

The Recruit

By William True

Just two good men, the sergeant said,
Now who will volunteer?
The captain's ordered night patrol
Men going get free beer!

I'll go, the new recruit pipes up
The rest of us stand tight,
Patrol's the pits, we've all learned well,
Especially at night.

Just one more soul is all I need,
Must I order him to go?
There'll only be the three of us,
A small, exclusive show.

We're going for a walk this eve',
It's safer in the dark,
No shooting, just a recon job,
A hike, a stroll, a lark.

No man steps forth, it's clear to see,
The Sarge must make his choice,
He's chosen Corporal Endicott,
NOT ME! Each inner voice.

The dawn has come, where are the three?
Have our patrollers flown?
At last in comes the new recruit,
Legs dragging, all alone.

The sergeant's gone, the corporal too,
Those burp guns killed 'em dead,
I never saw the enemy . . .
His voice trailed off in dread.

The new recruit, no longer new,
Has learned what can't be told,
Old soldiers never volunteer,
To live beats being bold.