

# Curtis Morrow Oral History Interview

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Interviewed by Aaron Pylinski

- PYLINSKI: I am here with Mr. Curtis Morrow, Korean War veteran, to tell his stories of service. Thank you so much, sir, for coming in.
- MORROW: Hey! You are welcome, you are welcome.
- PYLINSKI: Just to start off the interview, could you just give us a quick background of your life? When and where were you born?
- MORROW: I was born here, in Chicago, 1933. Southside. Brown Trail. I was pretty much raised here in Chicago. We moved to Michigan...at the...I was 12. We lived in the lower part of Michigan, in a little town called Buchanan, Michigan from 12 to 16—or 17, actually. I joined the Army from there. And from there, Fort Leonard Wood...no, Fort Riley, Kansas. That's where I took my basic training. I was in the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, I believe. It's the mountain division, I know. I took basic training there... from there to Fort Belvoir, Virginia. One of the fields that was open at that time, more or less for me, was demolition or engineering and booby traps, I think .... Covered that course. So I was stationed there for...actually...for no more...I think that was a 9 month course. I was there for probably about 3 months. And that's when we got news of the police action—that's what it was called then. Yes, so we all 17-18 years old, wanted to see some action. So we volunteered. Most of everyone.
- PYLINSKI: Did you have any brothers and sisters growing up?
- MORROW: Yeah! I have five boys and two girls.
- PYLINSKI: You guys were all close?
- MORROW: I am the oldest. Yeah, we were pretty close. They spread out now.
- PYLINSKI: What was it like being the big brother?
- MORROW: It was great until they started outgrowing me. I am 5'6" and my brothers just shot up. And I said, "Ah man, I can't boss them around anymore!" Yeah, it was great. They was all good citizens. You know, I am proud of them.
- PYLINSKI: What was school like for you? And high school?

MORROW: I dropped out of high school in Buchanan. In fact, I dropped out in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

PYLINSKI: Did you play any sports?

MORROW: Yeah, baseball was my favorite. And track. I liked that too. Basketball was just beginning to surface more or less. But, it was really baseball was my favorite and track.

PYLINSKI: What event did you run in in track?

MORROW: I didn't run in any because, like I said, I dropped out in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

PYLINSKI: So you never got the chance to try.

MORROW: I never got a chance.

PYLINSKI: Alright. So, what was your motivation to join the Army?

MORROW: Travel, to see the world, you know, the adventurous thing. And that was really it. Of course, I promised my mother that—she was a single parent by then, a single mother, with five children, well, seven all total—I promised her that I would finish...further my education, you know, all the thing that mothers like to hear. And so she let me go. She had to sign consent. I just about did what I promised her. Especially on the helping out, you know, [with] the financial part, sending money home every month. So, that was nice. It was just an adventurous thing for me, like the most of us back in those days, you know.

PYLINSKI: What year was it then when you signed up?

MORROW: That was 1950. My birthday was the 27<sup>th</sup> of March and April the 6<sup>th</sup> I was being...April the 10<sup>th</sup>...April the 6<sup>th</sup>, I was being sworn in.

PYLINSKI: 17 years young, huh?

MORROW: 17 years young, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Was there anyone in your family that was ever in the military?

MORROW: My brother. He went in I think around...'52, I believe. When I came in on a furlough, then he decided he wanted to join.

PYLINSKI: Did he go overseas?

MORROW: He went overseas. He did 22 years but he never...he was in the Air Force. He never saw action. That was good.

PYLINSKI: Probably had enough stories from big bro to sway his decision.

MORROW: Actually, I didn't talk about my experience because, you know, I didn't want to encourage anyone else. It's kind of hard to explain to people....The realities of war. They think it's like heroic. You know everybody, you wanna do it. So, you don't want to be responsible for some kid going out and getting killed or maimed for life or something...

PYLINSKI: That's completely understandable. So you said you went to Fort Riley, Kansas for your basic training?

MORROW: Yeah. That's where I...

PYLINSKI: What was basic training like for you?

MORROW: Basic training was okay...you know...but I think there was six blacks. The Army was just still sort of segregated a bit. But the base was okay. But, I think we had 16 weeks, if I am not mistaking.

PYLINSKI: It was infantry basic right?

MORROW: Infantry basic, yeah. Basic training was, you know, it wasn't bad. You had a couple of bullies, you know. But, I managed that. It was nice. I mean, it was like...

PYLINSKI: Was it what you expected more or less?

MORROW: Well, you know, they drill you. They run you through the ringer. [Laughs] They look at ya and are gonna work ya...But, I was determined to make it, to prove that I could endure as much as the six-footers and settle...

PYLINSKI: Would you say your size...did it hinder you at all?

MORROW: Well, you know being light, I think I weighed about 100 and...I think I just made it. I think the requirement was a 115 or something...for my height.

PYLINSKI: I think I was 123 when I joined in...

MORROW: I think that was the same for my weight, I mean for my height, which is 5'6". So, like I said, it was like Boys Scouts, really. It was no big ordeal. I did not take jump training. It was mostly classroom back in those days.

PYLINSKI: What were you learning in the classrooms?

MORROW: Rifle, you know, small arm. Disassemble some of your weapons. You slept through...it was kind of difficult to stay awake, especially in the summer, you know. There was no air condition so you know...

PYLINSKI: Dozing off.

MORROW: Yeah, you are dozing off and stuff, you know.

PYLINSKI: Did you volunteer then for demolitions training?

MORROW: Yeah, I volunteered for everything. I volunteered to join the service. I volunteered for the demolitions because it sounded exciting. And there I volunteered for a career.

PYLINSKI: What was it like at Belvoir then when you did demo training?

MORROW: Belvoir was okay on the base. But, you know DC was still segregated. You know you had white only and black only. I couldn't understand that. Being born in Chicago and raised here, and also Michigan, I couldn't really understand it. So, you know, you are walking around town like what is all of this? One of the good parts about DC at that time was you could just walk in and walk around and tour. The White House, I think I remember going there. They had a certain area that was roped off...well, that was the area where the president...that was probably his quarters. You may see secret service agents, one or two. They probably see us, but it was free, there was no barricades. You could just roam around. Of course there was a tour, but ah...

PYLINSKI: What were some of the things you were training on at Fort Belvoir?

MORROW: Just demolition. Demolition and C-2 and explosives like C-2 and C-4 I believe it was. They are probably completely obsolete now. It was mostly demonstration, they weren't trusting us with...we got a chance to feel it and explain about fuses and....

PYLINSKI: Did you get to blow much stuff up?

MORROW: We didn't get a chance to blow up anything.

PYLINSKI: No? No bangalores? Nothing like that?

MORROW: No. It was mostly like a classroom because I didn't finish the course.

PYLINSKI: Because you volunteered for Korea?

MORROW: Yeah. If I had finished more in advanced, they probably would have. But, when Korea started...

PYLINSKI: Did you have any flame thrower training or bazooka training or anything like that?

MORROW: Bazooka?

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Yeah, you know they introduced the bazooka ... 3.5, I believe it was, in Korea. Once I got to Korea. But it didn't work too well because in the terrain that we were fighting in, you know, it's mountains. So if you were going to fire a bazooka, you know, you need space behind you and you are shooting straight up. So that back blast...

PYLINSKI: Hit you right into the ground.

MORROW: And throw pebbles, and to the guys behind you. It didn't work. I didn't have it. I was a rifleman all the way.

PYLINSKI: So, you heard about Korea when you were at Fort Belvoir. What were you doing? How did you find out about it?

MORROW: You know, I was on KP. I don't know if you still have KP duty.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah.

MORROW: But, we had KP duty, it was about...I think five or six of us around a barrel of...peeling potatoes, you know. I think I was the only black in that group. No! There was another guy. Two blacks. And about 4 whites and Mexican-Americans, and we were sitting around. And someone brought up the subject in Korea, the police action, and it sounded interesting. So we all began to question these guys. We made some inquiries how we found out about it. So, it was a group of us. We went to the school battalion commander. I think he was a major. And he broke it down to us. And because you know we had to request a transfer to go on through that. So he really...in fact, this guy was like...he was a Second World War veteran. And he was a lieutenant as I recall...you know, I am going back 60-something years, right. But, he tried to encourage me to pursue sign writing because I had some... had an introduction to sign writing. Printing signs and so forth, in civilian life before I joined. I liked art at an early age. And he said, "Why don't you...the army need...the military needs sign writers, people to do signs." And I said, "No." He thought he was trying to talk me out of it. So that was it. That's how I had heard about it. So actually, I think they lost that class. I don't know how...I don't recall how many of us were taken. Because most of the guys, that was our chance, if nothing else, going overseas. Yeah. I think I had a change of heart about demolition anyway then. Because I saw...you only get one mistake. That was a good out for me. I imagine it could have been for them. But, then the adventure was the overwhelming personal reason for me going there.

PYLINSKI: So how much time did you have in between Korea...or between finding out about Korea and actually going to Korea?

MORROW: I had eight days coming.

PYLINSKI: Eight days?

MORROW: Yeah, furlough time. I hadn't been in long. So, I went home. I had eight days, like I said. I couldn't stay eight days. I was just on pins and needles. I wanted to go, man. I stayed home about five days, and I just told my mom, I said, "Mom, I want to go." So, I just left. So it was actually five day's and from there I went to Camp Stoneman, and from Camp Stoneman, to Korea.

PYLINSKI: Was that on the west coast?

MORROW: Yeah it was on the west coast, yeah, Camp Stoneman. I probably was there for maybe a couple of days, I don't recall exactly. From there to Japan—Camp Drake. And they outfitted us up, fitted us up, and everything. I was there for probably...I don't know. Thankfully it was real hot in Korea then. I think it was...It was right after the Chinese entered the war.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, that was after we were pushing north and then the Chinese were starting to...

MORROW: Yeah, the Chinese just came over. Yeah, yeah, you are right! We were pushing north. And the Chinese came across their border. And they was in need. So I arrived in Korea in December—I'll never forget this date—December the 4<sup>th</sup> of 1950. That's when we, the United Nations, was in full retreat. And we went around the peninsula and landed in...

PYLINSKI: Inchon, right?

MORROW: Inchon. Right after the Marine Corps...they had been through about probably no more than a month before knowing to push north.

PYLINSKI: I remember it was right after the Pusan Perimeter.

MORROW: Right. That's when I joined. I am thinking we were like eight miles north of Pyongyang.

PYLINSKI: Wow. So, what was saying goodbye to your family like before you headed out?

MORROW: They didn't know. We had never heard of Korea. I probably didn't mention it to her. I can't recall to my family. I had no idea what I was getting into, you know. She didn't either. Didn't any of us, family members. Most people had never heard of Korea before. So, it wasn't hard. Then, once I got there, I would write home, 'cause I never mentioned...just the good stuff to tell your family.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you don't wanna scare your mama.

MORROW: Yeah. She wouldn't know what to do anyway.

PYLINSKI: What...when you got to Japan, was that when you were put in the 24<sup>th</sup>, or was that when you got to the line?

MORROW: No. Japan was...we had about a week to give me a chance to take off and go to town. I was put in the 24<sup>th</sup> in Korea.

PYLINSKI: In Gulf Company or weapons, right?

MORROW: In George Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 1<sup>st</sup> squad. I stayed with them during the whole nine months.

PYLINSKI: I read your book and it was...the detail was impressive. It was such an easily flowing read. It wasn't written down any lower. I guess somewhat being a veteran, I can understand the lingo too. But, you know it was incredibly straightforward.

MORROW: Yeah. You know it was written from the viewpoint of a private. My feel of the life of a rifleman, you know platoon level, squad level. Platoon...probably the company, that was my range. I'm relating incident that occurred for a private soldier, just an ordinary infantryman.

PYLINSKI: What was the unit like when you got there?

MORROW: The unit...those guys had already been through hell. They were a month. The 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry, they were about the second unit to arrive in Korea. The 24<sup>th</sup> Division, if I am not mistaken, was the first. So, they got wiped out. So a lot of the time people get us confused with the 24<sup>th</sup> division. So we were the 24<sup>th</sup> regiment of the 25<sup>th</sup> division. I'll never forget, the first time I met them. We were eight miles north of about Pyongyang. And we got on our clean uniforms and shiny boots just from Camp Drake.

PYLINSKI: Looking brand new.

MORROW: Looking brand new. Clean rifles and everything. By the time I got to my outfit and squad- those guys was in what used to be a school, but I recall there were about three walls standing and that was it. And there's guys hurt all around in the fight. It was like 25 and 35 below zero. They had a little fire in the center. And asked, so we were telling them about the latest happenings in Chicago. Count Basie, jazz, you know we were talking about what was happening in the city. All of a sudden I would notice those guys as they were talking, would reach down there pockets and put on their...what do ya call it...cap.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, their knit cap.

MORROW: Their winter cap. Yeah. And they would pull out something and drop it in the tin can that was sitting in the middle of their fire. And out of curiosity, "What's goin' on? What's that?" They were lice. Everybody was infested with lice. And you know you get around a warm fire somewhere, then the start moving around. They like the hairy areas you know, between your crotch and forth. So I mean, they were in a miserable state. They would be wearing the same clothes for probably at least...I got there in December...I think they went up north...by the time the Chinese came I think it was September. So that is at least two months.

PYLINSKI: Same clothes...

MORROW: Same clothes, yeah, you know... Been lucky if you had a pair or change of socks. So that's the way...you drop a tooth pick and everybody is at attention.

PYLINSKI: Getting sticky hands.

MORROW: Yeah, you are so alert. So the sixth sense kicked in long before. So, that was the kind of...so they began the talk to talk to us. There was three of us that was assigned to George Company, six in total to the platoon. Three of us made it back. Two in all together...I think one of them lost his leg, the lower part. And, so they would tell us, give us different hints about what to do, what not to do.

PYLINSKI: Kind of instill some battlefield wisdom upon you.

MORROW: Right, yeah.

PYLINSKI: What was your leadership like?

MORROW: The leadership was okay. The leadership was all white... the platoon leader.

PYLINSKI: So white officers?

MORROW: White officers, yeah.

PYLINSKI: What about the NCOs?

MORROW: The NCO was a black sergeant. All the NCOs was black, African-American. At that time we were called Negros of course. The leadership was... if I had to do it over, I would have followed those guys. I mean, they...the emotion...Even the lieutenants. There was a lieutenant, Hell, I'll never forget this guy. He would say, "Alright, men, let's go!" And then he would take off first.

PYLINSKI: Headlong into battle.

MORROW: Yeah, he would do. He had to draw back afterwards. They were leaders. By then, in George Company, they had washed out...they were old guys anyways.



The oldest guy in my outfit now was...he was 29-years-old. He did 26 or 29, that was the captain. You got 17 to 29-year-olds. And the regiment commander, I can't recall his name. Coiley, C-O-I-L-E-Y. Yeah. They was warriors. We didn't call each other warriors, of course.

PYLINSKI: But you respected them silently.

MORROW: We all respected him. He was kind of old. Most of the officers, by the time I reached the outfit, we used to go in and get drinks. We followed orders, you always got some slackers but...

PYLINSKI: I know there was talk early on in the Korean War, some of the units being slack or retreating and not standing their ground. I know it took a while for the 24<sup>th</sup> to gain recognition as a hard charging unit.

MORROW: Yeah. But, you know the confusing thing too was that the 24<sup>th</sup> Division, like the general...I don't know his name. Dean...the one that was captured as a POW, he spent about three years there. Well they caught the full brunt...plus, they were in their first. They were in the Pusan Perimeter along with the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment too. Their next stop would have been the Japan Sea.

PYLINSKI: They got pushed all the way to the sea.

MORROW: Yeah they got pushed all the way out.

PYLINSKI: Did you guys ever feel like you were ill-equipped at all during that time?

MORROW: By the time I got there...December the 4<sup>th</sup>, no. In the beginning, yes, because they thought everyone was under the assumption that it was a police action. So you got guys going over there in their classy uniform shoes, their dress shoes. They was ill-prepared, period. Of course in the 24<sup>th</sup> there was also some units that was ill-prepared. But, when I got there, we had shoe-packs. Are you familiar with that one? It's like a winter boot.

PYLINSKI: Okay. Is that like a white rubber boot?

MORROW: Yeah. Similar. Sort of similar to what they are wearing now. They could keep your feet warm as long as you are moving around. Okay, so...in my company, in my outfit, no, I never felt ill-equipped.

PYLINSKI: Had plenty of bullets? Plenty of weapons? Plenty of hand grenades?

MORROW: Yeah. Never ran out. I never ran out.

PYLINSKI: I know...kind of a bad feeling to be headlong into a battle and your supplies run short.

MORROW: Right. Or your rifle jammed. [Laughs] You know.

PYLINSKI: You said you wrote home a lot. How did you spend some of your down time while you were over there?

MORROW: Yeah, but you know...I wrote home about probably on the average about once a month at least. Sometimes maybe...you know like you say, the down time you get. We were pretty involved like I recall on the front, 67 days. There is no time to pull your back. Just for that three days on reserve. Just give you a chance to get deloused, change of uniform, and a shower.

PYLINSKI: After 67 days on the line.

MORROW: Yeah that was the longest. On the average it was about 30 days and then we would get the chance to be pulled back.

PYLINSKI: So roughly you would spend about a month on the line. What were you doing while you were on the line?

MORROW: Most of the time we were just fighting patrols. At that time, the Chinese would be on their fence and then their defense, offense. So it was like back and forth for 5 or 6 months. Yeah, so that's like continuous...we would attack during the day. Now we were in the mountains right and they would counter attack at night. And we had control over the airspace. But they had the man power.

PYLINSKI: They definitely had bodies, that's for sure.

MORROW: They had bodies, and they used them. You saw them every day and every night. At night, it's kind of difficult.

PYLINSKI: What was it like fighting at night in Korea?

MORROW: You see the muzzle blasts of the weapon. That's about a fair and shadows. Sometimes they would run right by your position and you are so focused in on your front. You could smell each other.

PYLINSKI: Did you find yourself surrounded many times?

MORROW: Fortunately, no, but, pushed back, yes. Later on I found out that they could surround you anyways because you are on a mountain. So they are gonna circle around that mountain, corner off that mountain top.

PYLINSKI: You guys use a bounding over watch to get out of there?

MORROW: Yeah. Then we had a blocking force, which would be probably because...I don't know we couldn't call them. But there was a blocking force in the lower area.

You got your roads and trails going through there. There would usually be some of our guys there.

PYLINSKI: What was fighting in those mountains like? What was the terrain?

MORROW: It was hell. You are going up...it sort of reminded me...Afghanistan looks a bit mountainous too. They let you get at least half way up there. Sometimes they would let you get two or three stories up. So you know you are going up this mountain right and you get about right here and they come out of nowhere. They dug in. And they just throw away everything they got at you. That was not a good time to retreat because your back is completely exposed. So, after a couple of months, it could be summer. So you know it is up to you like old-timers, what they called us, to school the new guys, the replacements coming in.

PYLINSKI: How long was it before you felt like you were battle-hardened?

MORROW: I'll say at least a month, probably a month. I saw action the first...as a matter of fact, the first night.

PYLINSKI: You had your first contact with the enemy?

MORROW: Yeah. That was direct contact the first night. We were in retreat but the 24<sup>th</sup> was in a blocking position to get their guys to get back, you know.

PYLINSKI: What was that first month like for you, then?

MORROW: I couldn't believe it. I thought it was a scene like a nightmare. Somebody pinch me, one of those things. This is nothing like the movies like John Wayne. These people are crazy! They will kill ya! You know all of that goes through your mind. Your only chance of surviving is firepower, teamwork, and to keep up. Keep up because nobody will go back looking for ya stragglers and so forth. You are gonna lose the whole squad to rescue one guy.

PYLINSKI: Would you say your size had something to do with your success?

MORROW: I am so glad of my size. You know the smaller you are, the smaller the target. [Laughs] You wish you could reduce your size down to the size of an ant. It's like walking into a hornet's nest with bees all over you. You just say to hell with it! If I am gonna die, I am gonna die a soldier.

PYLINSKI: Die on your feet, right?

MORROW: Yeah. I am gonna die like a soldier. You just man up. You are out there crying out there and saying, "Damn! I should have listened to someone. I should have stay in school." No. Then you realize that...

PYLINSKI: There is not a whole lot of time for careful reflection.

MORROW: No, no you just have to do it.

PYLINSKI: I just did an interview with a gentleman last week who was a Vietnam veteran and you know, he was attacked first day in country. He said, early on, he just came to the conclusion that there is a good chance I won't make it home. And that's the only time I am gonna think about it and now I am just gonna do my job. Maybe you got more of a clear head because you aren't thinking about back home. Not thinking about your mom. Living or dying. You are just thinking about accomplishing the mission.

MORROW: Yeah. You have to stay focused. That was mine and that was most of the guys, you are just so focused on where you are and what you are doing every minute of the day. Even if you are sitting around, shooting the bull, you are still thinking about what would you do if...You know it is just like that. What would you do if all of a sudden...say you are on a patrol or something and all of a sudden, you just see four or five guys of the enemy soldiers? You are just like damn! They are like eight feet, 10 feet from you, what would you do...if...would you surrender? You have to think about...it's just like driving a car. What would you do if you have a front-wheel blow out? You wouldn't throw your hands up. You wanna try to control that vehicle. You have to make that decision because you only have a split second. And 10 to one they are gonna kill you anyway. Maybe they lost three or four guys of their guys of their people, just before they engaged you.

PYLINSKI: They feel the same way about you as you do about them.

MORROW: Right. So, it's like it's a hard especially if there are officers around.

PYLINSKI: Did you guys always have some solid NCO leadership when you were out doing your patrols?

MORROW: Yeah...repeat that.

PYLINSKI: Your non-commissioned officers?

MORROW: Did we have any? It depended on the size on the patrol. Like with a platoon patrol, yes. We usually had a lieutenant platoon leader, or his second. Platoon sergeant mostly. And...you know for squad leaders then.

PYLINSKI: Did you have corporals for squad leaders?

MORROW: Yeah. I was you could say I was squad leader for most of the time...or assistant. You know you try to avoid drink. Not because you don't want it, it's because guys come in that morning and then you have something during the day and

they are not there. So you feel sort of responsible for them, not making it to a fight. But the oldest member of your squad is like leadership role anyway. So I was point for quite a few times.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, I read in your book, there was a couple of times you were out walking, 10-15 miles and all you had was your walkie-talkie and your weapon.

MORROW: Sometimes not even a walkie-talkie. Most of the time, I was just on patrol. You never know when that walkie-talkie could go off at a time that you don't want it going off. [Laughs] You know how they sound, "CRAAACK!" You know like you can hear it half a block away, cracking a bit. So, you just...I never...

PYLINSKI: Aside from the mortar attack that got you wounded and brought you up the line, did you have any close calls out there on the battlefield?

MORROW: I had a lot of close calls but, the only time...

PYLINSKI: Any close calls that stick out in your mind?

MORROW: Oh yeah, quite a few. Those guys are so slick, talking about the Koreans, North Koreans, and the Chinese. They just pop up like...you just see a head and a rifle or a machine gun. So it's just instantaneous. You would be on a patrol too and you make contact, right? And then you pull back and get their position. So usually when you make contact, what I did and what the most of us would do, when you sense something is wrong, you get sort of all nerves, on nerves.

PYLINSKI: Your Spidey senses start going off.

MORROW: Yeah, right. I'd pop off a couple of...a round.

PYLINSKI: Recon by fire?

MORROW: Yeah, and once semi-automatic. And then they would return the fire. So you know they are there. So you always get that first blast. So, I encountered that quite a few times. But, they missed.

PYLINSKI: You think they were bad shots or scared?

MORROW: You know what, we used to talk about that. I don't know. At night, I can understand. We being black, they couldn't see us. So sometimes, that could serve as maybe they would walk right by you. But, they would see your eyes and your eyes would reflect light. And the only light is from muzzle blasts. Now, if there happened to be a star at night or a moon. I never really noticed that but, yeah, they can...That didn't really answer the question. Yes! That was a lot of close...I guess we had about...we all suffered from close calls. If you are on a patrol, they see you. Just like we see them if they are coming in. So they just

either have us waiting until you get close enough or just ignoring you so as not to give up their position. Now, they did that. I understand they done it quite a bit in Vietnam. But, they would do it.

PYLINSKI: Did you have any friends? Any close buddies while you were over there? Who were some of your acquaintances?

MORROW: Yeah. Well, just about everybody in your squad. One of my close ones was my squad leader, Milton Bailey. He was like a...he was a great cat. I think he had about three months on me.

PYLINSKI: Where was he from?

MORROW: He was from Milton, Pennsylvania. I tried to get in touch with his family. But he was an only child. He got killed there. I wrote about him this year in my book. And Maxwell Karney . I could go down the line. I got quite a few.

PYLINSKI: So with those buddies of yours, obviously they are from all over the United States. You being a Chicago native, and living in Michigan, they brought in a lot of different flavor from a lot of different places. What was that like?

MORROW: That was like...

PYLINSKI: I know there were moments were it was kind of eye-opening for you, right? Not that you were completely ignorant to racism or anything like that.

MORROW: Like my platoon sergeant...he was...in fact this was shortly after I joined the outfit. We were sitting around, bullshitting about something and about freedom, justice and liberty and so forth. This was some draftee, some replacement had come in, they had been drafted. So he was pissed off of course. They did not volunteer for that, they'd rather be somewhere else. So they are sitting there, all crabby. "Cho Chang ain't never did anything to me!" That was the gist of the conversation. Well, anyway, saying that one thing to the other, the Communists never did anything to me. Some of us understood what he said. Well, anyway he made this statement and it was true! And this guy was from the South. I can't recall it exactly what state. And then our platoon sergeant come in and he says, "Well, you might as well forget about that." I am not quoting the exact words he said. He says, "Here you are fighting for your life. F that freedom and justice and all. That is just another fight." He was just laying it out to us.

PYLINSKI: Leave your ideas at home.

MORROW: This is it, man. You are fighting for your life. And those words really stuck to me. I think I probably heard them before. I think I had been there for a few months.

But, to the recruits...it was a reality check to them. So what? That's another fight. Now, we fighting for someone else's freedom. And the thing that we as a people are gonna have to deal with when we return. But here we got weapons and in the states, there's no weapons. Who are you gonna go to? The sheriff could be the KKK leader.

PYLINSKI: Right, if you fight back there, it could mean your life, you'd have no way to defend yourself.

MORROW: Right! It seems kind of...that can really hurt your inside. To know that you are giving your all for your country. The only country you have ever known. You love your country. We all do! And what it stands for. All that we were asking for was equal share of everything.

PYLINSKI: To be on a level playing field.

MORROW: To be on a level playing field. So, those conversations would go on quite often amongst us.

PYLINSKI: Did you have ever any downtime to just kind of take a load off? You guys would come off the line every 30 days or so.

MORROW: Yeah! During the off days...yeah, sometimes we would get seven days. As I recall, a few times we would get seven days off the front.

PYLINSKI: Were you just in reserve?

MORROW: Yeah, just in reserve. Give you a chance to roam around and to find some soju. Yeah that was the name of it, the drink.

PYLINSKI: It's like Kool-Aid. Hits ya hard.

MORROW: Yeah! It was the warmest you wanna deal with under those circumstances. We had maybe, maybe we had some USO show. I do recall one.

PYLINSKI: What was that like?

MORROW: I can't recall exactly who the show...I am thinking John Wayne. It could have been John Wayne.

PYLINSKI: Was he there speaking?

MORROW: It was a musical show but he made a mistake and he come on the stage with two pearl-handled pistols.

PYLINSKI: Like Patton.

MORROW: Yeah, like Patton. And I recall some of the 27<sup>th</sup>...that was our sister regiment. The 27<sup>th</sup> regiment. 35<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> regiment. The 27<sup>th</sup> was all-white. The 35<sup>th</sup> had a few blacks in there. This white guy, he recognized...the only time I ever saw John Wayne was in a movie. But, he got highly insulted. They stood up and they walked off.

PYLINSKI: The soldiers did?

MORROW: Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: What were they insulted about?

MORROW: About the idea of him...and he had never been in the service and he had never served a day in any one of them. The conversation at the time was going on like the bureaucracy, in DC, they are making the decisions. Like if you are at war, you are gonna use every means necessary. That was during the time, shortly before MacArthur was relieved of duty. There was talk going on about using the A-Bomb. That was the highest nuclear weapon we had at the time. Every GI was for it. Get these guys off of us. They are kicking our ass.

PYLINSKI: Right! We don't have enough bullets for these guys!

MORROW: Of course you know they weren't against that. I think one reason was because China...Russia had developed the A-Bomb by then. So that could have led into further. But hey, we were for it. We didn't make the war. The military never make war. It is politicians. Guys who have never even...the only shot they have ever fired was at a target at range. And even none of their childrens. I guess that's why, I guess we got Ike in as president, because he was a former sergeant.

PYLINSKI: He was a supreme leader during World War II.

MORROW: Yeah, so he knew what war was about.

PYLINSKI: He was no stranger to fighting.

MORROW: No, he would never back off either. So yeah that was the kind of conversation talked. GIs period. I know about the 24<sup>th</sup>. Whenever we meet, sometimes on reserve, not the whole unit, maybe some we'd get together.

PYLINSKI: Was it pretty amicable between the regiments?

MORROW: Oh yeah. We know each other's strength.

PYLINSKI: So despite race, you guys still respected each other.

MORROW: Yeah we still- when they deactivated the 24<sup>th</sup>, that's getting ahead. There were so many guys who didn't have enough time, they were transferred either to the



27<sup>th</sup> or the 35<sup>th</sup>. Yeah, they were good. Some guys got first choice over the equipment. I couldn't say that because I don't know. But this is what we heard later. And he probably did.

PYLINSKI: So when you had your seven days off, where were you guys at?

MORROW: In Korea? Well, usually they put you back what they called Division Headquarters. That is as far as you are gonna get. Then they start out at the R&R. I never got R&R because when I had six months, there were guys who had nine months. So they were given their first choice.

PYLINSKI: Where did they go for R&R? Do you know?

MORROW: Japan. They would go for five days, I think it was. Five or seven days R&R.

PYLINSKI: So what were the circumstances behind you receiving the Bronze Star?

MORROW: The circumstances...You know what? I saw the artist too. But, it's not on my 214. It was on my original 214. But they said there was a fire or something.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, in St. Louis.

MORROW: So it took me 12 years. No, I am sorry, three years to get a copy of my 214. But, what were the circumstances, it wasn't that important. I think the most important one to me, and most veterans, would be a CIB badge. You know that one, just like your jump wings. You do things and you better answer. I can talk to you. Sometimes you just feel like invincible, you know. The circumstances leading up to that was we were...it was during the summer, probably around June or July. We just about took that mountain, that position. And those mountains are just like in Afghanistan. So you go up the mountain and on the very tip. At the very tip it seemed like there was a big border. And there was one guy there. I don't know...one enemy soldier, Korean or Chinese. It was probably Chinese. He had a position where you had to pass him in order to get to the top of that particular mountain, before you can continue on that ridgeline. He had two guys. There was a river. You go down the river on the other side of the river, there was a command headquarters. Some say it was a division commander or it could have been the whole...

PYLINSKI: For the enemy?

MORROW: No, for us. For our people. This was south. I forget...it was Ridgway.

PYLINSKI: He was the one who took over for MacArthur.

MORROW: Right, right. He was the commander there with a few operations. We figured what the hell, this may be a good time to bound...a lot of different thoughts. So

what happened was that me and a guy named Red, he was black but kind of light skinned, with a sandy mustache. I don't know. We just said, "Let's get him." We just devised a simple plan. Red was going to try to crawl up the side of the mountain. You have to use forward to get there. It was so slippery at the tip of the mountain. And I was going to walk the ridgeline. It was a heck of a plan, right? So, I began creeping up on the cross position. All of a sudden, I see this head pops up. And he had on a helmet liner, a helmet liner for your helmet. And I nearly had a gap between these two. And right in the center of his hole was a branch. And then I noticed the...what do you call a sub-Thompson...a bird gun. A bird gun. I am looking at it. It's about six feet from each other. Passed six, eight, nine feet, right? Our eyes met. I will never forget it. And we both start firing at the same time. He had a full auto weapon. I heard three or four bursts. I felt some heat go into my trouser leg. I think I got off two I think. Then I heard someone say, "Get down!" I just dropped backwards.

PYLINSKI: Was that Red up there helping you out?

MORROW: [Laughs] Red had got so far that he slipped and he started sliding down the mountain.

PYLINSKI: So who was telling you to get down?

MORROW: Some of the guys behind.

PYLINSKI: So you were leading the attack.

MORROW: I was point. I just went up there and just met him. So the whole scene was observed not only by our guys but by the commanders, our leaders, on the other side of the Imjin River ,that's what it was called. So I was told I was pretty in for it. I didn't care about that, man. I was wondering how stupid I was. I walked right up on this guy. I was kicking myself. That was the incident. There was a lot of incidents that we experienced. Our stories are probably not being told because we're not telling it. It was 30 some years before I talked to anyone. You tell them about Japan, and the nightlife, and the moves you made. All that good stuff. Jumping. That was fun, that was great.

PYLINSKI: I would never say that I never had a bad jump. But it was always a good time.

MORROW: Yeah it was good!

PYLINSKI: It wasn't necessarily the jump that sucked. Sometimes the landings were not all that good.

MORROW: Yeah the landings.

PYLINSKI: So when I was reading your book, your retelling of when you were hit with that mortar round was incredible. I almost felt like, I read through it so passionately, I really felt like I was in the scene. Just the way you flashed in and out, where you were and where you thought you were. That was...I couldn't imagine. I was never injured in combat. I can't put myself in that position. Having read the book, I totally felt like I was right there. What was going on in your mind?

MORROW: Well what was happening was we were all short-timers then. And the talk was going on about that we knew the 24<sup>th</sup> was going to be deactivated because that was the last all-black U.S. combat unit. Especially combat unit. So it was just a matter, man, if you can make it a week, we get out of this crap and get back to land, back to the world. So, everybody is just, that is going through your mind continuously. But, that was during the time of the Panmunjom talk, the peace treaty. So, the Chinese and North Koreans, they are fighting for high grounds and grounds. They were like so very, probably one of the worst times of the war. Those last months before it got decided, "Okay we are gonna sign the peace agreement." So that was setting the stage for the whole thing. So, I had about nine months close to then. So, that night we were, it was me and another. This guy, my foxhole buddy, he was also an old-timer. And we would take turns sleeping or napping at night. So we were in a bunker too. I never liked the bunkers. With the top half and you got your front, and that is also the exit. No, there was an exit on each side.

PYLINSKI: Were these bunkers that you made yourself?

MORROW: Yeah, we made that one. We make them. You know the Chinese, theirs would be on the other side.

PYLINSKI: Yeah if you fell in on another unit.

MORROW: Right, sometimes you did. They usually do that now. They always did it. They would build a bunker on the backside like that would be the north side. They would take shelter there during the arterial plane scraping and so forth. They would fight out of the one facing the south because that was the way we were coming south. We were going north.

PYLINSKI: So they would always be facing you.

MORROW: Right so you would be facing them. So we were dug in. We were on the north side. And all of a sudden, I had to relieve myself. So I didn't want to do it in the hole. And it was like black night. There was no moon, couldn't even see a star. I was gonna crawl out of the hole enough so I would be laying on my side so I could take a leak. And I think I was this much out, and all of a sudden, that was it. I saw a light. It didn't hit me now. It was the concussion. I don't know what it

was. I was thinking it was a mortar. It could have been artillery. It could have been a shell round. But we figured it out that I got a short round because we had a 159. This guy was good.

So, anyway, that was it. First thing I saw was seeing like a light, like a big flashing. And years later, I sort of recall greenery. It could have been dawn as I was being transferred back. Momentarily, you come to. I recall I couldn't hear anything. And I got...just hearing a ringing sound. Then I came to, on the train. So you must have been back a while. In fact, we were on route to Pusan. The train was a hospital train, lot of wounded guys. And I came to. I saw this woman leaning over me. She had blonde hair and she had on a nurse's outfit which was white. I thought I was dead. I thought she was a ghost. I must have started yelling because then they shot me with something, probably morphine, I think that's what they were using.

The next time I gained conscious, I was in Pusan in a hospital. That was then, I found out that quite a few of our injuries and death was due to concussion. On the front line, you couldn't put your finger on it. You notice most of the time you see enemy soldier, they wouldn't have any flesh wounds. But you could see trickles of blood from here, their ears and their eyes. And we learned that what accounted for most of the enemy casualties was concussion. It was easier to understand it was you're off it. We were bombarded from different positions before you send your troops over. So, concussion cost us. I don't know if they do it now.

PYLINSKI: I think the whole stipulation behind the whole Purple Heart is any injury due to enemy combat or combat with an enemy. I don't know to be honest with you. I've known guys who were in a Port-A-John in Iraq when a shell went off and shrapnel came through and hit them while they were on the john and got Purple Hearts for that.

MORROW: But, then you have to take into account the Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

PYLINSKI: You get guys who have seen a lot of carnage and being away from home and put into a stressful environment is enough to kind of turn people sometimes. It's different strokes for different folks. Men and women alike, they have different ways of being able to deal with those kind of situations and that stress.

MORROW: Yeah, you know that is something! I know this is probably...I think about the you know, now being an old-timer, an 80-year-old veteran. So I mostly associate with all of the veterans. We got 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment Association. We got the Marine guys and the Korean War Veterans Association and at time, we talk. And we talk about women in combat. I don't get it. But, that's not on this interview here.

PYLINSKI: This interview is your thoughts too. I obviously have my questions but...

MORROW: Go ahead with your questions.

PYLINSKI: So you made it back to the rear and you are in the hospital. Thankfully you are not killed and even though you thought you were. You saw an angel and what not. How long were you in the rear before you left Korea?

MORROW: I was in the rear for...they would have sent me back but I had enough combat time. Plus, at that time they had started to deactivate. I think October the first was when they finally pulled all the 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment guys back.

PYLINSKI: What year was this?

MORROW: '51. So I had been. That was during the time that I was there. I was sent to...I think I arrived in Pusan to that hospital on September the 1<sup>st</sup>. I was hit the last day of August. I think it was the 28<sup>th</sup> somewhere. I was there in Pusan. So rather than return me, they put me on TD, temporary duty, in Pusan at the time my records would catch up with me. During that time, I think I spent about a week maybe at the hospital. At that time, we called it...what did we call it? Battle fatigue. During the Second World War, it was shell shock, Korea, battle fatigue. And now, Vietnam, post-traumatic stress syndrome. So, I was there for I guess observation, to see if I was still kicking. So I was relieved from duty there. And they noticed on my record that I had took a course in demolition. So, they asked me. And I said "Sure, okay." So I was assigned to an engineering outfit and they had demolition. What they were doing was rebuilding Pusan and they had to blow up to remove...

PYLINSKI: Buildings and parking structures.

MORROW: Yeah, and dams...not dams, bridges. They had to get rid of the pillars. So they had underwater demolition. But, most of the work we did was at rock quarries. That was the most of it. I was assigned to that outfit. I was just one guy. I was his assistant for about November. I was home for Christmas. It was probably about maybe just about two months with him. We didn't do anything except rock quarries. He did most of the work. He wasn't gonna trust this guy.

PYLINSKI: He knows what he is doing, right?

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: So in your words, how would you describe the enemy you fought in Korea?

MORROW: I'd say damn good soldiers, fighters. They knew more about us than we knew about them, politically, I didn't realize it then. Because after you return, you find

out about things. They knew more. Like when we were on the front, we would get leaflets and on those leaflets would be a black man or a woman hanging in a tree, just being hung and a bunch of white eating popcorn. And I guess we had all seen that sometime in our life. And then at the bottom, they would have a “Why are you here? What have we done?” And it was hard. It was like they was right, it were true. But, I don’t think anyone surrendered. And at the bottom, they also had the word in Chinese on how to surrender. I think it was pronounced like “snow-shon”. But, you know they sort of give you the explanation of how to surrender. I don’t think anyone...we used it for toilet paper.

PYLINSKI: I was gonna ask you, did you hold onto any of these leaflets? Just as a keepsake?

MORROW: I wish I had. They are available here with a Google search. I never held onto them. They are good for making fire. We didn’t keep them. I don’t know of anyone.

PYLINSKI: They were a pretty tough enemy though?

MORROW: Oh yeah, they were tough.

PYLINSKI: Did you have respect for them?

MORROW: At the time, yeah. Oh yeah definitely. They were kids like us. Some of them, you look at them and say, “Damn, this guy cannot be older than 13-years-old.” But then, they were small in stature. The North Koreans as I recall were taller. They might have been 6 footers. And I am 5’6”. They were good fighters.

PYLINSKI: Did you have a chance to capture any of them?

MORROW: Oh yeah. Then they would become your responsibility to take them back.

PYLINSKI: Did you actually capture any people yourself?

MORROW: Yeah! Once. They just all of a sudden, this guy jumps up with his hands up. And he was lucky.

PYLINSKI: Was he North Korean? Or Chinese?

MORROW: I think he was Chinese. I am not sure. I think it was. I am quite sure it was Chinese. I recall the way he was dressed. He was surrendering. He had no weapon. But, that’s the way they surrendered.

PYLINSKI: Did he speak any English?

MORROW: No. If he did, he didn’t let me know. Because he was only in my jurisdiction for maybe 2 minutes or 5 minutes at the most because the company...the

opportunity was not...I think he saw the whole incident. They would be dug in...so after we peaked under here on the mountain or wherever. And he just decided that was a good time to surrender. He had no weapon. Usually they don't have weapons when they surrender. I don't know where he ditched his weapon. I am quite sure he ditched his weapon.

PYLINSKI: Right, just so they look like they won't attack.

MORROW: You don't want to surrender with a weapon in your hand because that first contact is really...you know, for anyone that is surrendering, it is the most dangerous time.

PYLINSKI: Right, because you have that split second....You are either gonna shoot me or capture me.

MORROW: Right. So you don't know. But he just threw both hands up and sit out there, which is okay because it gave you a chance to get off the front for maybe a couple of hours. It depends because I think that was in the afternoon. It could have been around two o'clock or three o'clock. So now you are a part of a detail to take him back to at least company battalion, along with the wounded, the walking wounded, you carrying them down. But, then after you delivered them, you gotta come back and by then it's dark. So you don't want to be coming up.

PYLINSKI: You may be caught in the dark by yourself and what not.

MORROW: You could be shot by your own men. Good times...mhmmm.

PYLINSKI: After you were taken back to-after you were done in Pusan, you came back to the States and said you were home for Christmas.

MORROW: Yeah I came back to the States.

PYLINSKI: How'd you get back and where did you land?

MORROW: We landed in...Seattle...oh wait...it could have been...I think it was...yes, Seattle. No, no I'm sorry, California.

PYLINSKI: San Francisco?

MORROW: Stockton. Where is that? Yeah it was near Stockton, California. Yeah. I was there for probably about two days or three days. I remember when we docked there, you know as you are coming in, your ship the Walker. We saw General Walker's cruise ship. Everybody on the ship was fed up with combat. We had all seen combat. All of us. It could have been 1,800 or 2,000 guys on there returning after experiencing life and hell. So as we were getting close, we could hear. First

we saw the banners, "Welcome home." As the ship get closer...you could have sworn that ship was going to capsize.

PYLINSKI: Because everyone was looking over.

MORROW: Yeah, everyone was looking. As you got closer, you could hear voices there in the harbor. As we got closer, we could hear singing. And they were singing "Sing Low Sweet Chariot." And let me tell you, there was not a dry eye on that ship. As the ship pulled in and docked, we started debarking and all of the people that were there were welcome committees and the girls. And you say, "Oh man." You felt like kissing the girls.

PYLINSKI: I was gonna ask you, did you kiss a lot when you got home?

MORROW: [Laughs] I didn't do that but I would have! You know, you felt like it. You felt like doing it. And then you start seeing the women. They get ya. It was nice. So, that night they said we are gonna have to take three days to process us out. So, me and a group of guys went to town. And, the first bar or night club I went in with two white guys. We didn't know each other we just met on the ship. We just happened to...we jumped the fence but didn't get passed.

PYLINSKI: Were you in uniform?

MORROW: Yeah, we were in uniform. And we go to this bar. And there is a crowd of GIs. Most of them are just AWOL. They just took off.

PYLINSKI: No one is gonna stop ya. You just fought in a war.

MORROW: Right. They wouldn't even try. So, this bartender comes up and says, "I can serve you, you, and you. But I can't serve you." And he pointed at me. It could have been a racist thing, I thought about it afterwards. Everyone assumed it was a racist thing. You could hear a pin drop for a split second. And then that place just went up and guys started throwing bottles, breaking up the place. And the police came and herded everyone out. Everyone was put on buses and they were taking us back to camp. Next day, we were on a flight out of there. They were sending us home. All we wanted to do was go home. That was the incident and I never heard anything about the incident or whatever.

PYLINSKI: Did you deck that guy?

MORROW: I didn't get a chance to because those guys just went berserk. We had all been fighting through the same thing. So, anyway, like I said, the next day we were out of there.

PYLINSKI: Right. You got a flight home.



MORROW: Right. So I got home, I think I had 30 days.

PYLINSKI: What was homecoming like for you?

MORROW: It was...Ohhh...The first thing was "How did that...What happened?" Everyone coming around. I got a Purple Heart, I got medals.

PYLINSKI: You got your CIB right?

MORROW: Oh yeah, I am decked out. I had three row, all of the kids, my former playmates. I was 18 then. The newspaper...this was up in Buchanan, Michigan. And I recall, "Oh Mr. Morrow!" I think he was a selective service officer. I think they were still drafting there. This was in '51...'52. Christmas, yeah. And she asked me-they come out and interview me and my picture was in the paper and everything. This lady comes up to me, a little lady comes up to me and she says, "Mr. Morrow, would you come to our school and talk to our kids?" I said, "Talk to them about what?" "About our experience..." She said it wrong because she said "we." She was selective service. Her reason...I said "What do you want me to say?" "Well, tell them about your experience there because of Uncle Sam. We need people." So I was to be sort of like a recruiter. And I told her, no, I couldn't do that. And I didn't because I didn't want that on my conscience. So anyway, my brother...that was when my brother joined. That was '52. I begged him not to. And, but- he...he said, "Well, you did it. You made it. You came back." But we had some guys there in that vicinity that had come back. One guy that, I recall, had lost his arm there in Korea. He was not in my outfit, he was in another outfit. But, they figured like if you make it back, oh hey, they got just as much chance. That's the way I felt. Sure, if five people and four get killed one is going to survive and that's gonna be me. And that's the way you feel. So I said no, I don't wanna do that. So, kids was coming up to me and saying, "Oh, I wanna join." I cut mine short. I cut my furlough short. Rather than do the 30 days, I probably stayed home two to three weeks, maybe three weeks. I told my mom I had to go.

PYLINSKI: You still had time left in the service, though?

MORROW: I still had a year to go. I had a year to go. I told my mother, "I can't...I don't wanna stay." Another incidence where she asked me, "How was it?" Because me and her were at the kitchen table, talking. She said, "How was it there?" And started to tell her some things. Mom started crying of course. So since that time on, I never told anyone...I never told anyone about combat experience. Until...about 33 years later. That's when I began writing my book.

PYLINSKI: Did you feel like it had to take those 30 years to kind of like analyze everything and get perspective?

MORROW: Yeah, I think definitely so. You know you are kind of scared to let it out...of who you are gonna tell. You know, like, "Did you kill anyone before?" question. That is a legitimate question. Sure, they wanna know. How did it feel? So you have to explain it to them because they don't know. It is not murdering...it is not like you are killing someone like a drive by shooting.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, I kind of liken it to the Bible. "Thou shall not commit an act of murder." It is not an act of murder. You are defending yourself.

MORROW: Yeah, you are defending yourself. I guess you are defending yourself when you return here. I was like red, white, and blue I was fighting for my country. But, there, when you are actually facing the enemy, you don't think about that part. That is just an afterthought if you survive. So those things I found too. Since I have been out within the last five years or 10 years. Since, 2000. I've accepted invitations from different schools, ROTC schools, military college at Fort Knox. Knoxville, Tennessee right there. And different universities, talking to people. Wanting to know what was it like to be...how do you feel to be a soldier? A buffalo soldier? The racists and all of those things that we encountered back there. So you know, if you don't want to talk an hour, you got a 15 minute Q and A so those are some of the questions. And they should know our history. That's how our history is. They should know the truth about war. War is a nothing like a movie. I never saw a movie. The sound, yeah. They could really magnify those sounds. I never saw blood except the time I was in a hospital. Because usually, as an infantryman, whether you are in the Marines or whatever, you just...you don't stop to tend to the wounded if you are on the offense. You keep going. So the medics take care of that. They take care of that part. They are not there. That evening, when you do your roll count, a head count. I think it is good. The most veterans, any veteran that has spent time... and especially the medical staff! I wouldn't want that job.

PYLINSKI: Especially with the extent of the wounds we have. Granted, we do have a much more advanced medical know-how and so forth.

MORROW: Yeah. That's when they brought in the helicopters too.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, Korea was the inception of MASH unit.

MORROW: Yeah, you see these guys flying around.

PYLINSKI: On the helicopter.

MORROW: Yeah, that thing. They saved a lot of lives.

PYLINSKI: Sure did.

MORROW: Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: So, when you cut your furlough short you ended up at Fort Leonard Wood right?

MORROW: Yeah, Fort Leonard Wood. It was still... On base was okay. But, off base...

PYLINSKI: Hickville.

MORROW: Yeah. It's a racist town.

PYLINSKI: I went to basic at Fort Leonard Wood.

MORROW: Oh yeah? Yeah, it was like, I'm talking about fifty years different.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. Oh yeah.

MORROW: I don't know when you were there, but it was like the moment you walk off the base, you know, the back seat of the bus, you know I couldn't...

PYLINSKI: What was that like for you? I mean, you didn't experience that at all in Chicago or Michigan?

MORROW: No, I never did. And, even in... even in DC.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: You know, hey, that the short period that I-- that I was there at Fort Belvoir.

PYLINSKI: Right, Fort Belvoir.

MORROW: Uh yeah. I experienced it once in DC. I mean, I was on my way there. We stopped in... Baltimore.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Had to change a train.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And, we had a ten minute break, and, so after the ten minute break, he comes out, and I see this por- my porter with my- with one duffle bag. And it was mine. I saw mine- you know how you have your name stenciled- I said, "Hey man, what you doing with my bag?" He say, "Oh, you gotta- we're moving you to another car." I said, "What do ya mean?" That's when I found about the Mason-Dixon Line. Of course that was before, you know, I just finished basic training.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you're just south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

MORROW: Yeah. But I had just been to basic training, that's just when I was in Fort Belvoir. I said, "What do ya mean?" You know. And he said, "Well, you know, here we have to- colored guy, one section." So they took me up, he took me up to- that was one of those coal burners, because, you know, it was a short trip from Baltimore to-

PYLINSKI: To DC.

MORROW: To Alexandria, I believe it was. Yeah. And, they had the coal burner, you know, where they're burning coal, the engine, you know.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm. Big plume of smoke, and...

MORROW: Yeah, the scream of smoke and all that. And I- [he] took me there, and I noticed there were some women in this black- you know, mothers and maybe some little babies or something. I guess they saw the look on my face. I couldn't understand why I couldn't ride with the other guys. Now they all- we all soldiers right?

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: Okay. And then that's when they began to- they explained to me about the Mason-Dixon Line and all the blacks ride behind the- the engine. Because that's where the coal and the smo- the smut, you know...

PYLINSKI: The soot.

MORROW: That comes from the engine, falls in there, you know. And I said, "Damn, what the-" I said, "You guys put up with this shit?" you know. And she said, you know, they kind of consoled me and- oh and by the way, they had some of the best fried chicken. Everybody had their little brown bags, you know, and buckets with fried chicken. I don't know- back in those days, people would, like, you go out on a trip, you know, you carry some goodies with you. Whatever you like, you know, your family fix it up.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And so we sat there and ate the fried chicken. And they said, "Oh, this will change. This will change," they trying to console me I guess. [Chuckling] So anyway, that was my greatest-

PYLINSKI: Tryin' to give you a head's up as to what to expect.

MORROW: Right, yeah that- so the rest of you know- I didn't saw any other guys at- off Fort Belvoir, from the South.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: They was, you know, it's only two of us Northerners and two of us heading into what was going north.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: And, uh, you know, a lotta- the guys- there was white guys from the, you know, from the North. They would say, "Well you know, that's just the laws down here."

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: You know. And some was encouraging, saying, "Man, I wouldn't put up with that shit if I were you guys." You know, like that. That was the law.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, fight for your rights.

MORROW: Yeah, and they probably wouldn't.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: So their hands were sorta- hey, they didn't wanna get caught up in no- you know, all they wanted to do was be a soldier.

PYLINSKI: Right, serve.

MORROW: Or sailor, and do their, you know, duties. So anyway- but fast forward to back to, you know, to...

PYLINSKI: Leonard Wood.

MORROW: Huh?

PYLINSKI: Fort Leonard Wood.

MORROW: Fort Leonard Wood.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: I was stationed, I was to be stationed there as a kiedrichman; it's sort of like a repo.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Like a forward, you know, and that-and guys- you gotta lot of guys from Korea mostly.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And so they're trying to distinguish where you going, you know, what outfit and so forth.

PYLINSKI: What rank were you at this time?

MORROW: I was in the Army. What Rank?

PYLINSKI: What rank, yeah.

MORROW: I was um... I think I was PFC.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: I was PFC then, yeah. I held it twice, I held the rank twice you know. And... I just said, "No way I wouldn't be- I don't want to be stationed here."

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: So...

PYLINSKI: How did you- what were the circumstances behind being a PFC twice? Did you get in a little bit of trouble or something or?

MORROW: Ah, well actually I lost that, there. I lost a PFC track there.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, 'cause I know there was like a- you were trying to work a technicality to get a- to get to Japan right?

MORROW: Yeah I did. I took a, I had to- you had to F up. Screw up, you know, in order to sign a waiver because most of the guys there, they didn't want to finish two or three of their years or whatever they had to, you know, they wanted to- actually we all wanted to return to Japan.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Any other duty except training guys. And that's what I would have been assigned to, a basic training unit. You know, maybe in a quartermaster crew, you know, some- someone's outfit, you know. So I just didn't wanna be stationed in Fort Leonard Wood. If I had been- if there was a chance- if I felt there was a chance to being stationed somewhere like Fort Custer, you know, anywhere in the North,

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: I just didn't wanna be stationed in the South in- at that time, see? So I decided, in fact, one of my buddies told me, he said, "Yeah man, I know where,"- no he had his orders, he just received them. I said, "How did you do that?" We were

sittin' around the PX. And this guy said, "Well, you know, I screwed up." I forgot exactly what he did. He got a DR and that entitled him to a, well that made it possible for him to sign a waiver.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: To return to, to go, you know, to go overseas, to be transferred over there.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: So I thought, "Oh wait, that's a good idea! I'll do that." So I disobeyed a direct order to report to the mess hall.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: I didn't know it would get as serious as it was.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: But the company he got us for copping out- KP wasn't nothing, I wouldn't mind, 'cause I've done it there before, you know, 'cause there was a shortage, there wasn't- sergeants was doing [Laughs] KP duty.

PYLINSKI: But yeah, you wanted to do it so you could get busted.

MORROW: Yeah. I just wanted to get outta there.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: You know, so I did. Anyway, I got out to the Company Command and the Company Commander said, "You know what the consequences of you are?" And I said, "Yeah, I know," you know, "Yes sir I know," you know that. So he said, "Okay, I'm giving you the same orders, direct orders to report to the mess hall." I said, "Sir, I refuse," you know. So... confined to quarters, right?

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: So I get a general court-martial. Yeah, they was kinda hard on us in a way-- blacks, you know.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: "I'll prove- I'll prove this guy," You know, like I'm the, you know, one of those Southern attitudes.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: You know.

PYLINSKI: Let you down.

MORROW: Right, so-- as an example, you know, "make an example outta this guy". So, anyways, so I went before the board, for the general court-martial, and they reviewed the charges, and they were saying, so they asked me, "You realize the consequences of a jury?" I said, I tell them, "Yes sir, I remember" - hey, I'm a combat soldier, I know- I would never disobey direct order. You just go, you just- you didn't go forward, you just hide some away, you know.

PYLINSKI: Right, yeah, exactly.

MORROW: You know, but, you know, you don't disobey an order. And he asked me why, and I told him, that I just didn't want to be stationed. So they reduced the charges, I think, to special and sentenced me to six months. So I soldiered my way out, you soldier your way out.

PYLINSKI: Right, so you were, like, in a confined...

MORROW: Yeah, you were sent in a stockade.

PYLINSKI: A stockade.

MORROW: Yeah and three months, you was released and then I was able to sign a waiver. [Chuckles]

PYLINSKI: Get you back overseas.

MORROW: And back to Japan. Now, I was kinda shit worried about that 'cause, you know, this-- the war is still goin' on in Korea.

PYLINSKI: Yeah you could still end up in Korea right? Back up front?

MORROW: Right. But they, you know, they gave us far more—veterans, they would give you a charge- if there was any other vacancy open, and they did. So there was an airborne outfit.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: 88 and 1<sup>st</sup> Resupply and Packing Company. And I... you know, I volunteered for that. They- once I got in the outfit,

PYLINSKI: Did you find out about that unit once you got to Japan or did you go out to?

MORROW: I found out when I got to Japan.

PYLINSKI: Okay, so you left Fort Leonard Wood...

MORROW: To Japan to-



PYLINSKI: Did you fly to Japan?

MORROW: No. I never flew.

PYLINSKI: No?

MORROW: No that was a ship.

PYLINSKI: Huh.

MORROW: Yeah, that was the time, I think, when we left from- I left from Seattle at that time...

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: Or not- I could be mistaken- to Japan, Kyushu Island, a southern island, and that- and assigned to the 88<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>, which was a rigging company of the 187<sup>th</sup> Airborne.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: So they gave us a choice to, you know, those who was interested or who were "Straight Laced", you know, that's what we were called. So I jumped, I said yeah I was ready.

PYLINSKI: For the airborne and all that right? [Chuckling]

MORROW: I wanted to be an airborne man. There was 22 of us went in. Guys from the Navy and Air Force went in and, you know...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: So I went in. At 22, 11 pass.

PYLINSKI: Passed jump school?

MORROW: Jump school, and I was one of the 11, so...

PYLINSKI: Huh.

MORROW: So the next two years was there...

PYLINSKI: What was airborne school like?

MORROW: The school was- you know airborne school, it's pretty rough.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. Well, you know, there's a lot of running, a lot of physicality

MORROW: Three weeks of, yeah, three weeks of physical assessments, and the last week we jumped. The jumping was the easiest part. [Chuckles]

PYLINSKI: Were you jumping in C-47's?

MORROW: Yeah, C-47 and 119.

PYLINSKI: Oh the C-119's?

MORROW: Yeah. That was "the boxcar," yeah... I liked it. It was great.

PYLINSKI: Yeah?

(1:32:52 mark)

MORROW: Yeah, I mean I was, like we all- we were gung ho man. Hell, the roster come up...once a month I think it was-- at least the required jump was once a month and that would exempt you from tax, income tax.

PYLINSKI: Oh, okay.

MORROW: So, I think I averaged at least two jumps a month. You know, every time you get a chance, guy was tryin' to, you know, you were tryin' to build up your jump

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah, building up your jump log.

MORROW: Shootin' for the... what's the second one on the CIB

PYLINSKI: Senior rated parachutist.

MORROW: And you get your star.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm, jumpmaster.

MORROW: Jump- no not the master, before that.

PYLINSKI: Senior Rated. That's what I had, it was Senior Rated-

MORROW: Senior Rated, you get the first style without the...

PYLINSKI: Without the wreath.

MORROW: Without the wreath, yeah. So, that's what I was shooting for. But, oh it was great. You know, we- the most difficult part of being in that outfit was... as a pusher, you know, we dropped supplies to different places mostly in Korea

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: During the winter months.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: You now, 'cause you get- you got water, so the water would leak from those containers.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: You know, with the whole inside-

PYLINSKI: Right. The little-

MORROW: Man, it was just like on a-

PYLINSKI: On a sheet of ice.

MORROW: A sheet of ice, yeah. So you had to be careful. [Chuckles]

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: And, you know, you're dropping from, what, eight hundred feet I think.

PYLINSKI: Wow, you guys were flying that low huh?

MORROW: Yeah because you drop it high and the stuff, you know, your supplies can spread out.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, can spread out.

MORROW: You're droppin' it on a mountain in most cases. So the Chinese was, you know, they could, they would be collecting

PYLINSKI: Take potshots at ya.

MORROW: Oh yeah. They took potshots but they would, you know- you want just your supplies to go to the, you know, to the...

PYLINSKI: The right destination.

MORROW: The right people, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah.

MORROW: Mhmm. So, that was mandatory, you had to make at least one... jump a month, but the add-drops was, you know, maybe two or three or four, it just depended on whatever was required.

PYLINSKI: So you were packing parachutes and making bubbles?

MORROW: Yeah we were packing, mhmm. Packing and packing up everything.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: I think we were dropping, the highest- oh there was eight tin containers.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And also 105, the howitzer-

PYLINSKI: You talking about the howitzers?

MORROW: Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: That's very cool.

MORROW: Yeah we dropped a couple of those over. Well most of that was like practice drops on, you know, right there...

PYLINSKI: Right there in Japan?

MORROW: Yeah in Japan.

PYLINSKI: What was the-- what was the training like for that? Did you train right there in Japan for all of that?

MORROW: For the airborne yeah. Well for everything, yeah for like the...

PYLINSKI: Yeah, for like the rigging?

MORROW: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: Did you have some buddies in the- in the unit that you hung out with?

MORROW: Yeah, there was only, uh- let's see there was one, two, three- I think there was only- no there was about six blacks in that outfit.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: For sure, yeah. And uh, yeah, we go to eat- yeah, you know, there was some white guys, you know, they was, they were all right. They was good guys, you know, we sang together.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Yeah. We'd go out and, you know-

PYLINSKI: Blacks and whites as an integrated company?

MORROW: Yeah- oh yeah, it was integrated very much so. And... you know- sure it was- it was- hey, I would have finished- I would have did twenty years if I could. I would

have done my other, what, seventeen years. I woulda retired- I tried. I took a year extension--

PYLINSKI: That's what I was gonna ask.

MORROW: While I was there. Yeah.

PYLINSKI: Did you reenlist while you were there or extend?

MORROW: Yeah, but you could only get one, I think, at that time.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: Extension.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: And, in order to reenlist there you would have to be a sergeant or more.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: And that was when they froze the rank.

PYLINSKI: Did you get back to PFC at least?

MORROW: In Japan, no.

PYLINSKI: So you were just a private all this time?

MORROW: You know, I don't really recall.

PYLINSKI: No? Okay.

MORROW: Yeah, I don't really recall... whether I got PFC or not- I don't think so because, you know, they froze rank right after that I got there.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: So there was no promotion.

PYLINSKI: No promotions at all, huh?

MORROW: At all, no. I don't recall anyone getting a promotion during the time that I was stationed in Japan.

PYLINSKI: So you mentioned in your book too, one of the, a young lady that you were... courting or whatnot.

MORROW: In Japan?

PYLINSKI: In Japan.

MORROW: Yeah. I tried to marry her, I really wanted to. We was... you know, prior to that, you know, we were just youngsters, we were taking, you know, women for- for granted, you know, it's just...

PYLINSKI: Just being soldiers right?

MORROW: Yeah being a soldier, yeah [Laughs]. Just bein' a soldier. But then-

PYLINSKI: What was her name?

MORROW: Keiko

PYLINSKI: Keiko.

MORROW: Yeah, Masako. And... yeah we got to be pretty, pretty tight. Yeah, I think that probably was the first time I fell in love.

PYLINSKI: Yeah?

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: I know you spent time with her family and stuff too and,

MORROW: Yeah, I just visited her aunt once... was a long one- we did a ten day thing, 'cause I think that's the limit, time that you could furlough, time that we was- that you could get at station overseas, back there. So we did our ten days, I visited her village, or home town. Wakamatsu I believe it was- a seaport town.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And, you know, then I began to get more and more in tune with the customs, and I even attempted to learn the language- and I found it was pretty easy. I mean, you know, speaking-wise.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: But the writin' part, which is hieroglyphic, you know, that would have been- take time, I know.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, yeah. My wife, she speaks a little bit of Japanese and she can write it and-

MORROW: Yeah. Oh she can write too, yeah?

PYLINSKI: She-- she understands it-- she can read it too, it's incredible,

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: When we were in Japan, she- she learned it before we went there more or less.

MORROW: Oh, okay.

PYLINSKI: And, like, she could- she could look at all that hieroglyphs, all that calligraphy and just be like-

MORROW: [Chuckles] I couldn't figure it out for nothing.

PYLINSKI: She could sound every little bit off to me

MORROW: Yeah, yeah, yeah, she did.

PYLINSKI: And I would be like, "I don't see anything but squiggly lines."

MORROW: Nah, I could not even get that right. But due to her encouragement and another G.I. there...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: You know, and you know in every outfit, there's the serious type...

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: You know, and this guy Peterson- he was a serious type. So we'd sit around base and we'd talk about, you know, different things.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Nightlife and so forth. And I asked him what did he do, you know, and he starts talking- we noticed that every evening- mostly evenings- we'd get a pass, you know, we gotta to be back I think at eleven- before curfew.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And Peterson would always go out to- if he got a package that he would take to his- you know he would go home to his girlfriend.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: His "keep girl." When you take the average G.I., you know, he'd go out bar hopping, you know, what G.I.'s do.

PYLINSKI: Paint the town red. Yeah. Spend your hard-earned money.

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: Spend that jump money, right?

MORROW: Yeah right. [Chuckling] You know, in those first ten days, you're broke.

PYLINSKI: Yup.

MORROW: So- but Peterson, we- so we would go to him for money, you know, for a loan. And I said to him, "Man what do you...?" He said, "No man, I go to- I go to my girl," And that's where he, you know, that's where he spends his time, right. He didn't go, he didn't, he didn't patronize, he didn't- -the different bars and stuff,

PYLINSKI: Yeah, the different establishments.

MORROW: Yeah. He said, "Look man, we don't know how long we're gonna be here, so it's best to try to learn, or I'm trying to..." he was trying to get as much of the customs that he could. And he spoke, you know, he was learning Japanese. And so I got to listen to this guy, I said, "Hey," I did my--the girl I was goin' with, Keiko. She said, "Yeah, you just like all G.I.'s, you just come here," you know, "You blah blah blah and," you know, she said a few other choice words, you know. And, "You don't know nothin'. All you know is 'idowa chip chow'" you know, which is, you know, the other word. And, so then I begin to, you know, I said, "Okay, teach me," and she would, you know, they always... and so she did. And I began to, you know, to learn it. And so... you know, we go out picnics and so forth and, so I really became more interested which was a good thing that it happened then.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, it kinda opens your, opens your horizons.

MORROW: Opens my horizon, it broadens it to a great extent, you know. And so I just- we start spending more time together, I'd just go straight home.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: [Chuckles] Yeah, the last year anyways.

PYLINSKI: Did you guys- you guys had a place together or...?

MORROW: Yeah. Yeah, we had a pla- you know, most G.I.'s had a "keep girl," that's what we would call 'em.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Where we paid her, you know, and everything. I think it was \$10-a-month, at that time, a yen was- a dollar was 120 yens I believe, about 360 yens to a dollar.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: We've made a lot of money, you know, here.



PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: It was 18,000 yen I think, that's what we, the average G.I. would, you know, give to his girl.

PYLINSKI: His "keep girl."

MORROW: Some "keep papers," yeah, and that would sustain her for the year-- for a month, because the average salary was, for a Japanese laborer, was 18,000 yen if I'm not-- yeah, 18,000 yen. And, what the heck?

PYLINSKI: Yeah, that's- that's peanuts for you.

MORROW: Yeah. You know, here, I figure I'll drink it up, go home, you know, blow it away, you know [Chuckle].

PYLINSKI: Right, at least it's when you got a girl, then you got a place a stay.

MORROW: Got a place to stay, you got something to eat.

PYLINSKI: Yup.

MORROW: Mhmm, because, you know, outa that 18,000 yen, she will probably pay about six for-- six hundred, yeah 1,800.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: Yeah, and she would pay, you know, rent would be like six hundred, and then food-- and then she would have six hundred left.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: You know, so... It worked out great, yeah. It was-- Japan was nice, great.

PYLINSKI: But you had to leave after your extension.

MORROW: Yeah after I took the year extension.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: And, so in order for me to reenlist, I would have to return to the States.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: You know, 'cause I wasn't Sergeant- I think it was just top three greatest was able to reenlist...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: ...over there. And to- -marriage was another question too. You had to be a sergeant or above, to marry. And, because, you know, you take a lot of young G.I.'s like myself off, first time away from home, first time I've fallen in love, you know, and...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: So the officers, they wouldn't encourage it. They would say, "Well, if you're that much in love, then you can return and come back on your own."

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: That way you are serious, you know. But, you know, once you get back, you know...

PYLINSKI: Things change.

MORROW: Things change, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Have you ever gotten back in contact with Keiko at all or...?

MORROW: Never- you know she wrote a couple of letters, and she sent them to- my mother received the letters. So you know how moms are: she passed it around to my sisters and brothers. So all of a sudden- it disappeared. I never got a chance to actually read the letters.

PYLINSKI: You never saw the letters?

MORROW: No, I'm here in Chicago and my mom's up in Michigan.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, she's up in Michigan.

MORROW: I don't know if I ever asked her to send them, you know, to send me a copy. You know, they would call me and tell me, you know, when I talked to them.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. What did they say of the letters? What were in- what was in the letters, do you know?

(1:44:16 mark)

MORROW: She said she was pregnant once. That was one.

PYLINSKI: Oh my.

MORROW: And that's what my mom was telling me but I never saw the letter. And- I don't think she wrote for about three times that I recall, and by that time, you know, I'm here. I'm involved with, you know, a lota ladies, you know, so whatever I wouldn't...

PYLINSKI: So when you came back from- from Japan, you were stationed at Fort Sheridan right? Is that-

MORROW: Oh no that's where I got discharged.

PYLINSKI: That's where your discharge was.

MORROW: Yeah, but was sent to Fort Leonard Wood.

PYLINSKI: You were back to Leonard Wood.

MORROW: Mhmm, but then I went back- so I returned from Japan, I was discharged. My four years was up.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Four years and five months.

PYLINSKI: That was it huh?

MORROW: That was it, yeah. Discharged April the... June the tenth. Yeah, I was discharged June the tenth of '54, mhmm.

PYLINSKI: 1954.

MORROW: Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: Was, was there ever a- like a, when you were doing airborne operations and stuff like that in Japan, you ever have, like, a jump that you remember, like, your favorite jump or your best jump?

MORROW: Yeah, my thirteenth one.

PYLINSKI: Your thirteenth? Your unlucky jump?

MORROW: Yeah, you know, guys pulling your leg, "Oh man on my thirteenth dance," you know, "On our thirteenth jump, I broke my leg, I broke-" you know, some kind of crap, you know, just to, to spook you out.

PYLINSKI: Being all superstitious.

MORROW: Actually the superstition-yeah I was- so I'm, you know, I was kinda shook up but, you know, you're thinkin' about what they're sayin', you know...

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: But, you know, it didn't materialize. I just... the only bad experience I had was, I jumped once- I remember one jump and... we're jumping from 1,200 feet, you know?

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And I looked down once and I noticed there was a honey bucket- that's when the Japanese was using human waste, you know, for fertilizer.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: I don't think they still do that now... and Koreans, yeah. And, so, I jumped down- out and I saw this here, big bucket, you know- it was not a bucket, you know, it's like a sunken well...

PYLINSKI: A containing well, yeah.

MORROW: Yeah like that diameter could be all at, probably about eight feet.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: In diameter.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Which is where they-- I'm just sayin' this is for the papers, you probably know what I mean, you know, where they stored the human waste.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: And they dip it from there and they take it out, you know, and spread it on the earth for the crops. And so I saw it down there- this was during the winter though.

PYLINSKI: Oh.

MORROW: And so I caught myself oscillating, I guess I didn't go before now.

PYLINSKI: Oh man, you almost pulled a stiff one to get outa there.

MORROW: Well I was oscillating there, you know.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah.

MORROW: Yeah and the next thing I look down there, just before I was preparing for my landing--

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: And I was right over- it was too late to do anything something. I probably was, like, I don't know, maybe 500 feet or something. So I hit right in it. But it was frozen over.

PYLINSKI: Okay. So you didn't go into it then?

MORROW: Yeah I went in. But I was near the edge, so -- and it was frozen. But anyway, I had a whole cont-- I had a vehicle there.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: What do they call it, a "trailer," that-- that we put on our-- before we store our parachutes.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, right, yeah. Parachute storage.

MORROW: Yeah so I had that all to myself, which was-- [Laughter]

PYLINSKI: Bet you were smelling pretty ripe huh?

MORROW: I was smelling pretty ripe.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. And how many jumps did you say you had again?

MORROW: It was 29.

PYLINSKI: 29?

MORROW: 29, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Right on.

MORROW: 29, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Good jumps?

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: Did you ever jump at night?

MORROW: No, we never made a night jump.

PYLINSKI: Any combat equipment jumps?

MORROW: Yeah, oh yeah, you know. I don't know how many but we had to make those, you know, that was-

PYLINSKI: Where you jump in your pack, and you're- you're in full-

MORROW: Yeah with that, container- I forgot. It looks like a duffel bag.

PYLINSKI: Looks like weapons case, yeah.

MORROW: Right on your front right?

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Out on the front.

PYLINSKI: Oh so you guys had like a mu-zip bag or something, or?

MORROW: Yeah. Then you got your reserve chute and all that, you know that, like a... I didn't like that too well. I never did care for the...

PYLINSKI: The reserve parachute?

MORROW: Huh?

PYLINSKI: Havin' the reserve parachute?

MORROW: Yeah. Your reserve is sittin' in just above the...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm, right above your pack.

MORROW: The pack, yeah. And then you got your-- where you got your chute on your back. And... I mean a little-- at the time, some guys probably got hit on some of the equipment, you know, but I never had any bad experiences. We go over to our course now, and-

PYLINSKI: Did you ever pack your own chutes or?

MORROW: Oh yeah. Yeah you had to pack your chute.

PYLINSKI: Yeah? Okay. Yeah, so you knew your stuff was good right? [Chuckles]

MORROW: Yeah. That was, that was easy. You know I-

PYLINSKI: I never packed a parachute.

MORROW: You never packed?

PYLINSKI: No we had riggers. We had the guys with the red ball caps.

MORROW: Yeah, they did too- we did too. But, you know, like, sometimes I'd just go in, you know, you have access to the packing area.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: So... It was- I don't think it was mandatory that I had to but, you know, you're hanging around there, watching the guys, so you pack.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you learn how to do it.

MORROW: Yeah I just pack, you know, and-- which is pretty easy.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, I mean I had to do more than that, yeah--

MORROW: Yeah you coulda do-- anybody could do it, yeah, but they got, you know, guys to do it, you know.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. So then do you-- so then you got up to Fort Sheridan from Leonard Wood for your discharge.

MORROW: Mhmm.

PYLINSKI: Then you came home. What was-- what was post-military life like for you?

MORROW: That was a whole different... you felt like you had aged ten years at least, you know. I think we had at least an idea- most guys do have a-- you value life more, than you did, you know. You just like you grown up, 'cause I was only eighteen right?

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: Oh, I was 21 when I was discharged.

PYLINSKI: I was going to say '54, right.

MORROW: '54, right. And, it was, you know, you're goin' out into life, and during that, that was during the culture revolutions, Civil Rights struggle through '54. I recall the whole t-- that year, there was a-- I think we had a snow storm or something. No, no, that was before.

PYLINSKI: Did you go back to Michigan? Were you living in Michigan?

(1:50:35 mark)

MORROW: Yeah I went up to Michigan-- I went to Michigan and there-- my mom's there but that's a little small town, and there was no jobs there so I came to Chicago, returned to Chicago and... applied for the G.I. Bill and I took about-- I didn't complete the course but I wanted, you know, I took a course in art.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: American Academy of Art which is what, you know, I was always interested, have always been interested in.

PYLINSKI: Right, yeah.

MORROW: I took the fundamentals there, worked at the post office, you know, at the same time, you know, the struggle for Civil Rights is goin' on, you know.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you said you read a Matthew Henson book and it--

MORROW: Yeah, and that's-- yeah.

PYLINSKI: Kinda stood out for you, what was that?

MORROW: That set a course for my life, really, at the age of nine, you know, bein' an Afro-being a black, you know, you're always told what you can do and what they won't let you do.

PYLINSKI: Right. What was the name of the book?

MORROW: Dark Companion is what it is now, yeah. And I read that book, I was 9, and that really, gave me an idea just what I wanted to accomplish in my life, which was to travel, see the world, and seeing ideas and-- you know, everything they said I couldn't do, you know. So I just set out to prove that I could do what I wanted to do.

PYLINSKI: Prove the naysayers wrong right?

MORROW: Yeah.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Yeah, so I done it. In order to see the world I joined the Army 'cause, you know, that's what Uncle Sam was promising.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: "Join the Army and see the world young man." So I did. [Chuckles]

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: Anyway, I'm glad I did. It was, you know, the military to me was nice, except that one year. You know, it was... if I had to do over- well if I had to do it I probably would do it different, I probably would have finished school. I woulda got more education.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. Did you never go back to get your high school diploma?

MORROW: No, I never did, no. I took art and then-- honestly I managed to make a livin' as an artist, yeah.



PYLINSKI: Yeah, I know you--you do work as a photographer...

MORROW: Well-- and mostly as a jury

PYLINSKI: In an art gallery?

MORROW: Then- I went to Ghana, I lived there for a while, and I got onto-

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you said you lost your ticket right? And got stuck-

MORROW: Yeah (laughter)

PYLINSKI: Stayed around for a while?

MORROW: Any excuse is better.

PYLINSKI: Right. How long were you in Ghana? You said eleven years?

MORROW: I was there for eleven years, yeah, mhmm.

PYLINSKI: Did you make a lot of good friends over there?

MORROW: Yup. Made a lot of good-- got, got a chance to meet some very influential people, educators which sorta took me under their wings more or less, you know and...

PYLINSKI: Yeah. Did you travel around Africa a lot then? Or did you stay pretty much in Ghana?

MORROW: Well just in-- pretty much in West Africa.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Ghana, Togo, the Ivory Coast, yeah.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: That was where I were. Yeah.

PYLINSKI: So how, how was the book for ya? Like, I know you-- when did you start writin' that book?

MORROW: I started writin' that book in '83 I believe.

PYLINSKI: Okay. How long did it take you to complete it?

MORROW: A good 3 years. You know, you're startin' off, and as it goes, "I don't know what this is." It's just like paintin' a picture of your life. Yeah.

PYLINSKI: Right, absolutely.

MORROW: Yeah, so... yeah for at least 3 years I think-- I think it was, came out, I forgot the exact-- I think it was '87 when it was published.

PYLINSKI: I think so, yeah.

MORROW: Mhmm. And the book is, like you say, you know, it's an interesting book. It's just my story, you know, it's like a--

PYLINSKI: Yeah, totally, you've got a damn interesting story, that's the truth. [Laughter]

MORROW: Thank you.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, no problem man. Thank you for keeping me entertained. My wife, man, when I brought that book home, she's like, "What the heck are you reading?"

MORROW: [Laughter]

PYLINSKI: I was like, We're about to find out, what *did* a commie ever do to a black man?

MORROW: Did she read it?

PYLINSKI: Eh, she's-- she's not too big on military books. She's a--

MORROW: Yeah, that's a lot of people, and you know--

PYLINSKI: I think the closest thing she's come to a military book is-- she just read Colin Powell's latest book.

MORROW: Yeah I read that one too.

PYLINSKI: Yeah. I'm--

MORROW: I think I had a trans-- yeah.

PYLINSKI: I, you know, it's on my list of many books to read, but yeah, she said it was a really good read.

MORROW: It is, it really was, you know.

PYLINSKI: Yup.

MORROW: And you can see how-- now I can see now how I was-- we was started-- we were pioneers really.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: You know, we paved the way for him.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: The highest ranking officer in... during the time that I was in was Davis, I believe.

PYLINSKI: Okay.

MORROW: And-- the Air Force, Davis. And the highest ranking officer- he was a general. I think a briga-- brigadier?

PYLINSKI: He was a fighter pilot. Correct?

MORROW: Yeah, right, yeah. He was "Big Old David." He was in Korea, he served in Korea.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: I think he could have been lieutenant gen-- I'm not quite sure.

PYLINSKI: He was a-- I wanna say he was a three-star general.

MORROW: Three-star?

PYLINSKI: I just-- I just watched a documentary about blacks in the military and I think he was a three-star.

MORROW: Three-star?

PYLINSKI: I think so.

MORROW: Yeah. I think that he-- and the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the highest ranking officer, they say there was a major, but I was-- I met our company commander who one time was a captain.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Mhmm. You know, there was getting', guys get-- get knocked off pretty fast.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, yeah.

MORROW: And-- especially the platoon leaders. And...that was--

PYLINSKI: Well they were targets right? They had the radioman with 'em and--

MORROW: Yeah they had a radiomans, and--

PYLINSKI: They were directing traffic more or less and shoutin' orders.

MORROW: Mhmm. Plus there was when they were wearing those bars.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah, the silver bars, right?

MORROW: I think they discontinued doing that because, you know, they reflect light easily.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah, yeah.

MORROW: You could see 'em easy. Oh, you see a white face among a bunch of black faces, you know, you say, "That's the leader."

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: That's the target, just like being a machine gunner.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah, yeah. Those machine gunners were like-- their life spans were pretty short too.

MORROW: Oh yeah, yeah, they really focus on them, you know.

PYLINSKI: Because they put down a lot of lead, that's for sure.

MORROW: Right, yeah, mmmm.

PYLINSKI: So how do you think the military kinda shaped your life, more or less? I know you said a little bit earlier about how you kinda respect life more.

MORROW: Yeah, yeah.

PYLINSKI: But, you know, did you carry your military mentality, you know, well into your years?

MORROW: Yeah, you know, the military was good for the disciplinary-- opened my eyes to the world, like there are other cultures and, like, with most of us, there's a lot of things like veterans that we could probably say that will enlighten the experience of the present soldiers, and, you know, that's in the service now, you know, from our experience, things has changed a great deal. Now you can punch a button, right, and wipe out a, you know, a building somewhere on the other side of the pond, the big pond, you know. Korea was, you know, was the last conventional war that I know, you know, what Vietnam was more or less like on a guerrilla-like style.

PYLINSKI: Mmmm.

MORROW: And, and now we're, like, in Iraq and up over there, you know, it's-- I think IED's is probably the-- and snipers is probably-- which is rough-- bad, you know, I wouldn't want to be in it because--

PYLINSKI: Well you're fighting insurgents, you know, they're dressed just like the local population.

MORROW: Insurgents and so forth, so you don't know who is who.

PYLINSKI: Yup.

MORROW: You know, it's just like... you know, after you're out and you look back and you're-- you say, "Gosh," you were in Korea, you were in Japan, or you were in China, wherever, everybody look like Chinese, you know, so I can't look at a Korean, a Chinese, or an Oriental for that matter, and distinguish which...

PYLINSKI: What country they're from or whatnot, yeah.

MORROW: Yeah, which I can't, I couldn't do that. I don't think the average American could do that.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Especially even the military. So, yeah, it shaped my life. It, you know, there-- open my doors, I respect other cultures, and countries-- yeah, good people, there are more good people anywhere you go in the world.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Than the-- than bad people. And the good people-- the bad people usually con-- they always-- they conceal themselves from amongst the good ones.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: So how you gonna tell?

PYLINSKI: Were you ever involved in the Civil Rights movement in the '60's?

MORROW: Well, not really. I checked out the NAACP, I wasn't interested in integrating at that time.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And, you know... the Muslim- at that time they were called the Black Muslims-- they helped me out for the disciplinary part in how to clean up myself. I was drunk for the first three years, you know--

PYLINSKI: Coming home from?

MORROW: Yeah, coming home, you know. And, so I cleaned myself up just from listening...

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: Like, and that was-- that was good for me-- that was Elijah Muhammad. And I respected them-- still do, but I respected their life-- outlook on life, you know,

about things. I didn't wanna join anything, you know, organizations after the service.

PYLINSKI: Right, right, yeah right.

MORROW: That was it. And, so I just went among, all just-- just like with religions, I respect all, you know, because all of them have goodness about them, but bad people get in and they can take advantage of--

PYLINSKI: Yup.

MORROW: Of those situations, you know, our belief. So, that's been, more or less--my life pattern really is to take the good-- take what's good from each and put it here and keep it, [Placing his hand on his heart] you know, keep it here. If somebody asks, I'll share it, you know, what the hell. So, yeah, it was-- it was great for me. Yeah man, I think the average person too, I can say, it was... it just brought me to the point like, the reality of war is not... I don't see no end to it. See... I guess just the way we are, people, we just make war on each other.

PYLINSKI: Some people are just wired that way. [Chuckling]

MORROW: Yeah, oh yeah.

PYLINSKI: So, just a couple more questions and we can-- we can wrap up, but I-- something was ask all of our veterans here, when we do these interviews, is: how do you feel about the boots that you were issued?

MORROW: The boot?

PYLINSKI: Yeah, your boots.

MORROW: Service?

PYLINSKI: Yeah, your service boots. How do you feel about those?

MORROW: Ah, like I said, those shoepacks was good. I think that's what we called them, you probably have a different name for them. That was after the regular combat boots--

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: Which was... I guess it's okay during the warm weather climate, it seemed, but your feet lack... you now, your-- your feet get cold, you're miserable anyway. And... so that's just about all I can sum up all on, you know, on your boots.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Yeah. It's...

PYLINSKI: So then, what's your opinion on somebody that's willing to-- to serve their own country in the military?

MORROW: Actually, you know, I'm asked that question, because I speak at different schools and, you know, high schools-- especially during black history month and so forth, you know... First I wouldn't 'cause, like, if-- if it's possible, for the educational reasons, great, you can't beat it, you know,

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: But then you have to decide what field of education you want to pursue because, you know, you could-- you might want to be a fighter pilot-- everybody wants to be a fighter pilot, but you gotta have some college background on that. When I went in, and 'course you could-- I think it was the sixth grade--

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: I don't know if, you know, you-- now you need at least-- you need to at least finish high school. So I encourage... if it's possible to go to college, you know, say if your family was able to finance your way through college, check it out, do it. I would encourage that. Just- and for the, if your family is not, then, sure, join. It's great for the disciplinary, you know, for your discipline and it's also for-- give you a chance to travel and meet other people. And it's not like it was when I was in, they don't have to-- they're not encountering the different races.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: Which was, really-- make a lot of guys screw it up, you know, and, you know, you just get fed up and you end up in prison or something, you know, or worse.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: But, I think the military could be good because-- like I said, military is-- is not the one that makes the war, you know... I also encourage them to vote. They spend, you know-- you're 18 or above.

PYLINSKI: Oh yeah.

MORROW: I think when I was there, we had to be twenty-one before you could qualify to vote-- like, I mean I could kill in a war--

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And I could decide whether a person lives or not, you know, in a war, but I wasn't able to vote.

PYLINSKI: Couldn't come home to--

MORROW: 'Cause I wasn't old enough, you had to be 21. So now, you know, they have that experience of voting, the experience of voting, period, which is our right. And so I encourage that, but other than that, I think that's it... but once you, you know, there are-- there are consequences to it-- to decisions, and I don't think that's what a lot of our people, all peoples, they have to think about it first. If I had to do it, I probably would like to learn as much as I can-- could, about the military, before, you know-- at least you got a sort of a head up-- head's up.

PYLINSKI: Yeah, you're not getting' blindsided by anything so much.

MORROW: Right, you know, 'cause they, you know, they have propaganda on all sides, you know. But when it comes to, like, this is our country.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And this is the only country we got, you know, no matter what nationality you come from. And it's like, [Chuckles] I say it's like a battleship, like an aircraft carrier.

PYLINSKI: Yeah.

MORROW: If it ever sinks, everyone on it is gonna go down. And some things you may disagree with, it's up to us, or it's up to them to correct those things, you know.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And to- by speaking up. Like, I'm a senior, so I can speak up, like, I don't have a job. [Laughter] You know, the seniors can speak up right?

PYLINSKI: Right, right.

MORROW: So, I just think, you know, I think it's-- this is a great country. I would, you know, if... so I, you know, and I've been to other places before.

PYLINSKI: Mhmm.

MORROW: And I've seen peoples who sacrifice a lot just to get here, to enjoy some of the benefits that we take for granted.

PYLINSKI: Right.

MORROW: Here, you know. And, this is just some of the advice that I give to young generations, you know, I say. So... bottom line, really, I guess, you all you got, you know, so take care. [Chuckling]



PYLINSKI: You can't trust nobody but number one, that's right.

MORROW: [Chuckles] You know me so, you know...

PYLINSKI: Well Mr. Morrow, thank you so much for coming in and sharing your story with us.

MORROW: All right, you're welcome, man.

PYLINSKI: The library thanks you definitely and it's been a pleasure to talk to you, so...

MORROW: Right, thank you.

PYLINSKI: Thank you again sir.

MORROW: Okay.

[END: 2:05:46]