

## Review comments by Loyd Little on *Blood Chit* by Grady Smith

Full of action, psychological insights and tenderness, *Blood Chit* by Grady Smith stays in your mind and your heart long after you finish the last page.

The novel is carefully written with superb attention to detail and not only the details of war itself but the more important details of the psychology of what war does to men and women.

Here's one detail: Smith describes a soldier opening a packet of Kool Aid mix sent by his family in the states. And here's another detail which is so precise that you think that you're watching a movie: the careful untying and retying of a trip wire in order to move it to a different location. That is scary to even think about.

The first half of the book follows a soldier with his company in Vietnam. It's filled with many lingering images created by such observations as "restoration to a normal lifelike appearance [was] not possible," which came when medical personnel were discussing how to handle a dead GI.

In the second half of the book, we follow one man back home to the states and the breakdown of his memories of the war into an inability to distinguish those memories from the world in front of him.

The book is frighteningly realistic and a must read in order to begin to understand what war can do to all of us.

Loyd Little

A former Green Beret, Loyd Little served on A-Teams in Vietnam, and worked with Chinese mercenaries on long-range Mike Force patrols in I-Corps. His novel, *Parthian Shot* won the Pen-Hemingway Award for best first novel of the year.