. Things start happenin'.
"Big bad firecrackers."

Well that night we did about four shows for the boys,
And they were livin' it up with a whole lot of noise.
We did our last song for the night,
And we crawled into bed for some peace and quiet,
But things weren't peaceful. And things weren't quiet.
Things were scary.

Well for a few minutes June never said one word,
And I thought at first that she hadn't heard.
Then a shell exploded not two miles away,
She sat up in bed and I heard her say: "What was that?"
I said: "That was a shell, or a bomb."
She said: "I'm scared." I said "Me too."

Well all night long that noise kept on,
And the sound would chill you right to the bone.
The bullets and the bombs, and the mortar shells,
Shook our bed every time one fell,
And it never let up; it was gonna get worse,
Before it got any better.

Well when the sun came up, the noise died down,
We got a few minutes sleep, an' we were sleepin' sound,
When a soldier knocked on our door and said:
"Last night they brought in seven dead, and 14 wounded."
And would we come down to the base hospital, and see the boys.
"Yes!"

So we went to the hospital ward by day,
And every night we were singin' away.
Then the shells and the bombs was goin' again.
And the helicopters brought in the wounded men.
Night after night; day after day.
Comin' and a goin'.

So we sadly sang for them our last song,
And reluctantly we said: "So long."
We did our best to let 'em know that we care,
For every last one of 'em that's over there.
Whether we belong over there or not.
Somebody over here love's 'em, and needs 'em

Well now that's about all that there is to tell,
About that little trip into livin' hell.
And if I ever go back over there any more,
I hope there's none of our boys there for me to sing for;
I hope that war is over with,
And they all come back home,
To stay.

In peace.