**“The Fire Storm”**

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“Great job Anad,” exclaimed Mr. Karim, “you got an A on your essay.” Anad’s eyes widened. A mix of excitement and shock drove Anad to snatch the paper he wrote from his teacher and run out of the class, screaming off the top of his lung. He had finally done it. After countless revisions, endless criticisms, and sleepless nights of research, the seeds of his labors had sown a harvest in a winter. Anad ran out onto the streets. His joy spread like wildfire as street vendors, passer byers, and drivers slowed down to watch a child celebrate hard work. After a few minutes of celebration, Anad found his footing and headed home. All he could think of was how he would celebrate with his parents. Maybe they could all visit their relatives. Maybe his parents would buy him a gift or give him some money so he could purchase something for himself.

He rushed up the ste –

Anad woke up gasping for breath. A huge piece of what was once his home rested on his chest. The ringing in his ear wouldn’t stop. Day became night as dust, debris, and smoke filled the once relaxing blue skies. Anad tried asking for help, but he couldn’t muster the energy to call. Through every ounce of his energy left, Anad hefted the debris off of him and finally could taste the “air.” Anad dragged himself towards the street. It was there he realized, that his home and his life… were gone.

Anad found his essay crumpled along the side of the street. The red A smudged across the page like blood. He squinted at the page and read: It is the fight against guerrilla militaries where the U.S. military embraces a sporadic fight too. The distinction between civilian and military blurs in guerrilla warfare, and so does the U.S. military’s tactics. During the Vietnam War, the US military would often destroy monasteries. When asked why, military officials would say, strangely, that they had to destroy it in order to protect it.”

Anad let the wind carry the essay into the distance. He dragged himself around without direction.