

# To Every Service Man and Woman I Say: THANK YOU for Serving My Children's Country!



Kids,

Today I took for granted at least a dozen things  
That come with freedom in my land—the gifts our freedoms bring  
Yet what have I that I have not received; what did I do  
To make the winds of freedom blow o'er me today and you?

Did I e'er watch my father die these blessed gifts to birth?  
Or did I put my brother's body down into the earth?  
Did I myself lie there in pain with parts of me so broken  
The medics threw them on a pile with hopeless words unspoken?

Or did I serve my country and go crawling through the trail  
That my buddy's blood laid out for me, and hate me 'cause I failed  
To think ahead and therefore now I reach to get his tags  
And know they'll send my buddy home with all the body bags?

Am I confined now just to wheels in place of legs so strong?  
And must I learn to push myself among the shopping throng?  
Or did I bring into this world a son, a joy to me?  
And did I watch him grow to be the man he'd hoped to be?

And then did I, fervently loyal, watch him leave to stand  
For country, honor, freedom... but then into my hand  
Did come a simple piece of paper, not my son again, to hold? And  
am I now without him as I watch his kids grow old?

No, I've not given anything that others have, I know.  
And so I stand with a salute and tears that say I so  
Am thankful for their willingness to live to make me free  
E'en die to see that you, my kids, are free; Praise God, you're free.

So I will show it daily in my thoughts and words and deeds,  
That no one will have fought in vain, but been our freedom's seeds  
Which we can nurture into a much wider freedom band  
Across our mighty country and right back into God's hand.

I'll run to hug them and I'll snap saluting at their side  
When in the New Jerusalem life comes to those who died.  
Until that day I'll honor them as long as I may live,  
Because they followed Christ to give the most that they could give.

God bless you and Happy Veterans Day!

—Judi Klug, Indianapolis

**Left:** A grief stricken American infantryman whose buddy has been killed in action is comforted by another soldier in the Hakdong-ni area, Korea, 28 August 1950. In the background a corpsman methodically fills out casualty tags. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Al Chang, U.S. Army) **Right:** Parade goers of all ages wave their miniature U.S. flags while soldiers with Regimental Support Squadron "Muleskinners," 3rd Cavalry Regiment, march during the Central Texas Veterans Day parade 11 November 2016 in Killeen, Texas. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Tomora Clark, 3rd Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs)