

## Unmentioned in Dispatches

### Poem by Peter Wyton

Some of them never come home to fanfares,  
they dump their kit-bags down at the door,  
kiss their wives and let their children  
wrestle them down to the kitchen floor,  
switch the telly on, pour out a whiskey,  
search for the local football score.

Some of them skip the quayside welcome,  
dodge the bunting and cannondade,  
make their landfall in silent harbours,  
nod to the coastguard, but evade  
the searchlight of public scrutiny  
like those engaged in the smuggling trade.

Some of them land at lonely airfields  
far removed from the celebration,  
hang their flying gear in a locker,  
cadge a lift to the railway station,  
make for home and take for granted  
the short-lived thanks of a grateful nation.

Some of them miss the royal salute,  
the victory parade along the Mall,  
the fly-past, the ships in formation passing  
the cheering crowds on the harbour wall.  
Remembered only by friends and relatives,  
some of them never come home at all.