

“I Retired, Too”

by Montoya Baylis

When my mom retired from the military, I retired too
I had to leave all my friends at the CDC; and didn't know what to do
I was just four and my little sister was not quite three,
That was our first school, and it meant a lot to me
I was excited to go with her to the unit, with the big drill hall
We would run around with SSG Hurst's kids, with her telling us to be careful; and try not to fall
My mom said that she loved to chat there with her Soldiers, whenever duty called
There were also BIG trucks at the unit that my mom used to drive, parked along the outside wall
A few times we were able to take a look inside, and my sister and I would exchange a high-five
I loved my mom in her camo uniform with the Velcro flag and name tabs
I would always pretend to be SFC Baylis, wearing her patrol cap and boots, looking fab
I missed my mom when she would travel far and we'd video chat over the phone
But when she returned, I always got the biggest hugs and kisses; and forgot that she had ever gone
There are a lot of things about the Army, that I'm sure my mom and I will miss
However, nothing compares to having my mom here every day to hug and kiss.
I think I assisted my mom and gave her the strength to push through
Somehow, I knew she understood, that I retired, too.

Montoya Baylis is a Retired Army Master Sergeant with 24 years of service, living in Mississippi with her husband and three kids. She's a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and serves as the Mississippi State Representative for From Combat Boots 2 Red Bottoms (CB2RB). In 2021, Montoya co-authored the book *Behind the Rank*, Vol. 5 and hopes to publish more of her works. When she is not writing, Montoya is busy building two businesses, The Piggybank Tax Notary, LLC (tax preparation/notary public signing agent) and Birth, Breast, & Beyond, LLC (breastfeeding counseling, lifestyle doula, and beyond).