



*"We cherish, too, the poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That the blood of heroes never dies."*  
-Moina Michaels, "We Shall Keep the Faith"

Veterans. They are the flesh and blood of this country. They are the men and women that brought together a pandemonium of ideas. They are the foundation to the great country that America has become, and maintains to this very second. Veterans are the reason why Americans have all of the liberties and freedoms we do. Our peaceful grassy meadows are sprinkled with lillies instead of the horrific, battle torn scenes that so many veterans had to witness; the home that your family nestles inside is comforted by the safety that these veterans provide. We owe everything to veterans.

Memorial Day is a day that we recognize the fallen members of the United States Armed Forces. These valorous soldiers have given their lives to our country for multiple reasons. They have fought for our equality. They have fought for our land and sea. Our safety. Our freedom. Our lives.

We tend to not realize these blessings because we take their sacrifices for granted. We take the fact that people just like us have packed their bags, sorrowfully said goodbyes to their beloved, and left to help us in more ways than we know as a part of life. A mere fact to a bigger picture. These men and women are the patriotic heroes of our country and we venerate them only a few days a year?

However, we do remember. We don't forget what they did for us. They gave us things we could never repay to them. They gave us liberty and freedom and we have nothing to thank them with but remembering them. For if we forget, what they did means nothing. Their lives would be lost for not even a second's remembrance in return.

This unequal trade of forgetting is egregious and devastating to us to witness, and even more so to those who are forgotten. The selfishness and greed that some may hold inside of their bitter hearts is heartbreaking for all, especially ones close to veterans. We must not let ourselves get this way. We must not let more fall to the cruel disease of forgetfulness, marching in a single file line towards a future where we cannot even honor the dead for a moment. We shall not forget their sacrifices.

You see, these men and women were people just like us. They were mothers. They were fathers. They were sons. They were daughters. They were sisters. They were brothers. They were neighbors. They were friends.

And, most importantly, while they might be gone, they shall *never* be forgotten. They must lay in our minds now and forevermore. They must be with us wherever we go, our minds at rest thanks to their sacrifices. It's our duty to show them the reverence they deserve.