

Forgiving My Dad

By Sarah McIver

I couldn't believe it the day my parents told us they were going to get a divorce. I was 7 years old and my little brother was only 4. I remember every detail of that day. They took us to a park by a little stream. We sat under a big Oak tree and had a picnic. There were geese waddling around beside the stream so my brother and I thought it would be a good idea to give them some bread. They liked the bread but started chasing us when we had none left! It was a nice sunny day and the spot was really beautiful. My parents must have thought that if they took us somewhere nice, maybe the bad news wouldn't be so hard for us to accept. Yeah right. When they told us they wouldn't be living together anymore, I cried. So did my brother but I don't think he really knew why. How could they do this to us? What was going to happen to us? Was it our fault? They said it wasn't our fault and that they both still loved us very much. If they did, why were they doing this? I found it very hard to understand.

Dad told us that we would live with him. So we moved away from the town that we used to live in as a family. Just me, my brother and my Dad. I used to walk into the bedroom of our small flat and see Dad crying. I hated that. He tried to hide it from us as much as he could, but you could tell he'd been crying because he had red eyes. I pretended not to notice and I don't think my little brother even did. My brother missed his Mum though. He cried a lot and I did my best to be there for him. I tried to help Dad too by cooking things for dinner. Simple things like beans on toast. I don't know if it helped much but I didn't know what else I could do. I would get my brother ready for school and clean up our bedroom in the morning so my Dad wouldn't have to.

After a few months, Dad told us we would have to go and live with my grandparents for a while. He said he had to go back to University to get his degree so he could get a better-paying job to look after us. At the time, I was so upset. And angry. How could he leave us as well? He said we were going to live with him! We had to get a plane to take us to where my grandparents lived because it was so far away. The flight lasted 45 minutes but it felt like only five. I didn't want him to leave us.

My grandparents were pleased to see us, as always, but this time they were especially welcoming. This was going to be our home for a while. It came time for Dad to leave but I didn't want him to go. He told us he wouldn't be able to visit as often as he would like because he would be very busy at University. As I watched him walk away, I hated him for leaving us. It was bad enough that Mum had gone, but now Dad too?

He visited us every couple of months for a few days at a time. It was always hard when he had to go back again because we weren't sure when we were going to see him again. Sometimes we would take a flight, just me and my brother, to spend a few days with him. The stewardesses were always really nice to us, letting us go up to the cockpit to meet the captain! But the visits were never long enough.

Finally, after 3 years living with my grandparents, Dad came to visit for the last time. He was taking us home! He had finished University and found a good job and a nice place for us to live. I had missed him for so long that I cried when he told us we'd be living together again.

When we are kids, we don't really understand why our parents do the things they do. I didn't really understand why my Dad had to leave us for so long or why we couldn't just stay with him. Now I understand that what he did, he did for us. He made the difficult choice of having his parents look after us so he could get a better education and find a better job. It was very hard for him too, but he did the right thing. It was best for all of us. Sometimes our parents can't work things out between them. When they don't want to be together anymore it can be very hard for them as well as us. It doesn't mean that they don't love us anymore, it just means that they can't be with each other anymore. Trust the fact that they will always try to do what's best, even if it sometimes seems that they're not.