

Dear Parents, Sweethearts, Friends, Draft-dodgers, etc.

In the very near future, the undersigned _____ will once again be in your presence; dehydrated and demoralized, to take his place again as a human being with the well known form of freedom and justice for all; to engage in life, liberty, and the somewhat belated pursuit of happiness. In making your joyous preparations to welcome him back into organized society you should provide certain allowances for the crude environment, which has been his miserable lot for the past twelve months. In other words, he might be a little Asiatic from Vietnamesitis and Overseasitis, and should be handled with care. Do not be alarmed if he is infected with all forms of rare tropical diseases. A little time in the “Land of the big PX” will cure his maladies.

Therefore, show no alarm if he insists on carrying a weapon to the dinner table, looks around for his steel pot when offered a chair or wakes up in the middle of the night for guard duty. Keep cool when he pours gravy with his fingers instead of silverware and Seagram’s VO. Pretend not to notice if he eats with his fingers instead of silverware and prefers C-rations to steak. Take it with a smile when he insists on digging up the garden to fill sandbags for the bunker he is building. Be tolerant when he takes his blanket and sheet off his bed and puts them on the floor to sleep.

Abstain from saying anything about powdered eggs, dehydrated potatoes, roast beef, kool-aid, or ice cream. Do not be alarmed if he should jump up from the dinner table and rush to the garbage can to wash his dishes with a toilet brush. After all, this has been his standard. Also, if it should start to rain, pay no attention to him if he pulls off his clothes, grabs a bar of soap and a towel and runs outside to take a shower.

Never ask why the Jones’ son held a higher rank than he did, and by no means mention the term “extend”. Pretend not to notice if at a restaurant he call the waitress a “numbah one girl” and uses his hat for an ashtray. He will probably keep listening for “Coming Home Soldier” by Bobby Vinton on AFVN radio. If he does, comfort him, for he is still reminiscing. Be especially watchful when he is in the presence of a woman – especially a beautiful woman.

Above all, keep in mind that beneath this tanned and rugged exterior there is a heart of gold (the only thing of value he has left). Treat him with kindness, tolerance, fill the car with gas, and get the women and children off the streets --- --- --- **BECAUSE THE KID IS COMING HOME!!!**