

Poet's Corner

The following poem was written by a Marine stationed in Okinawa Japan.

"Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney with presents to give,
And to see just who in this home did live.
I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand,
And on the wall pictures of far distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
A sobering thought came to my mind.
For this house was different, so dark and so dreary,
The home of a soldier, now I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent alone,
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
No how I pictured a United States soldier.
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night,
Owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.
Soon round the world, the children would play,
And grown-ups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day.
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
Because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa, don't cry," this life is my choice;
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my country, my corps."

The soldier rolled over and soon drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still,
And we both shivered from the cold evening's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night,
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
Whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure."
One look at my watch, and I knew he was right,
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night."

A Police Officer Speaks
(The author of this article was Trooper Mitchell Brown of the Virginia State Police. He was killed in the line of duty two months after writing this article. As a salute to the millions of police officers who put their lives on the line for us every day, please pass this one!)
Well, Mr. Citizen, it seems you've figured me out.

I to fit neatly in the category where you've placed me.
I'm stereotyped, standardized, characterized, classified, grouped and always typical.

Unfortunately, the reverse is true. I can never figure you out. From birth you teach your children that I'm the boogymen. Then you're shocked when they identify with my traditional enemy...the criminal!
You accuse me of coddling criminals...until I catch your kids doing wrong.

You may take an hour for lunch and several coffee breaks each day. But point me out as a loafer for having one cup.
You pride yourself on your manners, but think nothing of disrupting my meals with your troubles.
You raise heck with the guy who cuts you off in traffic.
But let me catch you doing the same thing and I'm picking on you.
You know all the traffic laws...but you've never gotten a single ticket you deserve.

You should "foul" if you observe me driving fast to a call.
But raise the roof if I take more than

ten seconds to respond to your complaint.
You call it part of my job if someone strikes me.
But call it Police brutality if I strike back of the Patrol car.
Or perhaps save your son's life with mouth to mouth breathing.
Or work many hours overtime looking for your lost daughter.

So, Mr. Citizen, you can stand there on your soapbox and rant and rave about the way I do my work.
Calling me every name in the book.
But never stop to think that your property, family or maybe even

your life depends on me or one of my buddies.
Yes, Mr. Citizen, it's me...the cop!

Speeding
Jack took a long look at his speedometer before slowing down: 73 in a 55 zone.
Fourth time in as many months.
How could a guy get caught so often?
When his car had slowed to 10 miles an hour,
Jack pulled over, but only partially.
Let the cop worry about the potential traffic hazard.
Maybe some other car will tweak his backside with a mirror.

The cop was stepping out of his car, the big pad in hand.
Bob? Bob from Church?
Jack sunk farther into his trench coat.
This was worse than the coming ticket.
A Christian cop catching a guy from his own church.
A guy who happened to be a little eager to get home after a long day at the office.

A guy he was about to play golf with tomorrow.
Jumping out of the car, he approached a man he saw every Sunday, a man he'd never seen in uniform.
"Hi, Bob. Fancy meeting you like this. 'Hello, Jack.'"
No smile.

"Guess you caught me red-handed in a rush to see my wife and kids."
"Yeah, I guess." Bob seemed uncertain. Good.
"I've seen some long days at the office lately.
I'm afraid I bent the rules a bit just this once.
Jack toed at a pebble on the pavement.
"Diane said something about roast

beef and potatoes tonight.
Know what I mean?"

"I know what you mean. I also know that you have a reputation in our precinct!"
OUCH!
This was not going in the right direction.
Time to change tickets.
"What'd you clock me at?"

"Seventy. Would you sit back in your car, please?"
"Now wait a minute here, Bob. I checked as soon as I saw you. I was barely nudging 65."
The lie seemed to come easier with every ticket.

"Please, Jack, in the car."
Plastered, Jack hunched himself through the still-open door.
Slamming it shut, he stared at the dash board.
He was in no rush to open the window.
The minutes ticked by.
Bob scribbled away on the pad.
Why hadn't he asked for a driver's license?
Whatever the reason, it would be a month of Sundays before Jack ever sat near this cop again.

A tap on the door jerked his head to the left.
There was Bob, a folded paper in hand.
Jack rolled down the window a mere two inches.
Just enough room for Bob to pass him the slip.

"Thanks," Jack could not quite keep the meter out of his voice.
Bob returned to his police car without a word.
Jack watched his retreat in the mirror.
Jack unfolded the sheet of paper.
How much was that one going to cost?
Wait a minute. What was this? Some kind of joke?
Certainly not a ticket.

Jack began to read:
"Dear Jack, Once upon a time I had a daughter.
She was killed by a car. You guessed it - a speeding driver.
A fine and three months in jail, and the man was free.
Free to hug his daughters. All three of them.
I only had one, and I'm going to have to wait until Heaven before I can ever hug her again.

A thousand times I've tried to forgive that man.
A thousand times I thought I had. Maybe I did, but I need to do it again. Even now.

Pray for me. And be careful, Jack, my son is all I have left."
"Bob?"
Jack turned around in time to see Bob's car pull away and head down the road.
Jack watched until it disappeared.
A full 15 minutes later, he too, pulled away and drove slowly home, praying for forgiveness and hugging a surprised wife and kids when he arrived.

Life is precious. Handle with care.
This is an important message, please pass it along to your friends.
Drive safely and carefully.

Remember, cars are not the only thing recalled by their maker.

Funny how you can send a thousand "jokes" through e-mail and they spread like wildfire.
But when you start sending messages regarding the sanctity of life, People think twice about sharing.
Funny how when you go to forward this message,
You will not send it to many of your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it to them.

A Christmas Prayer
Dear God, give us freedom from terror and strife.
Give us joy in our hearts, and new meaning in life.
Bring our troops home with honor and pride,
And give those who hate us, no place to hide.
That is what we want for Christmas.

We have lots of gadgets and have lots of toys.
We'll buy some more for our girls and our boys.
But help us to give them what's good and will last.
Things that won't break when the season is past.
Give us a heartwarming Christmas.

Help us remember and never forget, We owe our freedom and we have a debt.
To the men and the women taking a stand.
To keep evil forces out of our land.
Give them a wonderful Christmas.

Give us the will to do what is right.
To let our light shine, like a candle at night.
You saw us in need, and you gave your best.
Because of your goodness our nation is blessed.
So we can celebrate Christmas.
Submitted by Freda Warf

Merry Christmas Sayings
By William Jerry Ayers
A kind word is the best gift.
Jesus is the real reason for the season.
At Christmas time or any other time, a friend is a true treasure.
Christmas music gives life harmony.
On Christmas, CARE givers are special Angels.
Holiday friendship warms the heart.
Christmas, and a family is a circle of love.
Volunteers share and care.
GOD bless your house and all those who enter this Christmas season.

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