

# Please Don't Utter a Word

## Brenda J. S. Paynewhite

I want to talk to you today  
About why we chose to serve—  
And while I am speaking, you listen  
And I don't want you to  
UTTER A WORD...

We can't even live a normal life now  
Because of the way we are treated—  
We don't get any dignity or respect  
So we all feel defeated—

We look to you for support and understanding  
And most of the time all we get  
Is another negative label or negative branding—

We love this country and we went to war  
To save this country's grace  
But every time we apply for benefits and services  
Doors are slammed in our face—

We worked hard, we fought hard  
For our country to remain the home of the free  
But when we returned from our service  
To this country, it seems as if our country  
Has forgotten about us, about me—

I know by now you think I am frustrated  
And angry, but trust me, I am not—  
I just wanted to share with you  
How so very sad these misfortunes have gotten—

If I had to do it all over again  
I would still defend this wonderful nation—  
I would do it because of my selfless service  
And my dedication. I have spoken my piece  
And now you can speak yours, but again  
I will warn you, if you don't have a kind word  
To say or a thank you to give, then please  
DON'T UTTER A WORD...