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What Veterans Day Means to Me

Veterans Day means a lot to me because my dad, my grandmother and both my grandfathers served in the military.

The story of their military service is also about me, my two sisters, and my brother. You see the four of us are adopted from Ukraine and Russia.

Veterans gave Americans the freedom and a good life to be able to have a lot of the things that other countries do not have. Freedom allowed my parents to come to our countries to adopt all four of us.

In Ukraine we did not have the freedom that America has because this was taken from us by other countries. Those countries invaded ours because we did not have the military protecting us the way they have protected the people here. We were not allowed to have the freedom to get a good education, or a good job. People were not allowed to speak our native language or go to church.

I lived a life without freedom and I want to tell the children in America they should appreciate all they have here. I can say this because we did not even know what real freedom meant before we came here. I know that not having freedom to me means an orphanage filled with children without parents because they couldn't get jobs or go to school. There was sickness, alcohol, drugs and poor choices made because no freedom means no chance to become better.

My life was hard and I would have had to live my whole childhood in an orphanage if my parents had not had the opportunity to come get me. They used their freedoms provided by veterans to come all the way to another country and bring me back to America to live.

Fortunately, I now have a future that will allow me to do or be anything I want to be and to grow up with love and happiness. I am so happy that because of the freedoms that veterans like my dad, my grandmother and my grandfathers gave America I now have a big family that I dreamed about and love very much.

I want to thank the veterans who protected this country so that American children will never have to live through what me, my sisters, and my brother had to before we came here.

Thank you God and veterans for my family and my country!