

Galveston Bay

James Vargas

For 15 years Le Bin Son fought side by side with the Americans
In the mountains and deltas of vietnam
'75 Saigon fell and he left his command
And brought his family to the promised land
Seabrook, Texas and the small towns in the Gulf of Mexico
It was delta country and reminded him of home
He worked as a machinist, put his money away
And bought a shrimp boat with his cousin
And together they harvested Galveston Bay
In the morning 'fore the sun come up
He'd kiss his sleeping daughter
Steer out through the channel
And cast his nets into the water
Billy Sutter fought with Charlie Company
In the highlands of Quang Tri
He was wounded in the battle of Chu Lai
Shipped home in '68
There he married and worked the Gulf fishing grounds
In a boat that'd been his father's
In the morning he'd kiss his sleeping son
And cast his nets into the water
Billy sat in front of his TV as the south fell
And the Communists rolled into Saigon
He and his friends watched as the refugees came
Settled on the same streets
And worked the coast they'd grew up on
Soon in the bars around the harbor was talk
Of America for the Americans
Someone said "You want 'em out, you got to burn 'em out."
And brought in the Texas Klan
One humid Texas night there were 3 shadows on the harbor
Come to burn the Vietnamese boats into the sea
In the fire's light shots rang out
2 Texans lay dead on the ground
Le stood with a pistol in his hand
A jury acquitted him in self-defense
As before the judge he did stand
But as Le walked down the courthouse steps
Billy said "My friend you're a dead man."

One late summer night Le stood watch along the waterside
Billy stood in the shadows
His k-bar knife in his hand
And the moon slipped behind the clouds
Le lit a cigarette, the bay was still as glass
As he walked by Billy stuck his knife into his pocket
Took a breath and let him pass
In the early darkness Billy rose up
Went into the kitchen for a drink of water
Kissed his sleeping wife
Headed into the channel
And cast his nets into the water
Of Galveston Bay

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