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## Memorial Day 1995

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# MEMORIAL DAY 1995

*by Viki Spencer Pettijohn*

The fireman's big arms enfold  
A tiny broken body.  
The photo shows his tender  
Anguished gaze,  
The look of utter  
Helplessness to mend  
The little life.  
He carries her in his arms  
In an immortal moment;  
He will carry her  
In his dreams  
All his life long,  
And so will we all  
In Oklahoma.

A mother hugs the men  
Who tried to help her child;  
A nurse receives  
A dying baby,  
Leans close to hear  
The faintest cry for help:  
"Mama..."  
That tiny sound rings  
Through the state.  
Bell-like, booming  
In our hearts.  
The nurse will hear it as long as she lives,  
As so will we all  
In Oklahoma.

In uniform,  
The Marine met death  
At his post —  
A good soldier to the last.  
The workers found him  
Finally  
In the rubble  
Still at the desk  
Where he worked each day.  
So many soldiers, sailors, pilots  
Before him did the same,  
Met death at their posts with honor  
And resolution.  
They served and sacrificed  
To the last moments of their lives;  
The nation remembers them,  
And so will we all  
In Oklahoma.

Not all soldiers are men  
In navy blue and olive drab.  
Not all wars are declared.  
Sometimes our forces are  
Little children  
Who send teddy bears,  
Or musicmen who give  
Their songs,  
Or strong Oklahoma women who quilt  
Their faith and love for others  
Into being.  
Sometimes our wars are waged at home  
Against all that is dark  
In the human spirit.  
And the uniforms change to firefighter yellow  
Or surgical whites and greens.  
Some forces wear no uniform that  
Anyone can see —  
Except love.  
And they will feel the power  
Of that love  
All their lives.  
And so will we all  
In Oklahoma.