

# Stop the Sun

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## Summary

**Setting:** United States, small town, 1990s

Terry Erickson, age 13, is puzzled by his father's strange behavior. Sometimes his father goes into a kind of trance, and his eyes seem to go far away. Terry knows that this is connected to his father's experiences during the Vietnam War. It all happened before Terry was born, and his mother tells him not to ask about it. One day, his father's strange behavior gets worse and he creates an embarrassing scene in a hardware store. After that, Terry decides that he has to try to get his father to talk about Vietnam. In an emotional scene, Terry learns that his father was the only one of a group of 54 soldiers who survived a nighttime raid. His father survived by hiding under the body of a dead friend. He was terrified that he would be killed when the sun came up. He mentally tried to stop the sun from rising. Although he survived, he feels as if he actually did die that night. Learning about this terrible experience fills Terry with new respect and compassion for his father. He knows that he will never feel embarrassed by his father again, no matter what his father does.