

IF YOU COULD SEE WHAT I SEE

By: Tanya McCoss-Yerigan

My husband has been a deputy for nearing 30 years.
My son and he have very similar careers.

Their work is enforcing the law at least that much is clear.
For my son also strapped on a duty belt just last year.

Although one just beginning and the other nearing the end,
my worry is the same and hard to comprehend.

Let me try to explain what we go through.
Because even though I didn't choose it, we wives and mothers live it too.

At the start of each day, on my mind is the work of my husband and son.
I wonder to myself if he is scheduled for a shift or already begun.

I tell myself it doesn't matter because he has work to do.
Inside, I know it does matter because I have work too.

You see, each of his shifts I pray to God that He stays by his side.
That angels surround and engulf him his entire night's ride.

I ask for God's strongest warriors to stay the entire shift through.
If he is safe, he can protect you.

I also pray for the criminals so they have the wisdom to see
that these officers are sons, brothers, husbands, and grandpas just like thee.

It is my hope that if evil crosses paths with one of these brave enforcers of law
that God will heal their hearts to see what many already saw.

They've seen that regardless of color, creed, or job,
no one profession deserves a hate-filled mob.

No matter what side you're on, you matter to me!
The way this is going can't continue to be.

Wait, I am not yet done.
I owe thanks to this brotherhood and their assistance to my husband and son.

They serve, joke, laugh, feel sadness and share fears.
A special thanks for all these things today and through the years.

These men and women stand up for you and will argue your case.
They will keep you safe, and if need be, others safe from you...regardless of race.

Sometimes he will call on his break to share that all is well.
There are times I hear in his voice he's lying like hell.

He tries to protect me from knowing what he does and what he sees.
He knows it would worry me and bring me to my knees.

As an educator, I assume they teach the officer this in school.
You know, to present themselves calm, collected, and cool.

Before his shift even starts, he's respectful of you.
He wants your respect returned to him too.

He keeps his side burns trimmed just right.
His hair is gelled, short, high, and tight.

He launders his uniform; his boots and badge are polished with precision and care.
He wants you to know he is serious and there.

I watch as he pulls on a t-shirt covered with a bullet proof vest.
He does it without thinking because he knows it is best.

I think to myself, who would intentionally hurt these officers without care or thought?
If they'd only stop and think of the love to their families these officers have brought.

He puts on his socks which were folded and balled tight.
He checks his ironing to ensure his crease is just right.

He pulls on his pants, just like you, one leg and then two.
All while thinking of the things tonight he must do.

He slips his leather belt carefully through each loop.
He knows if he doesn't, the weight of his tools will cause it to droop.

His tools are many including a taser, a night stick, cuffs, and pepper spray.
As he places each of these, never to use them he will silently pray.

After loading and dropping a round in the chamber. It is the last tool to be placed.
As the gun slides in its holster he wishes the chance of using it could forever be erased.

Yes, the tools of his trade are different than yours or mine.
His can be lethal and this is far from just fine.

First carried to protect you but far too often to protect him.
He wears them primarily to serve and protect life and limb.

He is not arrogant or reckless with this power he has been given.
He is simply there to keep you and himself safe. That is why he is driven.

The responsibility weighs heavy on his heart.
He knows his role... he knows his part.

The last of his uniform to go on is always his boots on the rug near the door.
He does this as a last show of respect as not to dirty my floor.

Before he leaves he always says he loves me, kisses my cheek, and gives me a hug.
He says he will see me later and silently I pray he'll soon be back on that rug.

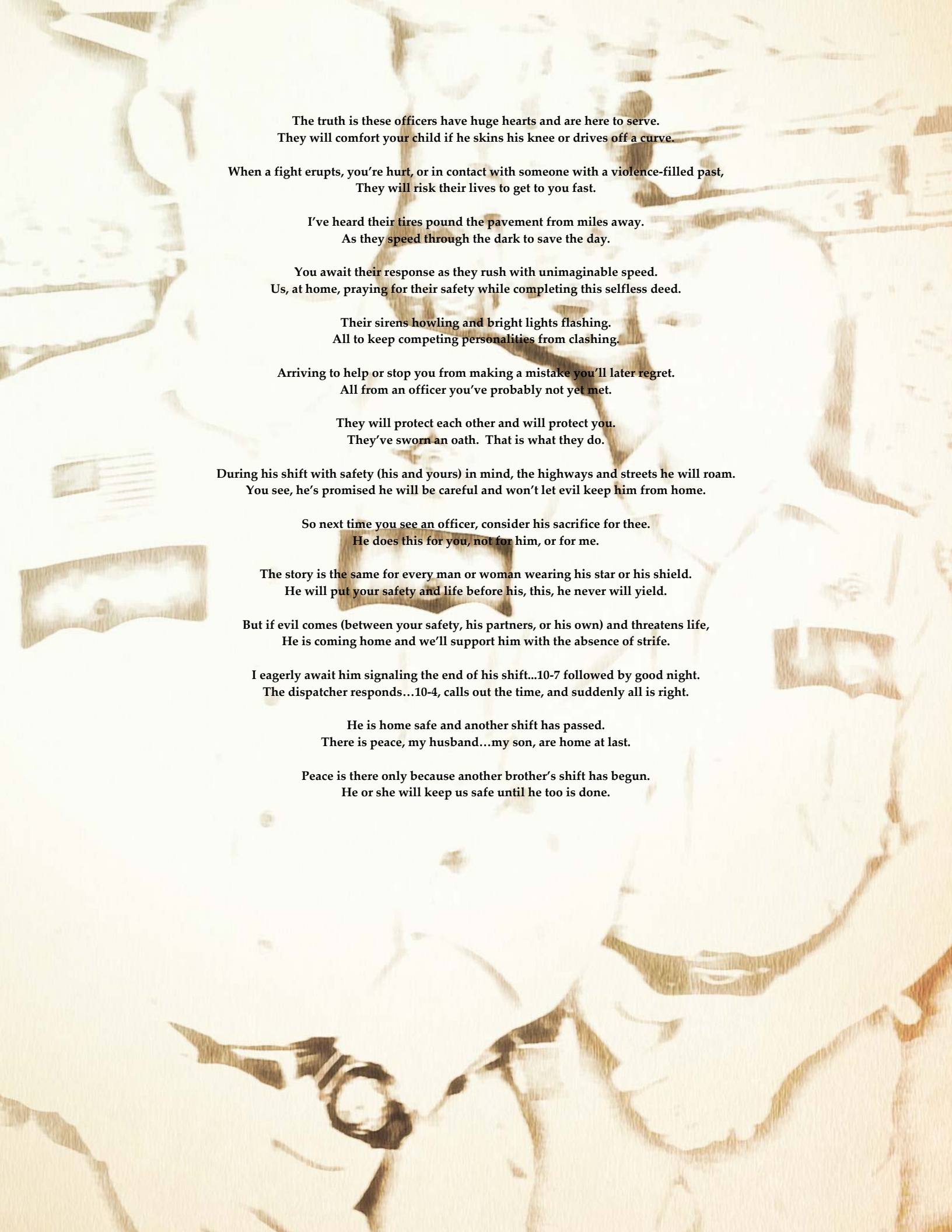
He gets in his squad, tests his radar, starts his computer, calls out his badge number, and says 10-8.
I watch him turn onto the highway while hoping he'll be home soon and not late.

His dispatcher faithfully answers 10-4, calls out the time, and welcomes him to shift.
All officers knowing that dispatcher is their lifeline and will not drift.

There is a bond between these men and women of the law.
The things they've seen and heard are unreasonably raw.

There is also a soft side if you look you will see.
I saw it at my oldest son's funeral when dozens lined the walls in support of my family and me.

All too often our cops get a seriously bad rap.
Our kids are told if they don't behave the cops will be called and that kind of crap.



The truth is these officers have huge hearts and are here to serve.
They will comfort your child if he skins his knee or drives off a curve.

When a fight erupts, you're hurt, or in contact with someone with a violence-filled past,
They will risk their lives to get to you fast.

I've heard their tires pound the pavement from miles away.
As they speed through the dark to save the day.

You await their response as they rush with unimaginable speed.
Us, at home, praying for their safety while completing this selfless deed.

Their sirens howling and bright lights flashing.
All to keep competing personalities from clashing.

Arriving to help or stop you from making a mistake you'll later regret.
All from an officer you've probably not yet met.

They will protect each other and will protect you.
They've sworn an oath. That is what they do.

During his shift with safety (his and yours) in mind, the highways and streets he will roam.
You see, he's promised he will be careful and won't let evil keep him from home.

So next time you see an officer, consider his sacrifice for thee.
He does this for you, not for him, or for me.

The story is the same for every man or woman wearing his star or his shield.
He will put your safety and life before his, this, he never will yield.

But if evil comes (between your safety, his partners, or his own) and threatens life,
He is coming home and we'll support him with the absence of strife.

I eagerly await him signaling the end of his shift...10-7 followed by good night.
The dispatcher responds...10-4, calls out the time, and suddenly all is right.

He is home safe and another shift has passed.
There is peace, my husband...my son, are home at last.

Peace is there only because another brother's shift has begun.
He or she will keep us safe until he too is done.