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Shields of Light

War is like a rabid, snarling wolf, untamed and vicious. Her eyes are a soulless gray, from all the carnage they have witnessed. Her mouth thirsts for blood. Only starvation, pain, tears, blood, and trauma follow in her turbulent wake. She greedily purloins lives; she has a heart of sooty charcoal.

The only things that stand in her way are brave men and women. They attack her, fighting for their families, friends, country, and their priceless freedom. Some will certainly fall, their cries for freedom felt by every American. In the face of death, they do not stop; they keep fighting. Freedom is never free. War is full of destruction. Yet, when the battle ceases the darkness departs. Like a seemingly painted sunrise, the light returns, and with it, peace swoops in like a breath of fresh air.

Men and women fight so that citizens can remain in this light; they fight so we can have a better life. They are the shield guarding America, allowing children to laugh and grow up feeling safe. Yet, that safety comes with a cost.

When they return from battle our veterans are forever changed. They are scarred, not just on the outside, but the inside. Some come back utterly broken. They are witnesses of humanity's cruelty, the violence forever embedded in their minds. Their sacrifices are cherished, for their brokenness allows America to remain unbroken. Their courage is forever remembered. Thank you, veterans, for standing up to the wolf, for being the light in the darkness.