

**A PICTURE, A FLAG AND A GOLD STAR PIN**  
IN MEMORY OF

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*That night I kissed my son Goodbye, and watched his plane soar to the sky.  
Little did I know as he held my hand, that soon he'd lie in some strange land.  
I still can see his smiling face, and feel his arms in last embrace.  
His quiet voice and tender touch, his loving ways all meant so much.  
He said, "Mother please don't cry tonight". I said, "I won't", I promised with throat so tight.  
I held him close, I loved him so, and it hurt so much to see him go.  
I'll be alright and I know ya'll, were his last words going down the hall.  
He waved goodbye going to the plane, and suddenly I felt so strange.  
I thought - he's going where he's never been, tho 'Nam was his destination again.  
I didn't know why - couldn't understand - but "Heaven" flashed through my mind then.  
I felt we had really said goodbye, and he truly was gone to the sky.  
I felt strange peace and calm within, and I felt I'd never see him again.  
I watched his plane go out of sight, as he was lost in the still, dark night.  
I love my son. Why must he go? My heart cried out, now it ached so.  
He went to 'Nam, but I soon learned, he really was lost, never to return.*

*MISSING IN ACTION....the telegram read, but inside I knew our Joel was dead.  
He'd been shot down, the helicopter lost...Dear Lord! My son! Oh, what a cost!  
And then we wait and wait and pray, and hope we'll bear that he's OK.  
The time was short, tho it seemed long. The grief was great but love was strong.  
Each day seemed like a million years, as time was washed away with tears.  
At last word came, and what I knew within my heart, was finally true.  
KILLED IN ACTION....this telegram read, crashed in flames...no survivors it said.  
KILLED...NOT MISSING NOW it read, My Joel! My Joel! Our Joel was dead!  
Oh Lord! Oh Lord! Oh no, no please! And then I fell on bended knee.  
Dear God! I cried in disbelief, my heart exploded then in grief.  
The tears then like a river did flow, our Joel! Oh Lord! what a way to go!*

*In crushed remembrance of his love, I bowed my head to God above,  
to thank Him for that life so sweet, and prayed someday again we'd meet.  
I felt his hand and tender touch, his last goodbye all meant so much.  
Just then I saw his face, his smile, and my heart raced across the miles.  
To join his heart in that last breath, to share his fate, to share his death.  
To die with him in burning flames, to leave with me only his name.  
There's no remains, no grave to be, nothing except sweet memories.  
A picture of him is left instead, and a folded flag to show he's dead.  
Always I'll look at the smiling face, of the picture I hold here in his place.  
Always I'll hold in grief and strife, this flag as if it were my life.  
Always a Gold Star Pin I'll wear, in memory of a life so sweet and fair.  
A Picture, A Flag, and a Gold Star Pin, I'll always hold in the place of him.*

Written by Ms. Evelyn Laton Hatley