

“Mister, could you bring my daddy home?”

by Alan Chenworth©

Just past sunset that fateful day
With dust in the air, the fires still ablaze
The twisted steel and acrid smell
I was about to enter a concrete hell.

In the pressing crowds, I saw him there
A little boy, with big-brown eyes and tousled hair
His eyes fixed on me he stood alone
“Mister, could you bring my daddy home?”

“He was big—and tall—with dark brown hair
And he liked to walk, he probably took the stairs.
He had an office on the 64th floor
I’m sure he’s ok, he called—just before. . . .”

I left with a nod—one more reason to go
But with piles of debris, the work would be slow.
With a heavy heart, I looked around
We worked hard, but few survivors were found.

Four days later, the work went on
The dust was settled—but hope was gone.
They said it was over, the lives were lost
Our job was now just to bring the bodies out.

In the pressing crowd, on my way back in
The little boy, I saw him again.
He spoke with resolve, as he stood alone
“Mister, could you bring my daddy home?”

A gentle smile, a touch on the head
With quiet resolve I started back in.
Just one last time, the boy had said,
He’d like to see his father again.

One more long night, like all the rest
Just concrete and steel and dust and death.
But this night in fervent prayer
I felt it was now HIS burden to bear.

After days of this, my heart was contrite
My efforts were guided this forlorn night
Remembering the boys solemn stare
I was impressed to look—over there.

Beyond the crowds, in a quiet serene,
I saw a face from a little boy’s dream.
Under a piling, I saw him there
A great big man with tousled hair.

Through the pressing crowd, I carried him out
That it was his father I had no doubt
And I heard those words as I walked alone
“Mister, could you bring my daddy home?”

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