

To Whom It May Concern,

To begin, let me extend my most sincere gratitude from myself and from the men in my platoon for your continued support. It is always refreshing to know that even strangers care about us over here while we are doing our tour of duty. The constant reminder that we have that support is sometimes the only thing that allows us to pick up our heads and continue to drive on, no matter how hard the situation. We always find that the packages you send end up dispersed and used in a matter of days or even hours.

I don't know how much my dad, Tim Norman, has told you but i will give you a bit of the background here in hopes that maybe it is some return for all you have done.

I/We are the Spartans of 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company 2-35 Infantry Regiment. Ever seen the movie "Platoon" with Charlie Sheen? Supposedly that's us during Vietnam. God know that sometimes we carry on like the idiots in that movie, but when it comes down to engaging and destroying the enemy we are relentless in our pursuit of the mission. So far we consider ourselves lucky. We did at least until we lost one of our brothers, SPC Levi Nuncio, our platoon medic. He was a very close friend of mine and should be honored because he gave his life for our country. He was a great medic; I think one of the best in the Army. He was from Harrisonburg, VA which is not far from home for me. He will forever be a part of us Spartans and will NEVER be forgotten. Other than Doc we have had nothing more than a few cuts, bruises and scrapes as far as injuries go. (Knock on Wood) So far in the few months we have been here we have captured 2 Taliban IED emplacers (sadly one of them wanted to resist... needless to say he is currently residing with his God for his sins) and have been in something in the area of 45 + firefights. According to the higher ups we have accomplished more than any other platoon while here. I don't know if i believe them or not, but we'll take it anyway.

We continue to wait for the day that we can come home again. Right now it is ungodly hot here and we are just waiting for fall/winter in the hopes of it cooling of some. A few have gone down as heat casualties but i guess the VA climate prepared me somewhat, but NOTHING can prepare you for the heights. This land is actually quite beautiful in a rugged and extreme way. Most of the people here understand what we are doing and help us. They want the Taliban out as well. I fear that this is a war we cannot truly win. Not the way we are going about it anyway. The Afghan Army is mostly filled with cowards who will do nothing to save this country unless Americans lead the way. We are supposed to be a partnership but 95% of the time we do all the heavy lifting and they treat it like a joke.

Anyway... I'm rambling. We truly do appreciate your support and all you have done for us and I am sorry that it took so long for me to get this to you but better late than never, right? LOL. You guys take care, keep up the good work, and bust my dad's balls every once in a while for me will ya??! LOL!

Sincerely,
PFC Zack Norman