

Homecoming

—Dick Hattan

Arriving on the sterile tarmac
Eleven months absent from life,
Citizen soldiers enter the empty concourse
Emerging aliens in an unfamiliar country.

An ungrateful country, ashamed, guilt-ridden,
Avoids its sons' scarred faces,
Warriors who heard the hail of fire
Parade quietly through the empty tomb.

Absent our fathers' banners and bands,
The cavernous void shouts words of freedom,
58,000 ghosts haunt the memory of
Battlefield comrades never to return.

Emptiness overwhelms anxious hearts,
Struck by wounded nothingness,
Marching in tune one final time,
Disgusted, disappointed, alone.