

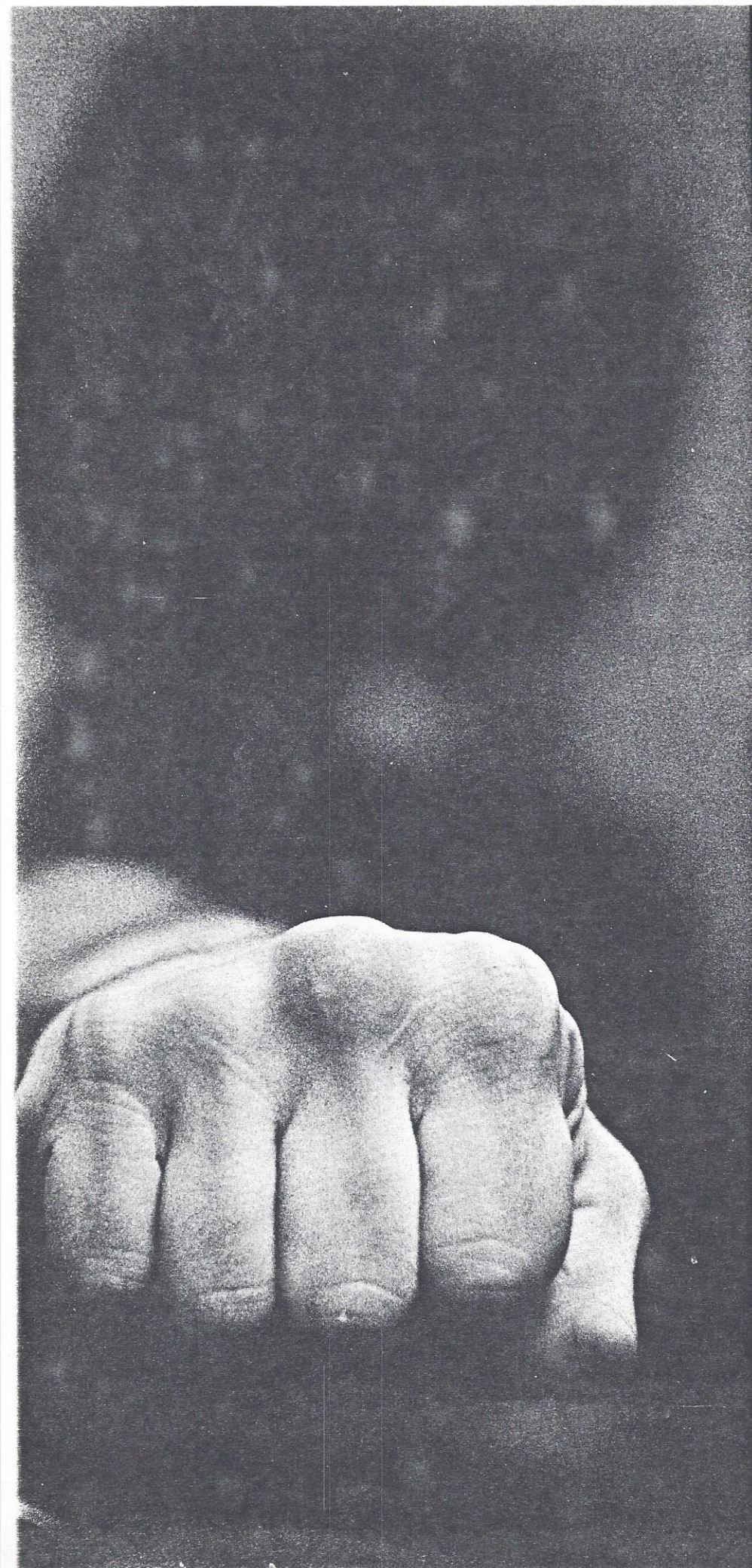
Frank Dux — Fighting Back Again

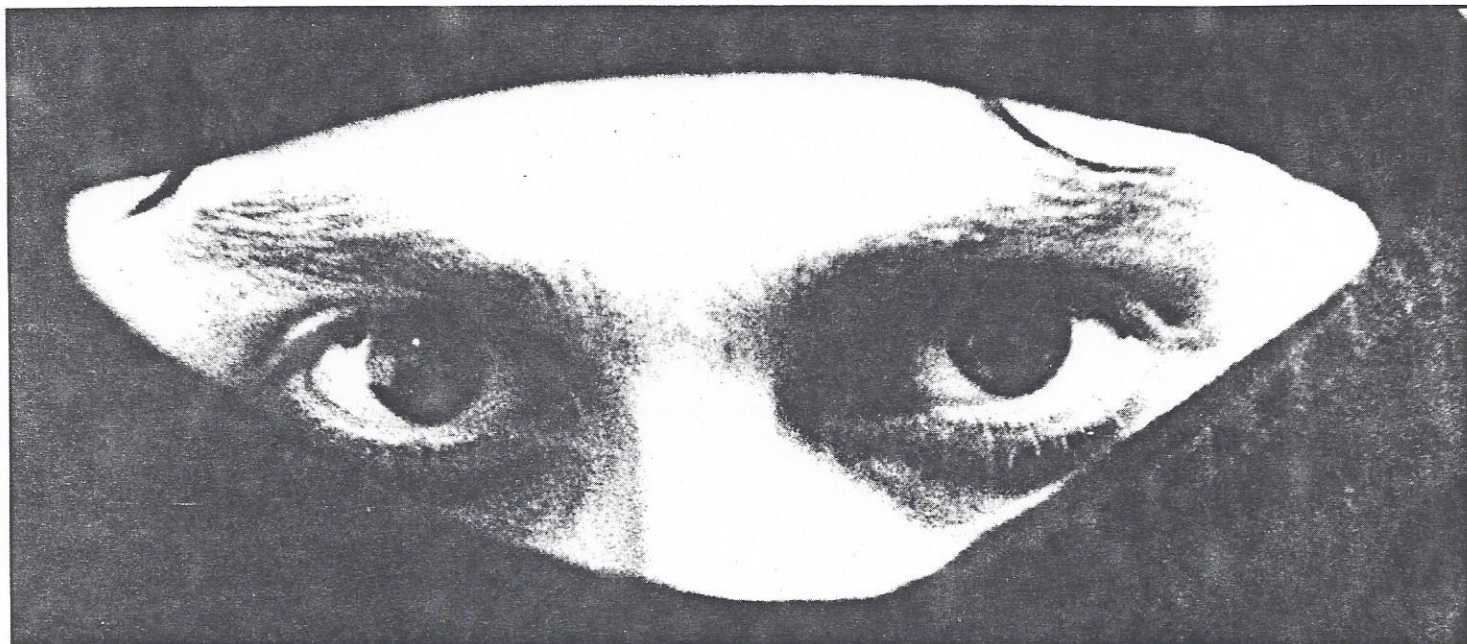
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First you notice his eyes. They can cut straight through you, or stop before your eyes can reach them. It is not unusual to wonder what those eyes have seen to make them so unfathomable.

To spend time with Valley student Frank Dux is to continually change your opinion of him. One moment he is like a child, animatedly telling spy stories that seem too fantastic to be true. Next, a suddenly responsible adult asks you not to repeat what you have just heard. Most of what Dux said will go unprinted here, partly due to lack of verifiability, and partly out of some inexplicable respect for this enigmatic man.





Frank Dux enlisted in the Marines in 1975, at the age of 18. All his life, he had dreamed of being a professional soldier. Part of that dream came from his father, a World War II veteran. Almost every generation of Dux' family had been involved in war. His father taught him to be prepared for it. "My father would play games with me to expand my awareness," Dux remembers. "Sometimes, he would throw things at me unexpectedly to improve my reflexes, and he taught me to recognize sounds in public places."

At the age of 13, Dux enrolled in a jujitsu class, "for all the wrong reasons." "I thought if I had a black belt everyone would like me." A short time later, he found himself at a martial arts tournament, "getting my ass beat." Ninjitsu master Tiger Tanaka saw the young man and took him under his wing.

"I didn't know what he saw in me, admits Dux. "I was overweight and had a terrible self-image. I thought he liked my determination." Dux' determination led to day and night training in Ninjitsu. Dux later found out that he reminded Tanaka of the man's late son, who had been killed in the bombing of Nagasaki.

At first, Tanka's three other students resented the presence of an Occidental at their workouts. But in time, they grew to accept and eventually respect him.

(below) A bloodstained knife reminds Dux that it was for real.



Dux learned the finer techniques of subterfuge, weapons, herbology, and hand-to-hand combat of the legendary secret assassins, called Ninja. The art of the Ninja, once rumored to be no longer in existence, is now being exploited by the film medium. "It's almost embarrassing to say I've trained as a Ninja," laments Dux.

The training would eventually pay off for Dux when he found himself on covert military assignments in Southeast Asia. In 1975, Lance corporal Frank Dux was part of a Special Operations Group which crossed the border into Laos. Dux is one of the few survivors of that mission. "I guess I had to see my friends turned into yuck to understand what I was making a career of." Dux watched the faces in those old photos die, one by one. They died in a game they were playing called war, in which the losers didn't always die. "The losers weren't the ones who died. The losers were the guys shipped home with no legs and no faces. I knew I feared that more than death." Dux fought his way back into Thailand. He returned with bayonet wounds in the stomach and shrapnel in his back. After recuperating in a jungle hospital, he was shipped home to the States. The Marines decorated their returning hero. "A hero is someone who's too cold, too tired, and too fed up to really give a shit"

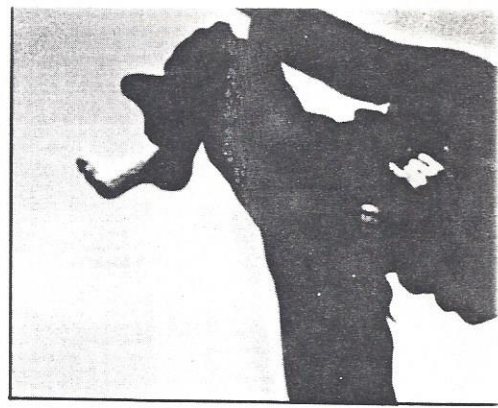
His other assignments were numerous. Dux went to Korea, where he instructed members of the Korean White Horse Corps. He trained secret servicemen in the States, and flew to Nicaragua as an anti-terrorist consultant to the Somosa regime. He left Nicaragua after two days, with few kind words for Somosa.

In between assignments, Dux lived at home. He kept himself active in the martial arts world. From 1975 to 1980, he reigned as the full contact heavyweight Kumite champion of the world. Kumite is a grueling form of free fighting where anything goes, except gouging. The tournament is held in different cities, once every five years, and is sponsored by the International Fighting Arts Association. Participation in the event is by invitation only. The matches are closed to the public. Com-

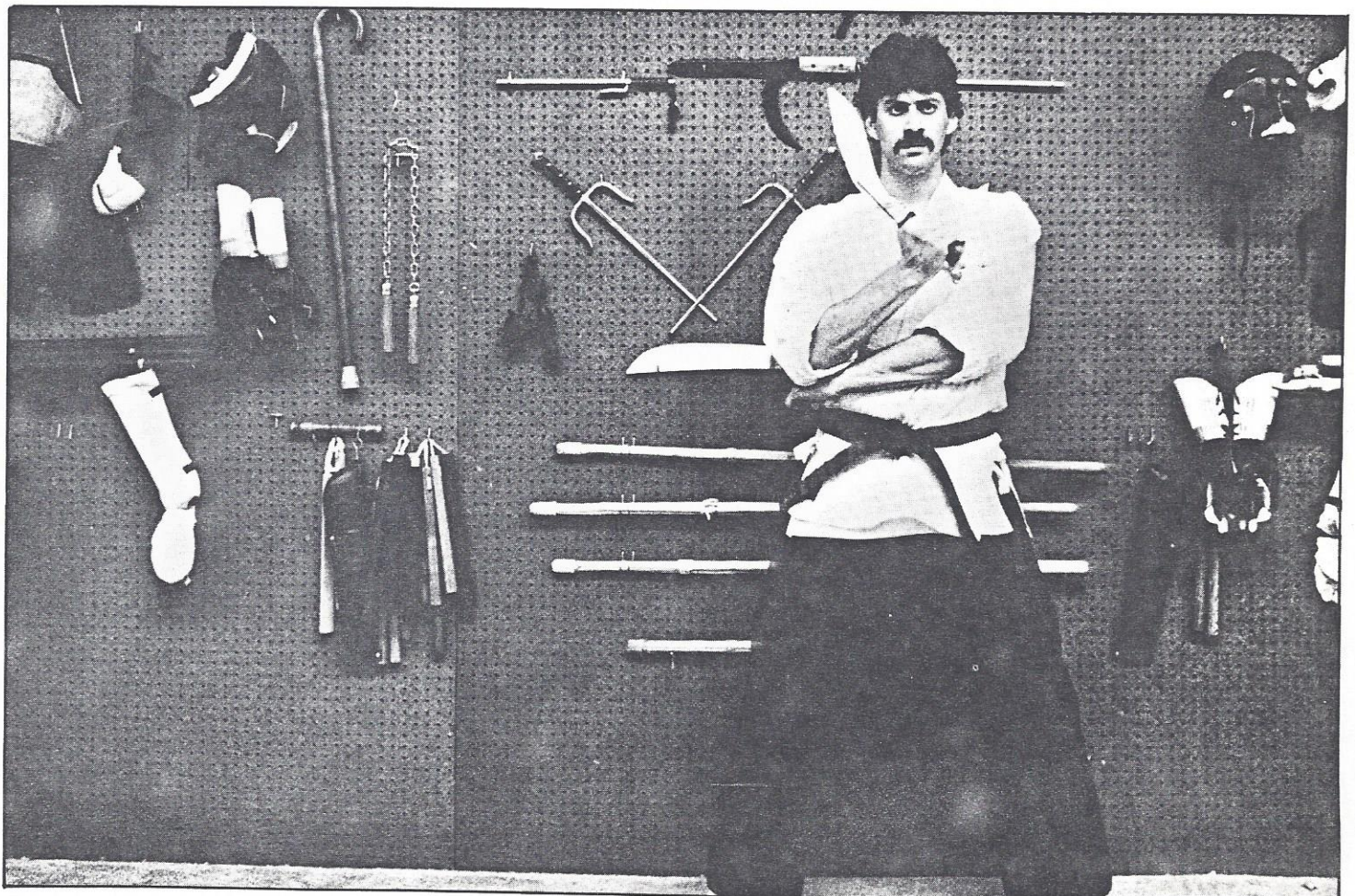
petitors often fight up to 20 matches a day, with the losers returning home after elimination.

"You fight to knockout or 'till the other guy submits, and it's usually over in about 18 to 30 seconds," recalls Dux. In the end, it would be the six-foot-two Dux who would return from Nassau with the magnificent trophy and the world title.

In the wake of growing controversy over Viet Nam, Dux was one of the many who became disillusioned by America's involvement in Southeast Asia. When other sources leaked information of "Operation Sanction," an assignment which sent Dux' Special Operations Group into Laos, Dux was one of a small few who were summoned to Washington to testify on the allegations of secret troupe activity behind Communist lines. The existence



(below) Knife, cane, newspaper, or bare hands -- Dux can make anything lethal.




of the mission was denied by the military. The Marines also denied that Frank Dux was ever a soldier. Dux' impressive service record and decorations no longer meant a thing. He had trained secret servicemen, buried his closest friends, and sacrificed his body for his country. He found himself being treated like a quack with delusions of grandor. "I was fighting a machine that made its money on the blood of American youth."

At the congressional hearing, a military doctor would testify that he'd treated Dux for bayonet wounds, just three miles from the Laosian border, in Thailand. It was eventually proven that Frank Dux was a marine, and that "Operation Sanction" did exist.

In 1978, Frank Dux was given an honorable discharge. He returned to civilian life somewhat disenchanted, slightly bitter, and a bit wiser. A book on his experiences titled "The Last Rainbow" is about to be published.

Dux' time is now occupied by less harrowing activities. Gone are the arduous 5 a.m. workouts and ascetic lifestyle. "I spent all of my teenage years in strict discipline. Now, I want to eat a hot dog and sleep late once in a while." He works with veteran and charity organizations, and teaches Ninjitsu at his Van Nuys studio. Somewhere, Dux finds time to study pre-med at Valley College and hopes to go into podiatry.

"It's a new experience for me to use instruments like scalpels without relating it to some wartime horror. I guess by learning to heal, I heal myself." 

Dux's relations with his students goes beyond that of a typical teacher; he becomes somewhat of surrogate father, disciplining them when he feels it is necessary.

