

## **From Father to Dad**

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**Course:** English 101

**Instructor:** Ms. Ramona Cutrer

**Assignment:** Narrative

Fifteen years of marriage and they call it quits. I could not seem to wrap my thirteen-year-old mind around this simple idea. Though divorce is not uncommon, I never saw it affecting my family and me. That day, my parents' decision to separate would change my relationship with my father forever.

Growing up I was constantly competing for my father's attention, but I could never compete with his job. He always considered himself to be, first and foremost, the provider then the father. Each day he would go to work, come home, eat, shower, and sleep. He had no time to even talk to me and my sister. He rarely spoke directly to me, except to whisper in my ear each morning and night, "Daddy loves you." My young, ignored heart held tightly to those words because it was all I knew of my father.

It was Sunday afternoon, and my family, minus my father, had just gotten home from church. Like always, my sister and I walked to our rooms to change out of our church clothes, but were interrupted by my mother saying, "Girls, come in the living room. Your father and I need to talk to you." Her voice crackled like a fuzzy radio trying to force music through the static.

We sat on the couch exchanging glances, when my father finally broke the silence announcing, "Your mother and I are getting a divorce."

Uncomfortably, we listened to my parents' reasons for divorcing, and when they were finished, we retreated to my sister's room as we often did after having "talks" with my parents.

Broken hearted and confused, we sat on the floor next to her bed hugging each other like magnets as we cried. My sister, only four years older than me, tried her best to assure me that everything would be fine, but I knew that my family would never be the same.

A few months passed, and I noticed my father making more of an effort to talk to me because he was constantly calling the house. My sister and I lived with my mother, so my father was unable to see us whenever he wanted. Because of this, when he did see us his face lit up with joy. My father was starting to build a relationship with me as he became interested in my life and my aspirations. Before, it was all about pleasing him, but the divorce changed everything. “What do you want to do?” he would ask. My father now appreciated the time we spent together and invested himself in getting to know me. My dad realized that he had missed vital years of my life that he could not get back, and he was determined not to miss another minute. It was then, at fifteen, that I started to get to know my dad.

Now, with each obstacle I face, I know I can depend on my dad to be there to listen, guide, and love me like a dad should. Although divorce separated my parents, it brought my dad and me together. It opened my dad’s eyes and made him appreciate our relationship. Because of this, my dad and I are inseparable, and though divorce was a stumbling block for one relationship, it was a stepping-stone toward another. Divorce changed my father into my dad.

**Ms. Cutrer’s Comments:** *This assignment was only the second essay written by the students in the semester. Whitney was able to clearly express her emotions without resorting to sentimentality and cliché.*