

Staff Picks



Coming Home - Fictional Stories of Soldiers Returning from War

What is life like for a soldier coming home, after he or she has been exposed to the indescribable horrors of war? And what is it like for the family and friends of the soldier, so happy to have their loved one back, but often sensing the soldier is not exactly as he or she was before leaving? Here are some novels that explore the lasting impact of war and the struggle to "get back to normal."

Compiled by Emily S.

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All the Broken Pieces: A Novel in Verse

Ann E. Burg Y Burg

Two years after being airlifted out of Vietnam in 1975, Matt Pin is haunted by the terrible secret he left behind and, now, in a loving adoptive home in the United States, a series of profound events forces him to confront his past.



Badd

Tim Tharp Y Tharp

A teenaged girl's beloved brother returns home from the Iraq War completely unlike the person she remembers.



Bull Rider

Suzanne Morgan Williams Y William

When his older brother, a bull-riding champion, returns from the Iraq War partially paralyzed, fourteen-year-old Cam takes a break from skateboarding to enter a bull-riding contest, in hopes of winning the \$15,000 prize and motivating his depressed brother to continue with his rehabilitation.



Heroes: A Novel

Robert Cormier Y Cormier

After joining the army at fifteen and having his face blown away by a grenade in a battle in France, Francis returns home to Frenchtown hoping to find--and kill--the former childhood hero he feels betrayed him.



My Brother's Shadow

Monika Schroder Y Schroder

In 1918 Berlin, Germany, sixteen-year-old Moritz struggles to do what is right on his newspaper job, in his relationship with his mother and sister who are outspoken socialists, and with his brother, who returns from the war physically and emotionally scarred.



No Man's Land

S.T. Underdahl Y Underdahl

Teenage Dov loves his brother Brian, a soldier, and is thrilled when he returns home from Afghanistan. But Dov notices Brian isn't the same person he was before the war and seems to

be harboring a dark secret. Dov wishes his family could see beyond Brian's perfect façade and face a difficult truth.



Somebody Please Tell Me Who I Am

Harry Mazer Y Mazur

Wounded in Iraq while his Army unit is on convoy and treated for many months for traumatic brain injury, the first person Ben remembers from his earlier life is his autistic brother.



Something Like Normal

Trish Doller Y Doller

When Travis returns home from Afghanistan, his parents are splitting up, his brother has stolen his girlfriend and car, and he has nightmares of his best friend getting killed but when he runs into Harper, a girl who has despised him since middle school, life actually starts looking up.



Sweet, Hereafter

Angela Johnson Y Johnson

Series: Heaven

Sweet leaves her family and goes to live in a cabin in the woods with the quiet but understanding Curtis, to whom she feels intensely connected, just as he is called back to serve again in Iraq.



This Is Not a Drill

Rebecca McDowell Y Mcdowel

A soldier suffering from PTSD after serving in Iraq takes a class of young students hostage. The children's fate is in the hands of two teens boys, tutors at the elementary school under attack. Told from the teens' points of view, the novel depicts the long-lasting damage often caused by exposure to war.
