

## **There Is a Will. There Has To Be a Way.**

Our eighteen days had flown by so fast. You spend most of the deployment hoping for time to fly. When they are home you pray for it to stop. The drive from the airport was excruciating. Knowing I was sending him back into harms way was more than I wanted to comprehend. Aren't we tempting fate? I had made it through nine of the fifteen months. I had given birth to our second daughter on my own. Our older daughter had her daddy back; cuddle time, tickling, and more importantly a parent. I can't afford to lose him now. I need him. He is my everything. I tried to be strong, and hold back the tears.

The time together is never enough. Though surprisingly it took us only days to fit back into our routine again. I am constantly amazed at how well he adapts to every situation and how he can be here in the moment knowing he has to return. Remaining aloof and detached would make his hurt so much less, but our time together would be affected. I am so glad he chooses to be here with us even though I know the joy of being completely and totally in those moments means the pain of leaving is even harder for him.

Within days things were functioning like a well oiled machine. Life was so much easier. We had our family back together. The stress was lifted and the joy had returned. There are basics of everyday life that you never realized you missed (having someone to take out the trash, an adult conversation, or someone to hug you) that all of the sudden become so much more appreciated. My best friend was lying next to me every night and he was there again every morning. I treasured every moment.

As I sit here and type there is a lump in my throat. The kind you get when you come back to the house and sit down to realize you are alone again. There is a half eaten container of cottage cheese in my fridge. There is a REENLIST coffee mug next to the sink. The laundry is piled up from a week. I know I'm going to have to face it sometime, but the thought of putting away his clothes right now is nauseating.

I know that it will be ok. I know I am strong enough to do this once again. I just know I don't want to. I don't want to do this (life) without him. I don't want one hundred and eight six more mornings waking up without him next to me. I don't want six months to go by and him not experience the joys of our children growing. I don't want to take ninety four more dog walks by myself, mow the lawn twenty seven more times, spend sleepless nights hearing every sound of the house, or even go to Target without him. But I will.

I will because I believe in him and what he stands for. I believe in us and what we are. I'll gather my thoughts, find my mission, and carry on. It won't be the same. I don't want it to be. I'll find strength because from my point of view it's my only choice. I'll clean out the fridge, do the dishes, and finally face the laundry. I'll line up some projects, immerse myself in work, and take significant strides to make sure our girls remember their daddy and have a good mama even when he is away. I don't want to right now, but I will. And where there is a will, there has to be a way.