

ONE NAME ON THE WALL

by Dennis DuPuis

It was the last flight out of [that P Z](#),
On March 31st, Nineteen hundred and Seventy
The last lift out usually meant trouble
But our Falcon gunships would give us cover.

Ten slicks landed to the east. I was trail.
My eyes alert, but my mind on the mail.
The Falcons covered us like a giant wheel.
You don't know, "How safe they made me feel"

Fully loaded with troops, the Lead began to rise
Straining for a 3 foot hover, it was no surprise.
Lead made a pedal turn to view the flight.
Then BOOM! An R P G impacted with a blinding light.

Lead beat itself to death in a slow motion roll.
Get out **now** was the flights' immediate goal.
A black mushroom cloud climbed above bright orange flames.
On the way out, I checked for survivors, they'd have done the same.

The AKs cracked, the bullets splashed here and there.
The Falcons rolled in hot. There was no time to be scared.
So I flew forward where the eight slicks had been.
Our door gunners fired into the tree line again and again.

At the smoke a quick-stop maneuver allowed me to see,
The empty seats where two pilots should be.
"HEY, there's one our guys." the gunner shouts.
I landed the aircraft and he jumped out.

The crew chief and co-pilot got out to help the other guy.
And just like that, alone in the aircraft was I

I watched our brothers carried back to the slick .

But with Two still missing, how could we quit.

We had found two survivors from the crew of four.

AKs were still shooting at us. We could linger, no more.

The door guns chattered; rockets impacted on the left;

Called over the radio "I'm coming out to the west".

On the way out and still looking, but we couldn't see

Any more Americans left in that PZ.

"Come in Charlie, Charlie.... Miller and Leonard are alive.

And we don't know if the others survived".

When I looked behind me, Miller's burnt face had started to peel.

And not one wounded in my crew. Ain't **that** surreal?

Kevin Crabtree had been thrust out . . from that fiery orange ball,

But [KIMBALL HAYES SHELDON](#) was not. He is "*One Name .. On The Wall*"