

# Notification

## To a KIA, Baghdad Iraq, October 2005



In a flash you became invisible to me.  
The grey-black ash framed by dun colored dust swirls,  
filled  
our  
sky.  
The flood of sound pushing away all sound, swallowed you.  
Then that fearsome flood washed over me.  
In the swelling mushroom cloud  
Where I stood, at the roadside,  
Watching you,  
I wonder if my time was up—  
This time.  
But, I never said your name.  
Now, the Sergeant Major will shout it out—your name  
(with the others).  
We'll sit where you sat, and walk where you walked  
Amid the pale flowers, flags, and dusty tentage.  
All drained of color by that common sun that God made for us.  
Outside, the makers of your demise—  
The builders of the bomb.  
And inside, the dissembling retinue,  
And the once-again mourners.  
But our sudden shock is incomparable  
To the sharp stab and lingering ache  
Of the inevitable notification.

—Lt. Col William Adler, U.S. Army  
September 2020