

# “WHEN THE WAR IS OVER”

By

J. H. Johns

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Someday,  
someone will read  
that the last person

from the time  
of the war,  
had died;

and, so,  
will that be it-  
will it be that simple?  
A time, a period,  
a generation  
had come to an end  
and  
had put itself  
“to sleep”-  
“to rest”-

along with  
the memories and the pains  
the losses and the broken hearts;

dead dreams now;  
deceased hopes;

oh,  
but there was a time  
when we got them  
to take notice;

yes,

they saw us and heard us  
and  
they became  
concerned and worried and troubled-

and they moved swiftly;

to kill us-  
destroy our bodies,  
maim our spirits,  
all because they were frightened;

it was a genocide-  
a "generation-icide"-

tens of thousands-

gone.

So, sometime on that last day,  
after that last breath  
and  
that final "exit sigh"  
has dissipated  
into the cool morning air,

someone will read a footnote  
on and to history;

but could they ever have known  
not only *what* was lost  
but  
"those" who were *wasted*;

"those"  
who could have made  
this country great,  
kept it straight,  
saved it from being adrift

in the irretrievable way

that it is?

Is it then  
that the war  
will finally be over?

END

**“SEQUATCHIE, TENNESSEE - 1974”**

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We heard it  
as we sat there-  
in the dark-  
sipping bourbon  
while surrounded  
by the sounds  
of the night.

*“There,”*  
we said,  
*“do you hear it?”*

*“Yes, yes,”*  
we whispered,

temporarily drowning out  
a sound so distant-  
so nearly imperceptibly faint-  
that it was almost unreal;

it was coming down  
out of Whitwell-

hell, maybe even further-  
heading this way  
all by itself  
with who knows  
how many people inside;

and, so,  
we sat still-  
sipped silently-  
and listened;

to the whining;  
to the crying,  
to the wailing;

calling to us,  
telling us  
that it was  
on its way...

END