



THE FALL OF SUMMER

A NOVEL

TED M. ALEXANDER



GREYFIELD MEDIA

THE FALL OF SUMMER

GREYFIELD MEDIA

Copyright © 2014 Ted M. Alexander

Printed in the United States of America

Published by Greyfield Media, LLC
Asheville, North Carolina

Books may be purchased in quantity and/or
special sales by contacting the publisher
GreyfieldMedia.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Greyfield Media, except in the case of quotations in critical articles or reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Alexander, Ted M.
The Fall of Summer

1. Coming of Age—Fiction. 2. Human Interest—Fiction. I. Title
Library of Congress Control Number 2014935131

ISBN 978-0-9914237-4-3
eBook ISBN 978-0-9914237-5-0

Designed by Kim Pitman, FireflyInx.com

This novel is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contact Author: TedMAlexander.com

For Portia

THE FALL OF SUMMER

. . . She will not care. She'll smile to see me come,
So that I think all Heaven in flower to fold me.
She'll give me all I ask, kiss me and hold me,
And open wide upon that holy air
The gates of peace, and take my tiredness home,
Kinder than God. But, heart, she will not care.

-Rupert Brooke
"Unfortunate"

JULY 1965

CHAPTER 1

Even if DJ had wanted to attend the morning funeral, he wouldn't have been able to gain admission. The homicide had been so heavily publicized that besides family, selected well-wishers and throngs of reporters, the Lieutenant Governor of New York and his entourage also appeared to pay respects, jamming the Methodist church.

Instead, he watched from across the street, hoping to locate her in the groups of mourners entering the church's vestibule.

The outer doors closed and he remained ten more minutes, then another five, until he was certain she wouldn't appear.



At home, as the afternoon funeral neared, DJ grew increasingly agitated—uncertain how he would react or maintain control. He had tried to erase the finality of the death ritual from his mind, and had toyed with the idea of not attending—instead listening to country-western tunesmith

Marty Robbins and drinking a beer or two.
But he really had no choice.



Later in the day, the graveside service still fresh in his mind, DJ walked aimlessly through the overcast, vaguely heading for town.

Leslie appeared next to him. "Going any place special?" she asked. Her yellow slicker suggested innocence.

"Not really," he replied.

"Mind if I come along with you?" She was already in step.

"I guess not."

The two walked silently for a block.

Leslie glanced at DJ. "I didn't see you at the funeral this afternoon."

"I was there with Patty." Through the mist, a hint of Leslie's perfume.

She placed her hand in the crook of his arm as the two crossed the street. "Did you go this morning?"

"No," DJ said. "The church was too crowded."

"I didn't even make the attempt." Her fingers tightened around his arm. "I wouldn't even be out walking today if you weren't with me. I always thought Long Island was safe, but now I'm not going anywhere alone until they catch the killer."

"Did the police talk to you?"

"Yes, a fat detective who smoked little cigars." Leslie brushed a strand of hair from her forehead.

"Did he ask you what you were doing on the night of the murder?"

She nodded. "I told him I stayed home and watched a movie with my father. I was so upset with Bobby that I didn't go out."

DJ shrugged. "What was the name of the movie?"

"I think it was *The Best Years of Our Lives*. It was stupid

even though my father liked it.”

“I know,” DJ said. “I saw it too.”

The two continued for several blocks into the richer section of homes.

“Would you like to come over and watch TV sometime? Nobody would bother us again.”

“I don’t think so, Leslie.”

“I’ve changed a lot, you know,” she continued. “I’m not the same girl who went to the dances and Van Velsor’s with you. I’m not as wild as I used to be.”

“That’s good, Les,” DJ answered, meaning it. “I’m glad.” He stopped to examine a cluster of pale blue hydrangea blossoms glistening in the mist, extending over the sidewalk.

“They’re beautiful,” Leslie said, standing behind him.

“And incomplete,” DJ replied, pointing to the fragile bits of confetti locked together in bloom. “They can’t attract pollen, and have no seed.”

“Is that true?” Leslie asked. The mist was changing to quiet drizzle turning her yellow slicker shiny. “How do you know that?”

“Monty told me once. He learned it from my mother a long time ago.”

The two stood for several more moments, then walked back toward town.

“Do you think you’ll miss me?” she asked, as they approached her house.

“Sure I will, Les,” DJ answered.

“We had some good times. They weren’t all bad.” She pulled the hood of the slicker up over her head as the rain grew heavier.

“I know.”

Leslie looked up at him, uncertain. “Well, if you ever want to come by, call me.”

“I will. I definitely will.”

“Okay.” She leaned forward and kissed him on the cheek, then looked briefly into his eyes. “It all went by so fast, didn’t

it?"

DJ nodded. "I think so." He watched her turn, walk up the steps and enter the house without looking back. "I think so," he repeated to the deserted street.

He stared at the closed door, then turned and retraced his steps to the house with the blue hydrangeas on the edge of the lawn.

As he stood beneath tree branches, sheltering himself from the shower, DJ watched the blue blossoms blur, then slowly draw farther away, until along with the rain they melted into the grass; fragments of a timeless cycle.

Leslie was right, he thought to himself. The time had all gone by so quickly.

He closed his eyes.

It might have been yesterday when the boys were swimming the window.

NINE MONTHS EARLIER
OCTOBER 1964

CHAPTER 2

A yellow bus eased up to the front of the high school. The driver honked, then waved for the group of boys to cross the street and join the students already boarding.

DJ lagged behind with Ike. The two were the last to make their way up the steps.

“How you doing, Ike?” the driver asked, waiting until they were settled in a nearby seat.

“Good for a guy with half a heart,” Ike answered.

“Well, it’s better than no heart at all.”

As the bus pulled away from the high school, DJ stared out at Captain Leo’s Seafood Restaurant where the boys had been acting like they were fish, pretending to swim across the outside of the long aquamarine window simply to aggravate the patrons inside—just as they had been doing since grade school.

Minutes later, entering Hardscrabble’s residential area, his focus changed to the cookie-cutter Cape houses, each with a square plot of lawn and single maple tree.

Looking more closely, this time studying his own reflection in the glass, DJ noticed dark half-circles under his eyes and

was immediately convinced he was dying. He gave it a few moments of deep thought, then reconsidered. No, couldn't be, he hadn't had sex yet. There was no way he would be allowed to die before that happened, especially because he was making a concerted effort for the bona fide thing and the God he'd been dealing with would certainly understand and appreciate that effort. He always bargained in good faith.

DJ shut his eyes and envisioned Leslie's basement with its water-stained maple paneling, its scratched green plastic bowl full of hundred-year-old, damp pretzels—the ones where the salt would peel off into one soggy ball—and the ancient DuMont TV resting on a table in front of the burnt-orange corduroy couch where they always sat.

She would interlace her fingers with his, or rest her head on his shoulder, and her scent of gardenias and Ivory soap aroused him to his toes. When he kissed her, DJ would move his face in front of hers, watch her close her eyes, then feel her softness and the power of her perfume.

After the first few months of being together, each time they were alone he would try to increase his familiarity with her, always to no avail despite his growing intensity. Then without any advance notice, to his amazement, Leslie let him touch her breasts. Near the end of *Queen For A Day*, while he kissed her during the commercial, almost as an afterthought, he had attempted to slip the straps of the St. Mary's green plaid uniform jumper from her shoulders. When she unexpectedly didn't resist, DJ became disoriented, but due to months of daydream rehearsal, managed to slowly begin unbuttoning her blouse with his free hand. He had reached the third button from the top, when to his astonishment, Leslie undid the remaining two, then reached behind her back and unhooked her bra.

For the first time, he had been able to feel the smoothness of her body. As his hands moved inside her blouse, touching her bare breasts, he could feel her tremble as she pressed against him.

Leslie had managed to resist his physical advances for months, either by keeping her arms pressed against her sides, turning away, or simply giving him a nasty look. For her to suddenly offer no resistance, and instead, her plaid skirt crumpled at mid-thigh, begin to kiss him more intensely than he could ever remember, unearthed an intensity in DJ he'd never felt before.

Then as surprisingly as she had begun, she stopped. Before emcee Jack Bailey could have the audience decide which pitiful creature would win all the prizes by being named Queen for that particular day, Leslie's eyes snapped open. "Get away from me, DJ." She reached behind her back, re-hooked her bra and buttoned her blouse, then stood. As she ran both hands to the back of her head to fashion a ponytail, she glared at him, then turned away. "I think it's time for you to leave. I have homework to do."

As he rose to his feet, DJ said nothing. He was embarrassed with his tumescence and used his hands as a fig leaf while he waited for an explanation. When she offered none, he knew enough not to ask.

Leslie always had reasons for what she did though it was rare that she would ever disclose what they were. And when he was unable to understand her thinking, which was most of the time, and would risk a question, she would roll her eyes, shake her head, and then change the subject, almost as if it was beneath her to dignify such a request by responding to it.

She was unsettling that way, and she was also very smart and very clean. Her green-and-white saddle shoes were always immaculate, the socks she wore over her nylons never sagged at the ankles, and even after all that kissing, he knew her breath would still be like peppermint.

As he stared down at his own hands, then glanced at Leslie's turned back, DJ used one fingernail to scoop a tiny sliver of dirt from another.

And then he was sad. It was not just being sexually

unfulfilled that bothered him, it was also the sudden sense of feeling incomplete. When Leslie had let him touch her, and his hands had moved across her body for the first time, the barrier between them had suddenly crumbled. And he realized that all their prior moments of soda fountains, hand-holding and Saturday afternoon football games had suddenly been rendered meaningless—superficial artifacts stolen from some two-bit *Archie* comic book.

He had never known Leslie suffered from red marks on her shoulders because of straps that clenched too tightly, or about a two-inch scar near the corner of her back, and that her skin was smoother just below the neckline. It was an uncharted world he had stumbled into, one that he didn't want to depart from now that he had arrived. But as the studio audience howled its approval to Jack Bailey while he crowned the chipped-front-tooth widow from Akron, and with Leslie now turned and facing him, arms crossed, cheeks flushed, DJ was suddenly uncertain anything had changed at all.

He picked up his two notebooks, said goodbye to no response and climbed the wooden stairs to the living room. As he crossed to the front door, the audience cheers below suddenly subsided, probably, he guessed, because Jack Bailey had been turned off too. He was—

The bus suddenly slammed into a pothole and DJ opened his eyes. He stared across the aisle at Lisa Havens, the high school goddess sitting next to Bobby Litchfield, the team quarterback. Bobby was whispering in Lisa's ear, his arm wrapped around her neck.

"Tonight's going to be another big night," Don Maynard said, sticking his head over the back of the seat between Ike and DJ.

Everyone knew DJ's friend, Don Maynard was having sex with his girlfriend, Frannie.

"Shut up, Maynard," an envious Rocco said from his seat behind the driver.

"Yes ma'am," Maynard responded, saluting.

“And don’t salute,” Rocco said, glaring at Maynard. As the town’s premier greaser and last year’s local Golden Gloves quarter-finalist, he was used to his directives being obeyed.

Maynard saluted.

Rocco pounced from his seat with such force his Brylcreemed hair whipped into a furry eye mask, changing him into a werewolf-like Lone Ranger. Before he could take a step, the bus driver removed one hand from the steering wheel and grabbed Rocco’s arm. “Sit down, son,” he said, his eyes never leaving the road.

“C’mon, that moron is giving me a lot of mouth.”

“Last warning, son, sit,” the driver said, “or you get off right here.” He waited a moment, then released Rocco’s arm.

Rocco sat, but continued to glare at Maynard.

After braking the bus at the corner of Jackson and Melville, the driver opened the door and discharged Lisa, Bobby, Maynard and a glowering Rocco. Bobby lived on the other side of town, but on Friday afternoons he had no football practice and usually went home with Lisa.

As the driver approached DJ’s house, he braked again. “Last stop.” He opened the door.

“Come on, Ike, let’s get out of here,” DJ said, lifting his books from his knees and rising.

Taking tiny breaths, his lips pursed, Ike gathered momentum, stood, then edged toward the door in small half-steps—all he could manage.

The two descended to the pavement and began to walk.

“Do you think Maynard will have sex with Frannie again tonight?” Ike asked immediately.

As he slowed to match his best friend’s pace, DJ wondered if Ike would ever even get the chance for sex. And with a congenital heart defect, what would happen if he did? He suspected Ike shared similar apprehensions, and though neither would speak of the concern, DJ could feel Ike’s perpetual blue undertow begin to surround and pull at him. “Probably,” he answered, stopping at the sloping cement steps

that crossed the patch of lawn in front of his house. “What about you?”

Ike edged the toe of his shoe against a crack in the sidewalk. “I don’t know. Maybe.” He thought another moment. “Do you think Maynard would tell us the truth anyway?”

“Hard to say,” DJ answered. “But you know what? Maynard may lie, or he may not, but either way, who cares. Sometime down the road, we’re both going to get it, and it’s going to be good when we do—a lot better than having sex with Frannie in the graveyard.” DJ leaned his shoulder against the lone maple that separated the sidewalk from the street and looked confidently at Ike. “And I mean it.”

“Yeah, I guess you’re right,” Ike said, staring back, a tentative smile on his face. He looked at his watch. “Got to go. Doctor today.” He started toward his house.

DJ watched Ike shuffle past the three-foot, off-white Madonna inside the turquoise clamshell that rested on his lawn, then up the steps to his front door.

“Hey, Ike,” he called, “maybe I’ll see you later.”

Ike turned, then nodded. “Maybe.”

DJ stared upward into the overhead tree branches.

If I carve my initials in the tree today, up near the top, the part that’s hidden from the street, will the letters still be there in twenty years? In forty years? If I came back and looked for them, would I ever remember being seventeen? Or if I died in a car accident, or in a remote corner of the world during some bloody war, would the initials ever be seen again by anyone?

He walked up to his house, then stepped along the line of onside bricks outlining the abandoned garden. When he reached the end of the brick border, he pivoted on his heel and stared at the ground, at the blades of grass and the tiny pebbles, then with partially closed eyes, transformed himself into a circus tightrope walker.

For the next five minutes, DJ angled up and down the brick tightrope until he finally lost balance, and as the audience, cotton candy vendors, and clowns all gasped, he somersaulted

into the safety net, dragging the spotlight behind him.

CHAPTER 3

Saturday afternoon, DJ was outside his house when Ike approached.

“What’s going on?” Ike asked.

“Nothing much. What did the doctor say?”

“Same,” Ike said, glancing away.

“I’m heading down to Van Velsor’s to see Patty. Feel like going?” He already knew the answer. Ike was never doing anything.

“Yeah, all right, I’m not doing anything.” Ike began walking next to DJ. “Hear anything from Maynard?”

“Nah, not a word.”

As the two walked past Leslie’s house, DJ thought he detected a downstairs curtain move slightly. He looked more closely at the window, but saw nothing and chalked it up to imagination. He hadn’t seen her since the beginning of the week and figured she still didn’t want to talk to him.

“DJ, wait.” Leslie moved out the door and down the front steps. “Hi, Ike,” she said, then intertwining her fingers with DJ’s, she kissed him on the lips. “Where have you been hiding, stranger?”

DJ stared at her as the scent of gardenias danced around him.

“Are you mad at me?” Leslie asked, a tiny smile on her face as she looked directly into his eyes.

“Mad? No, I’m not mad,” DJ said. He had never been mad, just confused.

“You want me to meet you at Van Velsor’s?” Ike asked DJ while he cleaned a lens of his sunglasses with his shirttail.

“Go ahead with Ike,” Leslie said. “Are we still going out tonight?”

“Sure, I guess. What time?” DJ asked. He couldn’t recall making plans.

“Seven-thirty, but I can only stay out till eleven-thirty. That’ll give us time.” Leslie kissed him again. “Bye, Ike. See you later, DJ.” She moved up the steps and disappeared into her house.

“What’s that all about?” Ike asked, replacing his glasses.

“It’s weird,” DJ said, resuming the walk to town. “It’s just weird, that’s all.”



By the time they arrived at Van Velsor’s coffee shop, lunch hour was over. DJ’s sister, Patty, was wiping the counter near the grill and loading a few leftover plates into the circular dishwasher while owner Herman stacked columns of quarters by the register.

“DJ, Ike, how about a quick game of checkers?” Herman’s sister Greta called. She was sitting in the first booth, a cup of coffee next to her checkerboard, a cigarette in an ivory holder held between her forefinger and thumb. In the old days, she was known for occasionally exhaling smoke and a birdcall simultaneously though DJ had never heard her in action. He had been told she specialized in the crow, the sparrow and the prairie warbler, but since Herman had spoken to her, it

rarely happened anymore.

"I'll play a game," Ike said as he crossed to the booth.

DJ sat on a stool at the counter facing Patty. He studied his sister for a moment—something he rarely did—and was again surprised at how pretty she was, in an understated way. And despite people sometimes thinking she was cold, he knew she was just shy. Pretty and shy.

How about a Coke?" DJ asked.

Patty lowered her voice. "Sure, but I can't give you a freebie. Not enough people at the counter to camouflage it." She loaded another plate into the dishwasher, placed the hood down, then pressed the Start button. Wiping her hands on a damp towel, she added, "Bobby Litchfield was in here without Lisa today." Her eyes brightened when she mentioned his name.

Patty's interest was upsetting. DJ knew Bobby Litchfield would have no desire to be with his sister and he felt protective. It was his job to shield her from everyday hurt. "Yeah, well Bobby's not so hot."

Herman coughed, letting Patty know he was getting nervous that she had been standing still for ten seconds. He could be edgy at times. Herman believed his workers should do two things: breathe and wait on customers. If there were no customers, still two things: breathe and clean. And if you could only do one thing, stop breathing and continue to clean. Someone once told DJ that Herman had been baptized with a bucket of vinegar and water.

"I guess I'll take a rain check on the Coke."

"Okay, I'll talk to you later," Patty said, moving to the other end of the counter.

"So, DJ, early tomorrow morning it is?" Herman called as he thumbed through stacks of dollar bills. "Come before six o'clock. The papers might be early and we can get a jump on them. The earlier the better."

"Okay, Herman, no problem." DJ could sleepwalk through the Sunday newspaper routine. He'd bring the *New York Times*, *Herald Tribune*, *Daily News*, and *Journal American* bundles

inside, insert sections, then pile them neatly on the stand. After the mounds of the newspapers were transformed to precisely stacked soldiers in front of the cash register, he was allowed to retreat behind the counter for a glass of water or a small Coke.

“See you later, Patty,” DJ said, standing.

“Wait up,” Ike called, leaving Greta’s booth and moving toward DJ. “See you, Greta.”

“Goodbye, boys,” Greta called. “We’ll play checkers next time too.”

“I hope you’ll be here first thing, DJ,” Herman restated. Then as an afterthought, “Why don’t you come very early so we can get an even better head start.”



Ten minutes later, DJ walked into the kitchen where his father was sitting at the table, an empty bottle of Piels, a half-full glass of beer, and a chunk of cheddar resting in front of him.

“Where’ve you been, son?” Dale asked. He lifted the glass to his lips and swallowed the remainder of the beer, then stood and moved to the refrigerator for a refill.

“Van Velsor’s,” DJ said as he walked to the wastebasket and peered in, counting a total of three discarded bottles. He had learned years ago that he could gauge his father’s temperament by the number of empties in the garbage.

Dale dropped his empty bottle into the wastebasket and returned to his chair. He uncapped the beer and sliced a piece of cheese from the block. “Your sister there too?” Not waiting for an answer, he continued, “What time is she coming home?”

“Same time as usual, Dad,” DJ said. “She’s—”

“You following this Staubach? Heisman Trophy last year, only a junior at Annapolis too. Going to be a star. Got a cannon for an arm. Doesn’t have a big mouth either. I like that.” He

placed a forefinger between his lip and gum and loosened a piece of cheese. "I would've liked you to play football, but physically you favored your mother's side." He swallowed. "That's not your fault though."

Staring out the front window, Dale wiped the foam from his upper lip with the back of his hand. "Tough few days in court. Cliff Collins got drunk the other night and ran into the fence at the City of Glass, you know, the nursery out by the Ag School. Smashed himself up pretty good. With that kind of behavior going on, I'm glad he's still the store manager over at Mertz Brothers."

DJ nodded, not understanding the point.

"Sit," Dale said suddenly, motioning to a chair at the end of the table.

DJ was surprised and immediately apprehensive as he settled into the chair.

"Your college applications are in, right?" His father stared at him.

"Sure. Remember you had to write the checks?" DJ shifted.

"I remember," Dale said. "When do you hear?"

"March, I think, Dad. Isn't that what the guidance counselor said?"

"I don't give a damn what the guidance counselor said. If she knew anything, she wouldn't be a guidance counselor, she'd at least be attempting to teach something." He belched, covering his mouth with the back of his hand. "The reason I'm asking," he said, "is Patty will be in college the year after you—which means a lot of money."

DJ hadn't really thought much about it. He had just assumed his father would pay for college.

"So what I'm thinking," Dale continued, "is that you're going to have to assume more responsibility. You're going to have to take on some of the liability."

"What's liability?"

"Well, if you hold your horses a second, I'll tell you," Dale answered, suddenly irritated. "You're going to have to work

more—plain and simple. You’ll need spending money, clothes, those things, and it’s going to have to be with money you earn. I’ll have more than my hands full just paying for your tuition.” He pulled on his ear. “Damned if I know what I’m going to do when it’s time for Patty to go.”

“But don’t judges make a lot of money?” DJ asked.

“Not in the district court, they don’t,” his father snapped. “At this level, you don’t make the kind of money the big-shot judges do.” Fiddling with the beer bottle, rolling it between his palms, he cleared his throat. “So, I’ve arranged with Cliff Collins for you to work Saturdays at Mertz Brothers.”

“Mertz Brothers? The department store?” DJ asked, immediately distressed. “But I don’t know anything about working in a department store. How would I even get there, it’s ten miles away!” He thought a second, then placed both elbows on the table. “Cliff must have really banged his head on the dashboard to come up with this idea.”

“Don’t get smart. It was my idea and Cliff owes me. He could’ve been in jail thirty days on a drunk-driving charge if it wasn’t for me. He said he’ll get personally involved and train you himself.” Dale pushed his hair straight back in an unconscious maneuver to cover the bald spot on the back of his head. “You’ll be what he calls a floating salesman.”

“I don’t want to be a floating salesman,” DJ answered immediately, his anxiety rising.

“Well, my friend, first of all, you don’t know what a floating salesman is, and second, you don’t have a choice. Cliff needs someone who can work any department in the store in case someone’s sick, or if they’re just generally shorthanded. That’ll be you, DJ: Jack of all trades—as the saying goes.”

“Dad, come on,” DJ moaned. “What if I have to sell shoes, or ladies underwear? I can’t do that.”

“Again, my friend, you’ll do it if you want to go to college.”

So there it was: *if* he wanted to go to college. His father had never been that candid with him before: *if* he wanted to go to college. He did, but probably not for the reasons he’d heard

the other seniors describe—to be a doctor, or for freedom, or to drink a lot. It was much simpler than all of that—he was afraid *not* to go. The thought of being left behind terrified him. Nothing would be sadder than to spend the autumn alone working on some factory line next to a foreign woman with a moustache while everyone he knew had vanished to different towns and states, and the old high school juniors had become seniors, leaving him loitering around town like some overgrown mutation. He would end up shopping alone during the evening at the A&P, and eating lunch in the factory canteen—purchasing tuna sandwich halves stacked on top of each other and wrapped in cellophane—from rumbling, paint-nicked vending machines, all the time looking through grimy windows at a steady gray rain.

The whole concept was too depressing to even contemplate.

“Well, Dad, I can’t walk to the store. And I don’t have a car, so I don’t see how this is even possible.”

“You’ll be able to use my car. I don’t need it on Saturdays. If I have to go down to Town Hall I can walk, and you’ll be home most evenings by six.”

“When do I start?” DJ asked, brightening. The prospect of access to a car made the idea of becoming a floating salesman infinitely more palatable.

“Cliff said he’ll train you next Saturday. He’ll show you the ropes, as he calls them, then the week after, you can start officially.”

Dale picked up his beer and walked to the living room. “Old Cliff should know better about his drinking and driving though. He’s my friend, and I’m the judge, but I can only help him so much.”

Switching on the TV, Dale slumped into his BarcaLounger and said, “Lucky he wasn’t picked up by the county police—those big-shot judges aren’t as willing to excuse a simple mistake as I am.” Reaching for the *TV Guide* lying on the floor next to his chair, he muttered, “I sure hope this thing

in Vietnam doesn't heat up. It would be a crime to lose a quarterback like Staubach."