

Student 1H

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English 1006.001

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Change

I sent a message to my sister at 12:30 p.m. during my lunch to ask her about my father's progress. He was having his second knee surgery and she explained that the doctors were not giving much feedback, but in general he was doing well. I continue throughout my day because this was his second time inside the surgical room for the same reasons. My expectations were the same as the previous surgery; where his surgery turned out successful. My brother picked me up from school and we headed to the hospital, expecting my father to be awake by then, since the surgery started at 10 o'clock in the morning.

When we arrived at the hospital my first questions was "How is he doing?" My sister told me that they still hadn't told them anything. At this point we are all very concerned because it has been many hours from the surgery, but our assumptions were that the nurses were rude and he was fine. Eventually a nurse that had been keeping the family informed came and told us that only two people could see him so we decided that my brother and I would go. My dad and I always had a strong link since I was a child. I don't consider myself to be his favorite child because he'd never shown preferences, but I would always follow him everywhere when I was small.

We walked toward the room as the nurse explained that we would have to see him very quickly. He had barely woken up from the anesthesia and he was not in a room yet. There were two large doors that only had nurse and hospital faculty access. As I walked in the room I saw

many machines. It was a large room that had many beds and a lot of lighting. The nurse explained that my father was in there because there were no rooms available in the “intensive care unit.” I didn’t pay much attention to the fact that he would have to be taken there, I was just focused on seeing him. When I finally reached his bed then I understood why he had to be taken there.

My father was connected to a breathing machine and his face was very swollen. I tried my best not to cry because I was supposed to interpret for him what was happening because the nurses did not speak Spanish. If I cried I knew I would concern him, but I couldn’t help it. I had never seen my father this way. He looked so vulnerable and different from the strong man I knew. I asked him how he was doing and he said he was fine. I told him he was going to be okay and he was going to be taken to a room shortly. I returned to the lobby and I was in a state where I realized that my hero, best friend, and love of my life was in a dangerous state and at this point anything could happen.

I reminisced on when I was a child. “I’m going to the store” were always his words, and that was without a doubt my cue to follow him. We would walk to the car, and sometimes if I was lucky I got away with sitting in the front seat. We would arrive to the store and he always said “get whatever you want and something for Ana”; Ana is my sister. My dad and I were best friends, he never showed preference with his children, but I just always happened to follow him. It was okay for me to cry when I wanted something because I was his youngest girl, he couldn’t say no to me.

I can still remember my first day of kindergarten. My mother and father left me there with children running and screaming. Some were riding on red tricycles and others were waiting on line until it was their turn. I stood next to an older woman whose name I did not know at the

time. She told me not to be scared and all I could think of was why my dad would agree to leave me with strangers. If I followed him everywhere why couldn't he stay there with me? I wasn't scared that something bad would happen to me, I was mad that he had left me after all those times I accompanied him.

After years of routine, I reached the sixth grade and our attentions towards one another began to change. He would still invite me to the store, but there was always an excuse from my part. He did not pay as much attention to me as he would when I was a child. Sometimes when he got home from work I wasn't home to pick up his stuff from the car, I was either at a friend's house or a school incentive. During this time, he was experiencing knee complications. He progressively began to limp and as time went on it kept on getting worse, but he never complained or missed a day of work.

Our relationship from my transformation to a teenager became worse, we mainly spoke to each other if we needed something. Every morning he would take me to school and I would get in the car, sit and wait until we arrived. Then, when we got to school, he would hand me my lunch money and I would just say a simple "bye" and received the same from him and that is how it was daily. I can say that we are very much alike. We have that love and care for one another, but we didn't know how to portray it. I had the fear of approaching him and telling him that I loved him and not receiving the same in return. It is quite complex that as a child it is so easy to express something and now I was older and clearly understood why I loved him, how much admiration I had for him; I didn't know how to express it.

All along my father had dedicated his life to give us the best. At the moment I never really understood why he was so serious and not like he was before. My father was completely changed, but so was I. How could I expect a flower out of a seed I only planted but never

watered? I cannot recall if it was fully my fault. I did not know if it was me who ignored him or if it was his fault for not showing interest, all I knew was that things were not the same.

As I took the time to acknowledge everything that was going on, what my dad and I used to be, I knew that things had to change. My past experience of cleaning his surgery wound was more of a chore than a choice. This time I was going to make things different. I wanted to show more interest in him and make things change. He has never been tired when I need something. All along my father has been the best possible figure I can have, therefore I had to portray a way of gratitude towards his love and affection towards me. Growing up does not necessarily mean that one must distance from our parents because it is childish; it is a time to take action and embrace the feelings because it is the right thing to do. Life presents us signals to acknowledge and value what is most important in life.