



As Angel Eyes Soar

Kelly Forehand

I remember my mother coming through the front door with a vague expression; she seemed to be lost. Collapsing in her sorrow onto the couch, I realized the most horrible must have come true; my father had left us. Darkness overpowered my soul, but emotion was withheld in fear of humiliation and uncontrollable weakness. In despair, I ran to one of my comfort zones trying to ease the terrible thoughts. Locking out the rest of the world, I curved my body to the fetal position and rocked until my knees lost their strength. I remember a hard, frigid pain followed by tranquility, and then blackness.

He's gone! My daddy is really gone! I knew my daddy would leave soon because he was so sick. But all the medicine that made his hair fall out, was supposed to help not make him leave quicker. How will mommy survive? She was been depending solely on daddy for everything, and giving her best to please him.

Today, she stood in her apron, smiling as always, with oil and flour covering her hands as she prepared dinner. Her hair bunched on her head with light curls caressing her neck, and specks of flour on her face. Even plastered with the yeast, her aura is flawless. The creak of the front door broke my amazement. As I looked up, my daddy walked in. "Hello, Angel eyes! Daddy's home!" he said surprising me with a kiss on the top of the head while he handed me a present. He loved to surprise us everyday with different gifts. Reminding him of how we seem to keep thoughts inside, and then just let them float away, he loved to bring me balloons. Daddy smelled of grease, like he always did after work, but today it was blended with a sweet scent, like fresh cut roses. Behind his back he held one for mommy. "Close your eyes, sugar," he said to her. As he lightly brushed the petals up her arm, I covered my eyes to give them their privacy while they reacquainted. Suddenly, mommy shrieked. BOOM! My hands dropped. I saw daddy shaking and bumping his head on the kitchen floor. "Call 911, baby, call 911," mommy yelled to me. I knew then that daddy was leaving soon.

I was oblivious to the time, but I recall a noise became unbearable

to my ears and it felt like a piercing drill tearing at my heart. I realized I was no longer alone when light flooded my eyes, and I felt my body being lifted from the cold bathroom floor. An aroma of tobacco filled my nose as I tuned in to my grandfather's voice. "Baby girl, are you okay?" he asked, unsure of what else to say. Not expecting an answer, he gently wiped my face dry and peeled the saturated clothes from my skin. The warmth of a robe was then wrapped around my body, though it did not console because an assuring gesture was needed. I ran to hug my father, thinking it was all a dream, but he was not there. I found my mother trembling with her head rested in my grandmother's lap, and tightly grasped in her arms was a bundle of his fragrance; her face buried in it. Overwhelmed by reality, I remembered the balloon daddy had brought me earlier that day, and I went to the kitchen to untie it from the chair. I found a pen and wrote, "I love you," on a napkin. I tore a small hole in the material, threaded the string of the balloon through it and tied a knot. As I opened the front door, that same creak that had last been accompanied by my father was now silent. Stepping out into the night air, life soared through my body, and I looked into the moonlight as the unspoken notion drifted to him.

At six years old, I knew nothing of life but was forced to understand death. With no one to console in or exhale my emotions to, my life was left empty. Yet, my life was full of expression and untold thoughts for my father.

Now, years have passed and I find myself still filled with sorrow and despair. But my passion for life has allowed me to conquer the dark, unseen obstacles that have tested my strengths.

With that, my life continues to change and I use my creativity to include my father. Attached with a thread of love, I have released my thoughts, step-stones and achievements over the years for his approval. Even on special occasions, his angel eyes still soar to him.