

Company Commander at An Trach II

They came out of the smoke;
The shells and the bombs
and the napalm had done their work.

The grandmother was burned black,
her hair gone, her skin in shreds;
She would probably die.

The mother brought me her son,
Then sank to her knees
and unhooked her long black hair
and began to sway side to side
and wail the wail of death.

The son was young and sweet
and he died as I held him,
his lovely brown eyes glazing.

The daughter, also young but much older now,
beat her fists upon my chest.

—Howard A. Christy