

# “Cruel”

My first love was a young man who completed a year of college and then joined the US Marine Corps. He served in Vietnam during the late 1960s. One night he went out on patrol with his company, but only he and another Marine returned. All the others were killed. He never really got over it, and he spent much of the rest of his life in and out of mental hospitals before dying at age 49. The Marine Corps denied that his problems were service-related, though it seems clear he suffered terribly from PTSD. I honored him by setting up a scholarship in his name at the high school where we both graduated.

—Susan, *Menands*