

PATROLS

The deck watch mustered in the red tinted darkness of the bridge wing prior to relieving the watch and made their reports to the OOD. Their voices seemed very small in the huge starry night. The water below parted silently for the ship as it patrolled up and down the Viet Nam coast and the endless throbbing from the engineroom spaces below filled

the background with noise. On the beach illumination flares burned brilliantly above the horizon and an occasional thud of heavy artillery could be felt and heard. The quick flash of explosives reflecting off the clouds in the distance served to remind everyone of the war that seemed, at times, to be far away.

