

MUSIC REVIEW

Enso's 19th-century lushness
 The quartet brings intensity to works by Verdi, Puccini and Richard Strauss. **C2**

DANCE REVIEW

Surprising 'Sleeping Beauty'
 Matthew Bourne's dance theater production freshens up a classic. **C3**

BOOK WORLD

'Sidney and Violet'
 They knew Proust, Joyce and others. Stephen Klaidman tells their story. **C3**

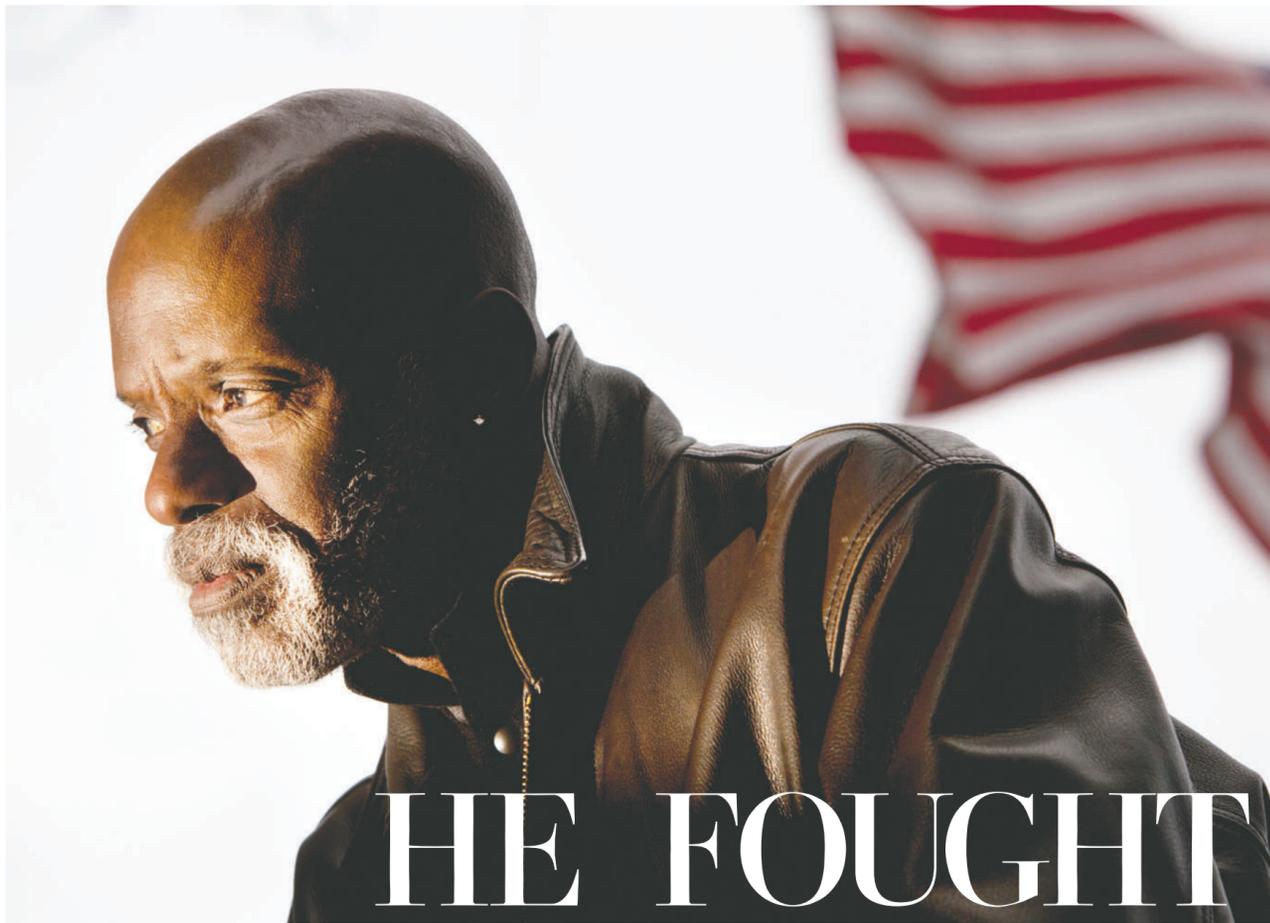


ART AUCTION

How much is that doggie?
 Jeff Koons's orange balloon dog sold for \$58.4 million at Christie's record \$691.6 million auction of contemporary works. **C10**

LIVE TODAY @ washingtonpost.com/conversations The Going Out Guide offers advice for local entertainment, dates and family fun **1 p.m.** • The Web Hostess: Monica Hesse on Internet meaning, manners and memes **2 p.m.**

THE WARS



HE FOUGHT

MELANIE BURFORD/PRIME FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

After a harrowing descent into addiction, a Vietnam veteran rebuilds his life and family through the power of his pen

BY ANNIE GROER
 Special to The Washington Post

Hasha Riley always waited until her colleagues left for lunch. For the next hour, she would type page after page, transcribing the torrential longhand written by an Army infantryman about his tour of duty in Vietnam. ¶ The young draftee from suburban New York had created a life of crime for himself near the U.S. supply depot at the port of Qui Nhon. ¶ "The malaria, at this time, is the least of my problems," he wrote. "I'm AWOL from the 1st Air Cavalry, wanted by [Army criminal investigators] for black-marketing, hunted by the Vietnamese police, strung out on opium and heroin, married to a Khmer mama-san, and on this night I'm drowning in my own sweat and fever." ¶ That wasn't the half of it.

SECOND CHANCE: Scott Riley, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaza in New York, led a life of drugs and crime before undergoing treatment. Now 68, he has been clean and sober for 17 years.

"I've got my arms extended before me with the pistol held in the two-handed grip, extra magazines held in my mouth. There's nothing I need to talk about as I take the slack off the trigger and squeeze off the shot. I watch Mr. Trang's head deflate as the .45 slug eats its way through his brain, tossing the residue of blood, bone and brain around the room."

The searing, novelistic prose — eight to 10 pages per lunch break — gave Hasha her "first taste of what had really gone on" half a world away before she was born. At night, she and her twin sister, Libra, who lived two blocks away near Washington's convention center, would read the pages together. Sometimes the aging vet would visit them and recite his work aloud.

"Selling and stealing, robbing and hijacking anything that wasn't nailed down" was how he described his larceny ring, using dockworkers who also patronized his opium den. "There was nothing that couldn't be sold in Southeast Asia at that time. C-rations, flak jackets, batteries, trucks, jeeps, guns, bullets, sides of beef, pallets, aluminum siding. . . . I even tried to sell a helicopter one time."

With each lurid story, the sisters asked

RILEY CONTINUED ON C9

Japan greets Ambassador Kennedy

The Reliable Source

There was something different about **Caroline Kennedy** on Tuesday night, but it took a while to figure out what it was.

The newly named ambassador to Japan was conservatively dressed, as usual, in a black dress and understated gold jewelry. Her hair was slightly unruly, her face unadorned by much makeup. Then it hit us: She was *happy*.

Normally self-contained and somewhat stiff in public, Kennedy moved through the celebration at the Japanese Embassy with an ease rarely seen in other public appearances. She smiled often and broadly. She held hands with her husband, **Ed Schlossberg**. At one point, while listening to the many tributes to her new role, you could catch glimpses of her mother's playfulness and charm. As she worked the crowd, one attendee noted a resemblance to her father: "I didn't realize she has that Kennedy physical charisma."

Hundreds of guests descended on the Japanese Embassy for the reception, hosted by Japanese Ambassador **Ken-ichiro Sasae** and attended by VIPs (Secretary of State **John Kerry**, Sen. **Edward J. Markey**, **Alan Greenspan**), friends, and plenty of the extended Kennedy family, including **Maria Shriver** and **Kathleen Kennedy Townsend**.

"At least, for tonight, *this* is the Kennedy Center," Sasae told the audience, adding that his countrymen would love

SOURCE CONTINUED ON C2

THEATER REVIEW



RODGER BOSCH

CLIMATE CHANGE: Bongile Mantsai and Hilda Cronje in "Mies Julie."

'Mies Julie': Strindberg with sizzle

BY PETER MARKS

Sometimes, the rawest ingredients yield the deepest flavors, as the basic instinct-driven power players passionately demonstrate in "Mies Julie," the captivating South African reincarnation of August Strindberg's "Miss Julie" that is ensconced for the next 10 days at Shakespeare Theatre Company's Lansburgh Theatre.

Transposed from an estate in Strindberg's Sweden of the late 19th century to a sprawling desert ranch in contemporary South Africa, the play is changed by director-adaptor Yael Farber from a story of gamesmanship and taboo desire in a bottled-up European society to one of a sexualized racial battle for the soul of a divided African nation.

Over the course of 90 electric minutes, "Mies Julie" details the waves of resentment, mistrust, dependence, helplessness and, yes, possibly even love that course back and forth between Mies Julie, the teasingly carnal Afrikaner ranch owner's daughter, and John, the African ranch hand who covets her.

As portrayed by the marvelous, athleti-

THEATER REVIEW CONTINUED ON C6

He knows how to cut red tape, too

BY MONICA HESSE

Chris Cox, an artist with springy curls and an arsenal of power tools, gained folk-hero status during last month's government shutdown when, brandishing the South Carolina flag of his forefathers, he stormed the lawn of the closed-off Lincoln Memorial and single-handedly mowed it. On Wednesday afternoon, Cox returned to the hallowed site of his rogue yard-care, where a power equipment retailer and executives from a fundraising Web site recognized his service by presenting him with a chain saw.

"It's an honor to be able to present Chris with this chain saw," said Belmont Power Equipment's Robert Hill of the Stihl MS 660, which retails for approximately \$1,200.

Chris Cox took the state of the Mall personally during the shutdown. On Wednesday, he got a new chain saw in return.

"I didn't set out to get this chain saw," said Cox, 45, accepting the saw on the steps not far from where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. "But I'm flattered."

Then, before a small crowd of onlookers, he hoisted the 5.2-kilowatt engine-powered saw into the chilly November air, though he did not turn it on. In the middle distance, a police officer appeared to be monitoring the situation.

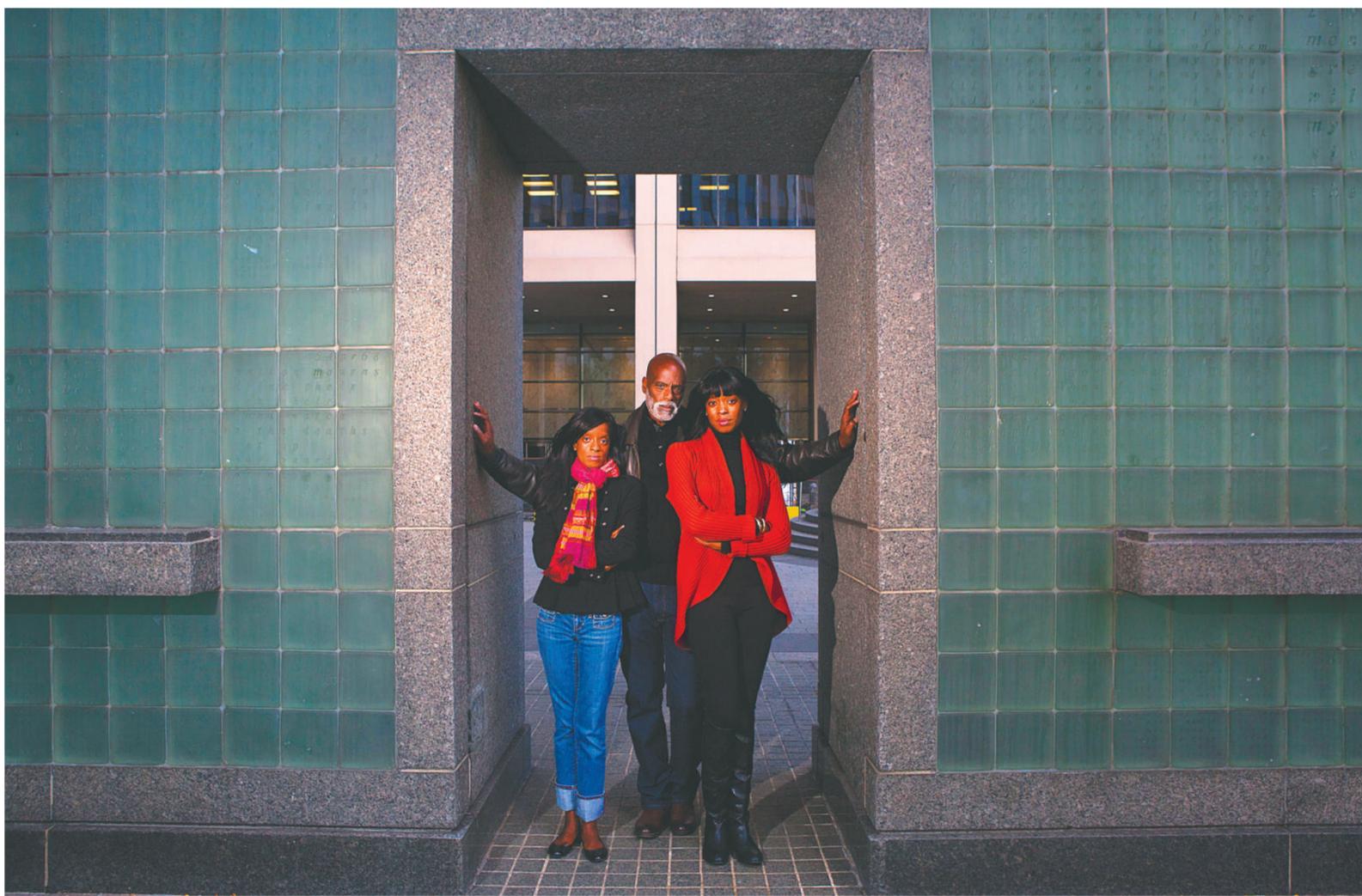
Originally, Crowd It Forward, a Tampa-based Web site that raises money for do-gooders nationwide, wanted to buy Cox a riding lawn mower. But when Kendall Almerico, the nonprofit group's chief executive, contacted him, he learned that Cox wasn't a professional lawn-care spe-

COX CONTINUED ON C4



ASTRID RIECKEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

TIDYING UP: Chris Cox accepts a new chain saw, a gift from admirers of the initiative he showed in maintaining national landmarks when no one else did.



MELANIE BURFORD/PRIME FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

REBUILDING A BOND: Veteran Scott Riley with his daughters Hasha Riley, left, and Libra Riley-Johnson at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaza in New York this month.

A veteran's road from hell to healing

RILEY FROM C1

each other, "Did this really happen? Do you think Dad's telling the truth?"

Like millions of veterans before and since, Clarence Scott Riley, 68 and now 17 years clean and sober, brought his demons back from combat and watched his life unravel. What began with his father's manly handshake and his mother's understated joy at his October 1968 homecoming slowly spiraled into cardboard-box homelessness and the frenzied search for a vein that could still withstand a syringe loaded with cocaine and filthy gutter water.

Riley was born working-class in affluent Rye, N.Y., where his father, Clarence, was the caretaker on a grand estate and his mother, Betty, was employed by Allstate Insurance. A rare 1950s latchkey kid — and the only black child in the neighborhood and at his school — he spent afternoons alone because playmates lived too far away to visit.

An only child, Riley found escape and adventure in books and art. He finished high school at 16, attending the School of Visual Arts in New York for a year before quitting to work as a technical illustrator. He smoked a little pot, drank a little wine and blanched at the sight of a doctor's hypodermic needle.

Then came Vietnam and the horrors of war and its aftermath Riley outlines throughout much of "Grace In the Wilderness," an on-demand book written in 1999, after he finished three years of

residential rehab. Released this year, the jumbled saga ends with inspirational essays by Hasha and Libra on loss, rejection, anger, estrangement, reconciliation, fear, redemption, forgiveness, faith, love and gratitude — all of which have marked their relationship with their father.

Not long after Riley returned from Vietnam, an Army buddy introduced Riley to Barbara Jones. A later chance meeting at a concert ignited them both. "We started talking and were excited about each other's art, music and poetry," says the retired teacher, now living in Raleigh, N.C. "I didn't know he was a heroin user. I had no experience with people who used heroin. I didn't know what a track looked like." They married in Central Park, but even before the twins arrived in October 1969, she discovered his habit. "I would take him to organizations to try to get him help, but they told me, 'You can't bring him, he has to come by himself,'" she says.

When her daughters were 18 months old, Barbara evicted her husband for refusing to seek treatment. But she never bad-mouthed him, and she made sure the girls saw his family every month in Westchester County.

"No one talked about Dad. There were no pictures of him at our grandparents' home," Libra says. "But our great-aunt Ella had his picture on the piano, and we loved to look at it. Everyone told us, 'Your father loves you very much, but he's not doing well and he just can't be in your life right now.' We didn't really understand that, but we accepted it."

When they were 4, the newly remar-

ried Barbara Jones Gullatt moved the girls, and her older son from a previous relationship, out of gritty East Harlem to verdant, suburban Teaneck, N.J. They were one of only two black families amid Orthodox Jewish neighbors on the white side of town.

"We did what all kids did," Hasha says. "We rode our bikes, jumped rope, chased after the ice cream truck, had a newspaper route and babysat." When they finished high school, the twins moved to Washington to attend Howard University and remained in the area.

By this time, Scott Riley had a new girlfriend, Nilda, who would later become his wife, and a new baby, Maya, who would grow up in a railroad flat filled with guns and junkies in the drug-infested Manhattan neighborhood of Alphabet City.

"I would like to start by saying that my father was the apple of my eye whether he was doing drugs or not," Maya, now 37, declares by phone from her home in Jersey City, speaking publicly for the first time about her life. An A student in grade school, she had, by age 14, two addicted parents and a baby who died shortly after birth. She attempted suicide, and by 16 she had a son, who inspired the drastic action that would change all their lives.

"I came home from the hospital with Keno. He was premature and weighed four pounds, and there were syringes all over the place. My mom and dad didn't want to protect me and I wanted to protect my son, so I called the police," Maya says. "That is when Dad went out in the streets to hit rock bottom. Then came the guilt. I thought I was the cause of his being homeless. And a few months later, my mother kicked me out of the house. But I wanted to break the trend."

She did, marrying Keno's father, with whom she later had daughter Imani, earning her high school equivalency and working at a day-care center. Her son is now an Army medic in Korea, and her daughter is enrolled at Manhattan's performing arts high school of "Fame" fame. "I didn't want to follow in my mother's footsteps. You learn from your parents' mistakes. My mother has been clean for 14 years. She's playing catch-up with life," a process that does not include being interviewed for this story.

Maya was about 5 when she first met her half-sisters. Scott Riley had run into Barbara and said he'd like to see his daughters. He arrived at his parents' home several hours late for Sunday dinner, without mentioning he was bringing his new family — Nilda, her brother the drug dealer and Maya. Hasha and Libra were 12 at the time.

But all three girls came away from the meeting with mixed feelings. The twins found Maya "adorable" and invited her back for weekend visits. But with no clue about her parents' drug-ravaged lives, they envied her: She lived with the father who had been absent from their own lives.

As for Maya, "the part I didn't understand was that my sisters had a [step-father] and a mother in a nice house in Teaneck. I was so happy to be with them in a house with rules and love. And then I



FAMILY PHOTO

'APPLE OF MY EYE': Maya Riley, Scott Riley's youngest daughter.

"The person he has become today, that is the tissue that has wiped my tears."

Maya Riley

was put back in that dreary house I grew up in," she says. "I never loved any of them differently. I just couldn't understand, 'Why not me?' They had doors on their rooms. They had a little privacy."

Barbara soon surmised that her ex-husband was still a junkie and ended the twins' visits with him. Today, there is occasional residual envy among the sisters, but all claim a deep love for one another.

In December 1995, no longer able to face the streets, Riley surrendered his rag-clad, 6-foot-2½ body to Su Casa, a drug treatment residence run by the Lower East Side Center. By then, he had two failed marriages, three grown daughters, a long rap sheet and any number of blown chances.

As part of his treatment for addiction and post-traumatic stress, Riley was told to chronicle his life. Over three years, he filled eight hardcover composition books that Hasha methodically transcribed.

"Writing is considered a priority" because it makes PTSD patients "recollect the events, confront them, recall all the individual details of emotion," says Robert Hanover, a retired Veterans Administration psychotherapist who treated Riley from 1996 until 1999 and remained in periodic touch thereafter. "It's the startling moments when the veteran will remember not just the event but the incredible details that have been planted and stuck there for years and years and years."

"In drug treatment there were no visual arts materials," Riley says, "so I began

to express myself in writing and found I could paint a canvas with words."

Despite decades of addiction, Riley says his rehab clicked because of two Su Casa counselors. The first was "an old Jewish mobster who wore nice clothes, the way I remember myself dressing. He made recovery fun and funny. I thought it would be constant white-knuckling, always holding on. I didn't realize you could have fun, have your old personality, laugh at yourself and move on." The second was a weekend staffer "who had been in Vietnam. He threw his arms around me and said, 'Welcome home, brother. I believe we have to give ourselves permission to change.' This was the first time anyone said this to me."

Earlier this year, Riley, Hasha and Libra launched the book before 100 people at Su Casa, where Riley, who went to culinary school while still in treatment, runs food services.

"We were thinking that we would get drug questions at the end, but we were getting family questions," Riley says. "You are left bleeding and raw over the family issue. The first time the girls came to Su Casa, I was so nervous. What do I call myself after a lifetime of not being their father? 'Dad,' they said."

Libra's advice to audience members desperate to reconcile with family: "Consistency. Start by calling every Friday for five minutes. Your word is your bond. Forget what you can't buy us. Just call when you say you will."

Father and daughters caution against assuming perpetual domestic tranquility "just because we clean up real good," Riley says. There have been harsh words and bruised feelings, prolonged silences after arguments over money and relationships, as in any other family, intact or reconstituted.

Libra, mother of a college freshman, works with an AARP literacy-mentoring program but has also created "In Transition with Libra Johnson," a public-access cable show airing Friday nights on Channel 19 in Montgomery County. Hasha is the producer and starred in the highest-rated episode, about the strokes she suffered in 2005 and 2009 and the apparent full recovery achieved after intensive speech and physical therapy. Both live in Rockville.

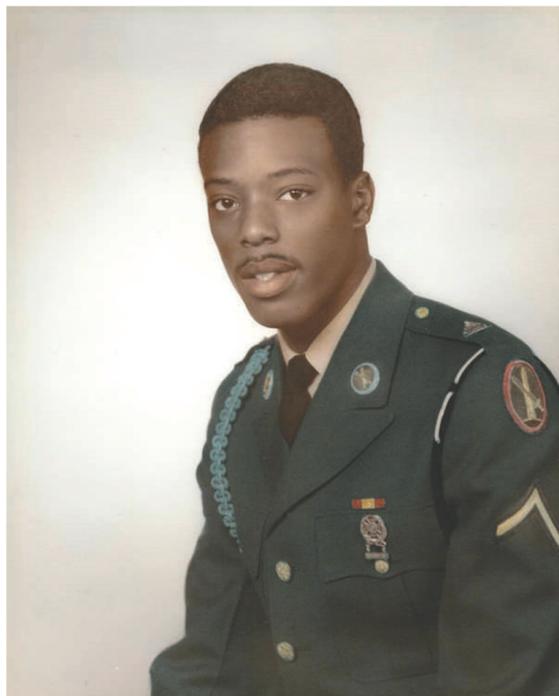
Maya was 19 the first time she saw her father drug-free, leaving a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. They hugged tightly, and she introduced him to his infant granddaughter. "The person he has become today, that is the tissue that has wiped my tears," she says.

She also revels in "a second chance at life that a lot of families don't get. I had to give my dad a chance to be more of a man to his grandchildren than he was to his children."

There is a sense of calm around Scott Riley these days as he recounts his unlikely journey to hell and back. "Rereading the book, it's almost as if someone else wrote it because it's so far away from who I have become. It makes me feel very fortunate. . . . My life was so crazy and jumbled no one would ever have thought any of this would happen."

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U.S. ARMY

'SO FAR AWAY': Riley, shown in 1967, served in Vietnam and later spent decades addicted to drugs and involved in crime.