

My Dad

My dad has the mind of an architect
The body of a friendly giant, the spirit of a bird and the job of a handyman
I love my dad, because of all of the sacrifices he made for me
All the times he was there for me when he didn't have to be
My love for my dad comes from his pain tolerance
For saws cutting his fingers like little pricks in the back of his mind
So he can come home and put a few more pennies in my piggy bank
I love my dad because he ignored his aching bones after a ten hour work day
So that I could sit on top of his shoulders and watch the fireworks on 4th of July
My love for him comes from him rolling lemon oil on my forehead
At 1 o'clock at night when I have a bad dream
Even though he hasn't slept in weeks, in fear of my mom coming home and causing a scene
He protected me from her words thrown like daggers, cut like long gashes
The words "I hate you!" made scars, but they don't bother me now
Because I had a dad that made up for her lack of affection or my lack of remembrance
And when she threw a remote at the wall near my head
he covered my ears and prayed over me
and when things got worse and my sister became my mother, my dad supported us through it all
Now he's older and he still pushes himself to feed his second family, and me
Sometimes I wonder when his body will break down
Like the rusted pickup truck that my dad loved, that he had to sell
I wonder when his legs will fail him and he won't be able to go on walks with me
And I hope he'll be able to walk me down the aisle and dance with me on my wedding day
But I still wonder when his countless surgeries will be pointless
And he won't be able to kayak in the fox river because of all the weight he put on his body
Because of all the times he took jobs that killed his shoulders and knees
so he could pay the bills
So he could buy me a battered teddy bear that said 'God danced the day you were born'
So that I would know I was loved and had a purpose
And that I wasn't doomed because of the environment I grew up in
My dad taught me that love isn't just telling it's showing someone you love them
Because every day that I can remember he showed me he loved me
I wish I could take away every scar he got for me
That he covered up with duct tape because he didn't have bandaids
I wish I could take away every ounce of pain that he feels because of me and endure it myself
I wish I could give him the 33 years of his life back
So he could go on mission trips like he's dreamed of
And as I watch him get stepped on again and again by his own customers
Stabbed in the back too many times to feel it anymore
I wonder if heaven is the only place he can rest

And as selfish as it is, I don't want him to rest, I don't want him to leave me
So I wish god would recognize everything he's ever done, every obstacle he's overcome
And reward him with the happiness he deserves
Because there has to be a reason why he's going through all this pain
There has to be a reason and it couldn't have been just for me, because I don't deserve it
I think about all the money that he saved up for retirement
That was washed away from shopping sprees, all 33 years of hard work gone
Because she spent it on things we didn't need
And he still tells me to this day, That he's saving up for my degree
So that I can have a better life and not have to work like he did, at age 14