August 1963 I ended up at an Air Force base in Turkey. I've always been a newspaper junkie, so I'm reading Stars and Stripes and there's a story about the single largest loss of life in the Vietnam War, two Marine choppers out of Da Nang, and it was almost like the newspaper lit up, you know, like a neon light—there's Bruce's name on there. So that's how I knew Bruce had died in Vietnam in October of '63.

And I'm thinking, What is going on there? Because that was before Kennedy was assassinated, before the Gulf of Tonkin, before LBJ crushed Barry Goldwater and started sending the Marines in, in '65.

And that's why Bruce is about the 130th to die in the war.

When you see stories about a war and it's other people, it's kind of like, "Doesn't affect me." But when suddenly this thing pops up off the paper and it's your friend, it becomes different, and very real.

So I've been to the Wall—the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington—dozens of times since it was built. And I'm a little over 6 foot, so standing in front of that first panel, if I raise my hand up as high as I can, I hit Bruce. He's right in the middle—I think it's the 30th line. And if I stand there and I see groups coming by, I'll point at his name and ask: "Do you want to know something about my friend Bruce Farrell?" And invariably, they'll stop and I'll tell my story.