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The One Who Had My Heart First



“My dad walked through hell to watch me run. He sunk to the bottom to watch me swim to the top. Most of all he watered me with love and watched me blossom like a flower.”

As someone who has not had the easiest life, I can confidently say that having my dad is my greatest blessing. I have grown as a person and come to be happy with myself all because of the guidance he has given me.

Whenever I fail to smile, he reminds me that frowning causes wrinkles. Through my many tears, heartaches, and failures, he has stood by my side and encouraged me to keep on keeping on.

The definition of a best friend in my opinion is someone that you can come to about anything and someone that will always have your back when times get rough. My best friend is definitely my dad. I come to him when things are good, bad, or even just to tell him random stories. When I came to college, I didn't realize just how much I would miss him. I tried to act like I was okay, but much like leaving a best friend behind, leaving my dad behind was a sad moment in my life. I knew that I would get to come home to visit, but not being able to tell him

good morning before he went to work and not seeing him after a long day of school was a challenge that I wasn't ready to face. However, I know that he will always be with me even if we are miles apart.

By looking at my dad and me you wouldn't think he was my biological father. Which he is not, but he has raised me and loved me more than my biological father ever could. Although I see him as my dad, the difference in color of our skin has caused stares beyond belief and murmurs among the crowds we've been in. People could never grasp how a mixed child could belong to a white man. Nothing about us looks the same. My brown eyes against his blue eyes, my dark brown hair against his dirty blonde hair and of course the differences in every facial feature we have. However, he gave me a big personality and a heart of gold just like his own.

Over the years I have watched my dad cry and break down, but he always reminded me that sometimes bad things happen to good people. His divorce in 2013 took a toll on him in ways I couldn't even describe. In the same year he had lost his job and our air conditioning went out when it was 70-80 degrees outside. He was in the process of helping my brother pay for college at N.C. State as well as provide for my sister and me while we still lived at home. My mom during this time was nowhere to be found. My dad was now a single father with no job and trying to make the impossible happen financially. Somehow though, my dad pulled through this all and showed me that faith goes a long way. He refused to give up on his family and I can never thank him enough for that.

As I grow up and experience change, I realize that my dad is who I aspire to be. I have never met a more genuine person in my life. If someone needed the shirt off his back, he would not hesitate to offer it. He has always been the kind of person to listen and give advice when all hope seems lost. When I was going through a rough patch my senior year of high school, he

guided me through it all. He got me the help I needed and made sure to tell me how proud he was that I had come so far in life. I know that he cares for me and I never have to question that at the end of the day.

I feel that I am who I am because I have had such a wonderful role model in my life. You might wonder why I don't feel this way about my mom. The reason is simple; she has never been the person to show me unconditional love and support the way my dad has. It may not be right to pick a favorite parent, but my dad is by far mine. My dad walked through hell to watch me run. He sunk to the bottom to watch me swim to the top. Most of all he watered me with love and watched me blossom like a flower. He has been there through thick and thin and although we may argue, I know that it could never break our bond.

The lessons I have learned from my dad hold so much value for my life now and what my life will be in the future. He taught me to hold my head high even when I am broken inside. He taught me to work hard for things because hard work pays off. He told me that I can achieve anything I set my mind to. The best thing he taught me was how to love myself and to know my worth. My favorite quote of his is "Your mouth is like a tube of toothpaste, once it comes out, it's hard to put it back in." He wanted me to know to be careful with my words and to realize that sometimes it is hard to go back on harsh words. The wise words did not just involve my future or how I can do anything, it was small things. Things like how to check my oil, how to dig a hole to change a water pipe, and how to put antifreeze or power steering fluid into my car. He is a handy man in all aspects and a man wise beyond his years.

As life goes on and my dad and I age, our relationship only gets stronger. I look forward to the day he walks me down the aisle or the day he becomes a grandpa. I can't wait to get older and make him even more proud than he already is. I know that one day he won't be here, but I

cherish every moment I have with him. He is a great dad, friend, and inspiration. Words will never be enough to express my gratitude for him.

THIS ONE IS FOR YOU DAD. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE GIVEN ME IN LIFE AND FOR ALLOWING ME TO BE THE BEST VERSION OF MYSELF. I LOVE YOU.

-B