

Applicant's Name: Tanya Pedersen

## ESSAY PAGE

### My Hero

As I stare out the window, I observe the late-summer trees and towering buildings that flash by. I can see my faint reflection in the tinted glass; my headphones are wrapped around my head, and my lip gloss is glistening in the sunlight. We are finally on our way to the airport; it is the day I have been waiting several months for. I close my eyes and smile; I can hardly contain my excitement. The sun is gleaming, and I can already tell it is going to be an extraordinary day.

My shoe rips at the gravel that is scattered on the tar beneath my feet. With every step I become more focused on one thing – I have missed him so much. Stepping into the airport, I am flooded with even more excitement and anticipation. I have been waiting for this day for several months; it is so hard to believe that it is finally here. Without hesitation, I confidently stride next to my mother to a desk with no lines. After a few signatures and identification checks, we are given our passes.

We find the terminal that we were directed to go. I glance out the gigantic windows that completely envelope the room from floor to ceiling. As I am looking out of the giant window, I notice an object in the sky. It is getting closer, and I know it is the American Airlines plane that my dad is on.

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I spring up out of my chair, and my eyes become wide. I stand there for the longest minute in my life until I see the door open. A man in a tan and brown uniform steps out. Without thought, I dash towards him and jump up into his strong arms. I cannot say anything; I just cry, and right now I am the happiest girl in the world. I am in my daddy's arms for the first time in eight months. I do not see anyone or anything; I just feel exhilaration. I squeeze him as tight as my arms allow; I do not ever want to let go. I smear my warm tears off my cheeks, but fresh ones just roll over them immediately. I look up at him and smile my biggest smile. He smiles down at me, and I notice that there are tears pooled in the bottom of his eye lids.

My mother walks up to him as she quietly cries her tears of happiness and thankfulness. My brother gives him a hug, and we begin to walk out of the terminal. People that we have never met before clap and say their thanks to my father. I feel so proud to be the daughter of this American soldier. My hero - my dad.