

Daddy's Little Girl

A monologue by Dennis Bush

Selected from his collection,

“Life and Death, Laughter and Love”

Cast: 1 female

Length: 3 pages of dialogue (582 words)

Performance time: About 4 minutes

The Story

Meredith, a young woman, flies home to visit her father who is battling cancer. They talk about their common love, baseball, all day. Once back home, she begins to call her parents almost daily and is told not to worry—until one call when he father urges her to go out to dinner and think of him. He dies that night with a picture of her in his hand and a baseball game playing on TV. (drama)

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(29, Daddy's little girl, was a tomboy growing up.)

His said that he didn't want me to worry. He was the one who had just been diagnosed with cancer, and he didn't want me to worry. It had been almost a year since I'd seen him — I'd been living in California since I took the job at McKesson and he didn't like to travel. My mom had been out to visit, but dad couldn't be persuaded to get on a plane or sit in a car for that many hours no matter how much we tried.

I offered to fly back as soon as I heard he was sick. But he told me that was silly. I remember the lilting tone in his voice when he said, "Now, Meredith, don't be silly. You're busy with whatever it is that you're always busy with and I'm going to be fine, anyway, so there's no reason for you to come home and make everybody think this is worse than it is."

So, I didn't go see him. Not right away, at least. I called every couple of days and my mother usually gave me a whispered update on dad's condition. If he overheard her telling me anything too serious, I could hear him yelling in the background, "For God's sake, Joan, you'll have her a nervous wreck. Tell her I'm fine and there's nothing for her to worry about."

When I finally got some time off from work, I flew back home for a visit. My mom picked me up at the airport — she was actually offended that I suggested getting a rental car — and we made small talk all the way from the airport to their house. Just as we pulled into the driveway, she said, “He doesn’t look like you remember him. But don’t let him see you get upset. Do that much for him. Don’t let him see you get upset.”

Nothing she said could have prepared me for what I saw. He was yellow — jaundiced — from the chemo ... and he was so thin. He was sitting in his chair. My mom told me, later, that it was the first time he’d been out of bed in three weeks, but he was determined to be sitting up so I’d think everything was all right. So, he sat in his chair and sipped a ginger ale and asked me about work. He told me he was glad his girl was home because he wanted to talk baseball and my mother was useless in that department. He wanted to know which players I thought had been using steroids. He had opinions on the off-season trades and Pete Rose’s book. It wasn’t like having a conversation with my dying father, it was like being a guest on some sports talk show on ESPN.

After that visit, I started calling every day to see how he was. One Friday afternoon, he got on the phone to tell me he was feeling better and made me promise to go out to dinner with some friends that night and drink a toast to him. I said I would, though I wasn’t sure who I could round up for dinner with so little notice. He said, “I’m gonna go now, Meredith. I love you,

End of Freeview

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