



Story Title: My Forever Best Friend

Life is full of good moments and bad moments, we never fully know when the good moments will come or when the bad ones will start. It is filled with many surprises that could be wanted or unwanted but everyone has that special someone to give you a shoulder to cry on, love you for who you are and will always be there to support you. In that case, my special someone is my dad. My dad and I have always been each other's best friend, ever since birth to where we are now. Even though a lot has changed recently, he will always be my rock. He taught me to love, be kind to everyone or anything and always be there for others when they are in need of a friend. My life was exactly how I wanted it to be.

When I was little I would spend a lot of time at my grandparents house. My mom and dad always worked to make ends meet and tried their best to be around but it was just hard with their schedules. Even though I didn't understand why they had always worked and were never home, I still loved them with all my heart. I would wait for my dad everyday to pick me up from my grandparents. I would get so excited to see him that I would jump up and down on a gate that was placed between the dining room and living room saying, "DADA, DADA!". He would then come over and pick me up, and spin me around like an airplane saying how much he missed me. We would throw the football outside or go for walks during the day. We even went shopping with each other which is ironic because usually girls go shopping with their moms.

I finally reached the age of 7 and started to play sports. My dad would take me across the street and practice on the softball fields with me. Later on, I got onto a travel team for softball. My dad always made it to my games and was my number one

supporter. If I messed up or struck out he would wait by the dugout to give me advice or comfort me during the game. If I had a good game sometimes me and him even went to go get ice cream together which was the part I was always looking forward to. After softball we would go straight into basketball season. We would shoot around and practice dribbling drills to help me improve. I didn't really like basketball but I was good at it so my mom wanted me to play it. I also wanted to try volleyball and even though my dad didn't know much about the sport he tried his best to understand the game to help me.

Throughout the next few years, my parents started to fight a lot more. Yes, they would fight before but it just kept getting more and more frequent. After a while me and my sisters couldn't take anymore so we would all go down to my room and watch a movie together. Although we could still hear them, we tried our best not to. Usually the fights were about my older sister, Madison. She was a dancer which cost a lot of money and put us in difficult situations but we managed to pull through. My dad didn't want to waste all this money if she wasn't going to do it when she was older but my mom was the opposite, if Madison wanted to dance she should be able to dance. But something happened that changed our families lives forever.

My dad got stage-four colon cancer. I was around 12 when he was diagnosed. He always had back pain but he assumed it was just from work but once we got it checked out we realized that was not the case. We were all shocked, how did such a great spirit get punished with something so life threatening? We spent months and months in the hospital just wanting for that good news that never came. My dad is a fighter but you could tell he was just tired. He started chemo treatments which affected

him badly. When we would visit he would be throwing up, in a deep sleep or out of it because of all the medicine he had to take. I eventually stopped wanting to go visit my dad because I hated seeing him in all that pain. My mom had to drag me along to that awful hospital to see him before it was too late. I never talked about it in school, to my friends or even my family, I just wanted to avoid everything. Soon I lost motivation to do anything and I fell into a depression phase. I mean who wouldn't when your lifelong best friend gets diagnosed with stage-four colon cancer. I tried my best to go to my practices and hang out with my family but all I did was sleep in my room everyday after school. Although before my family would always fight, this brought our family together. We decided not to fight anymore and just be a loving family once again. One day when I was forced to go visit my dad and the doctors told my mom he only had a couple months to live if that. All of our hearts sank but especially mine. I started to eat a little or not eat at all and thought about harming myself in ways I never saw myself doing before. I would have never thought that my life was that bad to harm myself but thoughts kept getting the best of me. After a while I was numb to the point where I didn't cry anymore, I had no tears left to cry. I just wanted the aching in my heart to stop. Later on, my mom got all of us counseling appointments. I would be compelled by my mom to go to the appointments but nothing was working. Finally, I wanted to get better. I didn't want to punish myself anymore so I started to think that I should be thankful that my dad is alive and be my best for him. So I started to eat more, go to practices and visit my dad more frequently. My depression phase slowly got better and my dad was doing better which was all we could ask for. The doctors thought it would be best to switch to

immunotherapy instead of chemo. We started to see progress and the masses in multiple areas began to shrink not by much but it gave our family hope.

When I was almost 13 my dad got released from the hospital because all he wanted to do was to leave the place he hated the most. He was slowly getting better but was still not in the best condition. Life was rough toggling with school, sports and trying to be positive about my dad. My grandparents were a big help with my dad's situation. They would give us rides to school or to practices. At one point my dad's parents stayed at our house to help with the cooking and cleaning since my mom had to work a lot more. I honestly felt bad for my mom because she had to work a lot more hours to provide for our family since my dad couldn't work anymore, she had to run us everywhere and most of all had to deal with her husband having cancer.

Currently, my dad still has not beaten cancer yet but he is still fighting. A lot of the cancer has swept away while more grows in other spots. For a guy with stage-four colon cancer he does a lot around the house. He still can't work of course but he works out, eats healthy, he does all the chores around the house when we are at school and he can now drive us to school or practices. He also doesn't have to take as much medicine as he used to because of how much he has improved. Even though he has good days there still are bad days where he doesn't do much. He still does Immunotherapy every six weeks to keep the cancer from spreading.

With everything that has happened to me and my family we are closer than ever before. I was finally able to be around my dad without feeling the need to cry every second that I was with him. My dad and I's bond became closer than ever because we never knew when he could take his last breath on this Earth. People truly mean what

they say about anything that can happen at any point in time and to cherish those moments until you can't have them anymore. My life has not turned out the way I wanted it to but we as a family have grown tremendously throughout this experience.