

"CHRISTMAS EVE, 1966

By Juanita Preston Sparks

350 words

The airways were alive with the sounds of Christmas carols
Yet-

"On Christmas Eve, 1966
I could hear only one line of one Christmas carol.

"There is no Peace on Earth, I said."

This was the first Christmas Eve that I had spent without my son.
He was twenty-one, and old enough to be away from home,
But he was so far away, so very far away.
He was half way around the world in a country called Viet Nam.
He was a soldier stationed at the largest ammunition depot in that war torn land.

"There is no peace on Earth, I said"

I repeated that over and over.
I asked myself and I asked my God,
"Has there ever been a time when we have had Peace on Earth?"
Perhaps.
There was Peace on Earth that starlit night in Bethlehem,
When the Prince of Peace was born.

Then I lit a candle
And placed it in the window,
And I prayed.
I prayed for peace
And the safe return of my son-
And the sons of all the mothers who were saying the same prayer, as I.

It was the same prayer my grandmother said in 1917.
It was the same prayer my mother said in 1944.
It is the same simple prayer that mothers throughout the world are saying
on this Christmas Eve.

Yet---
"There is NO Peace on Earth,"