Celebrations

Father’s Day

Carmen Ruiz

Since I was little girl, I have always thought about how different my life would have been if my father did not die when I was only one year old. My mom and our neighbors always told me how happy my father was when I was born because he took such good care of me. Everyone said he was a proud dad and I know my life would have been different with his presence.

Nowadays, when I have difficult moment in my life, especially in my relationships, the only thing in my head is how I miss my father. I think some men respect you more when they know you have a father. I think some situations in my life could have been avoided by having him around.

The saddest moment I can never forget is the day I graduated from elementary school in Honolulu. Duras and my mom told me, “Your teacher told me you are a smart girl. She said I should find a way to let you go to middle school, but I do not have money to pay for that. So, you must go live in the city with your aunt, help her with her kids, and go to the middle school at night.” This was one of those moments when I said to myself, “I miss my dad, especially today.”

I now work as a nurse’s assistant in a hospice unit for people living with HIV. I honor my father’s memory in this way, because I like to help those in need. Doing my job with love and taking good care of my patients reminds me of the way he used to be. I celebrate his legacy by showing my children how to be loving and kind in everything they do.

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Explore Further

Use inference to make meaning. In the first paragraph the author says about her father: “My life would have been different with his presence.” In the next two paragraphs, she identifies two ways she particularly missed her father, but she does not say explicitly what would have been different in her life if he had lived. As the reader, you can infer her meaning from the information given. Using inference, describe two significant ways her life could have been different if her father had lived.

How do you honor people who have passed? How do you express gratitude? (See the essay on the next page.)