

# Fallen angels book report

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Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers is about a young black male named Riche Perry from Harlem who enlists in the Vietnam war to try to help his single mother with bills. But due to misfiling he is sent into combat which he is not mentally ready for and does heavy soul searching into the meaning of life and why he is here. The story takes place in Vietnam several months between 1967 and 1968 during the Vietnam war at an American base at Chu Lai in South Vietnam. The narrator of the story is Richie Perry. Richie struggles to come to terms with the grim reality of war, which contradicts the myths about war that he believed going into it.

Richie Perry is the lead character in Fallen Angels. He is a 17 year old high school graduate who just enlisted in the army to help his alcoholic mother, who lives in the slums of Harlem, with their family and bills. When Richie first arrives in Vietnam he is lost and confused about himself, his life, and can't grasp the brutal reality of war. He meets many new people in the army and is well acknowledged by his squad. His intellect, curiosity, and soul searching questions he asks himself are noticed by the squad and he becomes the unofficial therapist for the squad.

Without knowing it Richie begins to mature by asking these kind of questions and tries to understand the carnage of war and why he's there. When he's discharged he is still too poor to go to college and has no means to improve his brother's life, but he has grown from his experiences and started on the path to manhood and emotional maturity. Richie's change in attitude about life show that he still is capable of achieving his goals even though right now it seems the money situation is not allowing him to reach them.

The fact that he did not let the war bring him down and ruin his life shows that anyone can overcome hardship. Peewee is Richie's friend. They met each other on the trip to Vietnam.

He is arrogant and childish at first but just as Richie did, the war showed them discipline and he matured. He's from the ghettos of Chicago and has grown up around violence all his life and has a humorous attitude towards it. Of all the members of the squad, Peewee best illustrates the odd mixture of boy and man that makes up a soldier.

He bravely rescues his fellow soldier from death and at the end of the story, just like Richie, he is no closer to figuring out his future but is more mature and closer to becoming a man. Peewee's childish attitude is probably how most soldiers at his age acted and the fact that the war influenced him deeply into the man he was during the brave rescue of Monaco and who he is today shows that there's always some good in anything. Even in war.

In chapter 3 Richie first arrives at the base in Vietnam but his commanding officer says that his medical file has not yet arrived.

This foreshadows that Richie will not get the medical discharge that he wants because of his injured knee. Since he's not going to get his discharge he's going to have to go into battle which he is not mentally ready for. Jenkins stepping on the landmine shows that death can be sudden and without warning. This shows that war is cruel, senseless, and unromantic.

He include this scene to show that during war there is chaos and nothing ever goes your way. In chapter 17 Richie learns that Sergeant Simpson has been sent and they now have a racist sergeant by the name of Dongan.

He puts the black soldiers in the most dangerous positions. Knowing this Richie is worried what he will have to go through under his command. He included this scene to show that everyone who claims to be on your side has other ideas in mind which tarnish the armies reputation. Chapter 20 has the greatest tension.

During the evacuation of the troops the Vietnamese allies agree with the American troops about who should be evacuated first and surround them but the American helicopters think it's an attack against the Americans and open fire on the Vietnamese and evacuate only the Americans.

After, he gets separated from the rest of his squad with Peewee and end up rescuing Monaco, his fellow soldier, from Viet-Cong enemies and saving many other life's in doing so. Making him a hero showing him that not all the myths he heard about war were untrue. Richie tells the story in the first person, giving us immediate, intimate access to his thoughts and feelings as the action unfolds. We can read exactly how he feels toward why he's there and the thought going through his mind during battles and conflict with himself and others.

The author picked Richie's point of view because it's the perfect example of how life was during the war for a young black male and the hardships he had to go through from racial discrimination to death.

Tone is the attitude a writer takes towards a subject or character. The tone of the novel is that war is violent and to survive you have to survive mentally and physically to make it out alive. This is shown through Richie and how he acts during his time. Richie speaks with immediacy and poignancy, baring his innermost fears and thoughts.

He filters the action of the novel through the medium of these emotions and ideas. The authors message is that during war there is a loss of innocence.

War is unromantic and costly and your life is on deaths door every step you take but even through the bad the fact that it turned the young immature soldiers into men mean that it had a great impact on their lives. It shows that even though I might be in a situation that seems unbeatable as long as you never give up and keep fighting you can prevail as peewee and Richie did. This book was excellent in every way.

I'm a huge fan of army books and games and the army life, and this seems to compel me to enjoy the genre very much. There was a good mix of action and deep soul searching which makes the story feel very believable and there was a heroic rescue at the end which makes the book worth reading because the main character had a happy ending and a medical discharge he does not have to face that again and figure out his future, finally as a man. This novel shows that war is brutal and unforgiving and how people act during these times of hardship.

Also the racial aspect of Dongan placing the black soldiers in the most dangerous situations and how all the black soldiers came from impoverished areas of the United States and the toll the war took on the black community

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in America. I would recommend this book to anyone I met. It's a amazing tale and journey of a young man who realizes the grim realities of war. The truth of war is understood by many and as John F. Kennedy said, " War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today. "