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## The Lottery

In another version of reality I get a low number  
in the draft. I go into the Marines  
like my father and my brother. I make it  
to Khe Sanh in 1968 where I save  
John Smith. Not Pocahontas' Captain,

but John Smith from Milton, Massachusetts,  
the center on my football team  
who hiked the ball between his legs  
to my open hands. I drop back

from my platoon and see a VC  
zero in on John. I raise my M1,  
fire and miss and the gook disappears.  
"John!" I call, "it's me, Ed!" Instead,

I got a high number in the draft.  
I won the lottery and lost my center.

