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Dear Madeline,  
Hello my dear sister.

Boy, I sure feel close to you. Since your last letter, I almost feel as if you are my sister. It's good to have someone to tell your troubles to. I can't tell them to my parents or Darlene because they worry too much, but I tell you truthfully I doubt if I'll come out of this alive.

In my original squad I'm the only one left unharmed. In my platoon there's only 13 of us. It seems every day another young guy 18 and 19 years old like myself is killed in action. Please help me, Mad. I don't know if I should stop writing my parents and Darlene or what.

I'm going on an operation next month where there is nothing but VC and VC sympathizers. The area is also very heavily mined. All of us are scared cause we know a lot of us won't make it. I would like to hear what you have to say about it, Madeline, before I make any decisions.

Oh, and one more favor. I'd like the truth now. Has Darlene been faithful to me? I know she's been dating guys, but does she still love me best? Thanks for understanding. See ya if it's God's will. I have to make it out of Vietnam though, cause I'm lucky. I hope. Ha ha.

Miss ya,  
Love,  
Ray

*PFC Raymond C. Griffiths went to Vietnam just after Christmas in 1965 and was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division. He wrote this letter to Madeline Velasco, a friend from high school in San Francisco, California, in June 1966. He was killed a few weeks later, on the Fourth of July. He was 19 years old.*