

Mackenzie Moore

Professor Wood

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The Smallest Comfort

Four months ago, I moved 1,490 miles away from the only home I had ever known. People always say when you move out and enter the adult world it is the best of both worlds: the freedom to do as you wish without parents' rules, and taking charge of your own finances and starting a life of your own. In my case, I started my new life with my significant other. Words cannot describe how wonderful my new life was. Then reality hit and I realized being married to the military, I would be alone sometimes.

Sitting home alone for hours while my husband was in the field was the first time I had ever really been alone. I was new to El Paso and had no friends, no family and no job, so school was all I had. I only went to school a few hours a week. Our house was a town home with white walls and ceilings, and dark brown hard wood floors. It was a beautiful home, but meant nothing when there was no one to share it with. As I laid down on my husband's side of the bed, over on mine I saw a blanket—a blanket that my mother had hand sewn when I was born.

It was not just any blanket but a small, worn, old blanket that looked as if it had been over used for decades. It was white with small green leaves all over the front. I could see the cotton inside because there was a tear in the center. As I reached over to pick it up and press it against my chest and face, it brought me back in time. I remembered sitting outside in the country at our house on top of the hill. I was about nine years old looking out at all

the green trees and grass surrounding me while the pink, yellow and orange sky lit up as the sun was going down across the hills. My daddy sat down beside me to tell me he would be moving away. Not just moving to the other side of town but miles away because of a new job. As a child, I was such a daddy's girl. We did everything together from working in the barn, riding horses, swimming in the creeks, to anything we could think of. That night I laid down for bed with my blanket and began to cry. What would I do without my dad and best friend to always play with me and push me to be the best I can be at everything I did? My blanket always made me feel better and let me know that it would all be okay in the end. My daddy would come home soon and be with me again.

A loud "DING" came from my phone lying beside me with a text from my mother saying "I miss and love you so much. I cannot wait to see you again. We have lots to sit and talk about." After I read the text I began to remember my mama and I always having what we called "porch time." When I lived at home my favorite memory was sitting on the back screened-in porch with Mama while we rocked in brown wicker chairs watching our dog Chip run around. As I got older my mama became more and more my best friend. We could sit and talk for hours about anything in the world. She was so easy to confide in. I never had to hide anything from her because when I told her, she would always do her best to help me. I replied to her text saying how much I loved and missed her to and told her how much I missed our "porch time."

Then I went to sleep that night with my blanket and thought about why she made me the blanket and how it became so special to me. I miss my family more than anything right now, and I believe that is why she made my blanket. My blanket always reminds me of

different times with my family. My parents always showed me love and compassion. My parents did not have the best childhood so they decided to give me the life they never had.

My dad grew up poor and always moved around. He never had a stable home growing up. He was the type of parent that pushed me to always be independent but had my back when I needed him. My daddy always showed me how to take appreciate the little things because that is what means the most in the end. He gave me strength and knowledge that I will never forget. My dad is one of a kind, and I am so proud to call him mine.

My mama grew up in with parents that did everything they could for her, but she never had a good connection with them. My mother became my best friend because she understood what it was like to not have someone to share everything with. My mother is the most giving person I have ever met. She taught me to always be kind and grateful.

I realized my parents made my blanket so that for the rest of my life I will have something this special to me. My mom and dad gave me everything I could ever ask for in life. They both worked hard to provide what they did and I will forever be grateful. I will keep my blanket forever and one day maybe pass it down to my children and grandchildren so that they can have special memories as well. My blanket was the best gift ever given to me because now I understand family means everything. When I need a friend or just a soft reminder of how lucky I am, my blanket is always there to comfort me.