

HE COULD HEAL NO WOUNDS, BUT . . .

Having been hit by two RPGs when Fire Support Base Buttons was overrun by a large North Vietnamese force, I lay in a hospital with the better part of my right thigh and three inches of my femur gone. Tubes protruded from here and there, and shrapnel covered my body. And, while I wasn't looking forward to eight months in traction, a more immediate irritation was the full body cast—my “shipping container”—that encased me from chest to toe.

After a couple of weeks of lying on my back like a stranded turtle, my attitude simply checked out on me one day. The hospital staff was taking care of others in worse shape than I, but they weren't paying attention to me . . . and I didn't think that was fair. Life's not fair, is it? At least not in the eyes of the world.

So it was that I became somewhat of a pain in the neck to the doctors and nurses and corpsmen around me. You see, I'd developed what my wife Florence, a former kindergarten teacher, would call a DRA: a Dirty Rotten Attitude.

Then *he* found his way into my life. I saw him come into our ward through a door about twenty beds away. His head was completely covered with bandages—you couldn't see any part of his head or his face. He was shuffling along, sort of navigating by Braille. Occasionally he'd stop at a bed, lean over, and say something to the guy in that bed. Then he'd move on.

I watched him with self-pity in my heart. At least that guy could get out of bed! You see, I had a DRA.

Finally he arrived at my bed. Ran into it, actually. When he did, he reached out and his hand brushed my across cast. He tapped on it. Then he leaned over and in a low, muffled-gruffly voice that was sort of hard to hear, he said, “Man, what happened to *you*? They got you wrapped in concrete! You gonna be OK? You gonna get to go home any time soon?”

About that time the guy in the bed next to mine leaned over. “Don't need to answer him,” he said.

“Why not?” I asked.

“Can't hear. Lost his hearing and most of his face to a mortar round.”

As I looked back at the faceless young trooper standing by my bed, he thumped my cast once more, leaned over, and in that muffled-gruffly voice said, “Hang tough, dude—I'm prayin' for ya.”

Then he shuffled away.

I watched him till tears clouded my vision. You see, *that* guy was praying for *me*!

At that particular moment in my life it wasn't so much my body that needed the cure, as my DRA—and on that morning, a faceless young trooper healed it.

Do you believe in angels? Was he an angel? I have no idea. But I do know this—on that day, an anonymous young man personified a verse from Philippians:

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit,
but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
Each of you should look not only to your own interests,
but also to the interests of others.*

~ Philippians 2:3-4

Ty Dodge