



Look What they've Done Johnny

VOICE

CHARLES BRYAN COLE

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ABSTRACT

"Look What They've Done Johnny" is a poem addressing the withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan. Johnny was Major John Wiegand, a friend, soldier, and true patriot. John, unfortunately, died of a heart attack while attending a class reunion. The poem is a reflection of our mobilization through Fort Bragg, a reflection on victories in Afghanistan, and the collapse of the country.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Charles Bryan Cole

Andrew College, US

bryancole@andrewcollege.edu

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Look what they've done Johnny
 Johnny before the dust settled on the
 September Day we knew, while miles
 Away we would mount up, ruck up
 And suck up and head that way
 We hurried up and waited and
 Waited some more, We qualified
 And sat through briefing and briefing
 Waking each other through the boredom
 And we signed our lives away.
 We leaned forward to get there
 And built pallets of gear and formed
 Forever friendships that most don's
 And can't understand
 Finally we shipped out and
 The ramp dropped. We fought hard
 We fought hunger, fought years of neglect,
 Fought years of tortured pain of
 The war torn and beaten.
 We built roads, schools, villages
 And we built trust.
 We opened classrooms
 To girls, and opened their minds
 And their eyes to a better way
 Towards hope and a new vision
 Of possibilities.
 We returned home to mend fences
 That could not be repaired with
 Bonds broken and forgotten.
 And Johnny, I cried when you died

Not over there but in an empty forgotten
 Parking lot.
 And Johnny I am glad you
 Didn't see the loss in a blink of eye
 The failed wasted exit, Negotiated
 By a coward out of fear seeking
 Some empty holiday
 On a calendar and some
 Campaign Slogan
 We armed those bastards Johnny
 And let them run our gates
 And load our planes.
 Look What They've Done Johnny

ARTIST STATEMENT

Johnny was a friend of mine, LTC John Wiegand, and a fellow Civil Affairs Team Leader. We served in Afghanistan from March 2002–November 2002. The hardest working officer I ever met, he was truly committed to the cause of rebuilding Afghanistan. I retired from service in 2006. I am now a Criminal Justice Professor at Andrew College in Cuthbert, Georgia.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR AFFILIATION

Charles Bryan Cole
 Andrew College, US

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