

Missing in Action

By Jeffrey R. Paine

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Do not be alarmed by
my absence
in recent times
from all my former haunts.

Do not call
out the guard,
for there is no need for
searching jaunts;
no, no one
has heard tell or tale of
or from me,
for quite some
time. But rest assured,
I'm alive and
feeling fine.

It would be, I assure
premature
to begin to
mourn, to hold a wake, or
peruse my
will, plan my
funeral, yet you look
and do not

see me here,
and you wonder, therefore
still, "Wherefore
art thou, old
friend, habituae of
this diner;
once-common
occupant of this place,
long-time a
barfly to
many known attendees
at meetings,
many long
discussions blown over,
a man oft
seen walking
or sitting in glade, or
glen, along
highways and
byways in public sight?"

Worry not!
For I shall
return to be with you
soon, to share
again food
and wine, and word, and rhyme,
swap tales and

verses many.
Yes, our comradery
shall once be
renewed, soon.

So, do not report me
absent with
out leave, nor
a person missing all
these long days
from home and
kin! For now, all you need
know is this:
I am not
missing in action, I'm
just missing
inaction.