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English 1301

October 4th, 2019

Music Heals

Almost every day at the end of a school day, my parents love having their miniature concerts. My mom would be the lead singer, and my dad would be the sole guitarist. Although I do enjoy them expressing themselves through music, I wish sometimes they would have helped me learn my multiplications. I always lock myself in my room, trying to do my homework and suppressing the sounds of all the ruckus they are creating. One day, however, after they had finished, there was music still playing, but not from a music player. It was from my dad. I jolted from my bed to my parents' bedroom in a matter of seconds. As I walked into the room and waited patiently for my dad to finish the verse from the song "Stairway to Heaven," I noticed how beautiful his guitar looked. I watched him strum his pear-shaped, dark-colored, pinewood guitar, and turn these steel strings into music. Standing a bit distant from him, I could almost smell and taste the steel that was being rubbed against his fingers while playing his heart out. It was astonishing hearing the same sound from the music player coming out of his guitar. As I had heard both my mom singing and my dad playing the guitar, they created their versions of the song. The more I watched my mom sing, and my dad play the guitar, the more I have realized music is something that will be a massive part of my life. Because of it, I will always remember my dad for believing in me.

As a child, I have always wanted to learn something that seemed impossible to do, but then again, I was a sluggish and unpassionate child. My dad had not started to learn the guitar

seriously until I began to fifth grade. Since then, he has not stopped playing. Occasionally, he practices here and there, whenever he has the time to do so. Even though the guitar has never been picked up ever since my dad started playing again, I could never get the image of the guitar out of my head. The back and sides of it were solid black, outlined with a white pearlescent material. The pegs at the head of the guitar were polished metallic, and they were like a mirror. I could see myself looking into them. One day out of curiosity, I jokingly asked my dad if he would teach me how to play the guitar. He answered, "*Si mijo, pero no es facil.*" As soon as I heard the word "*Si*," my mind went into a whole new world full of creativity. I could see all my favorite artists fly by in my thoughts, Passenger, Cold Play, John Lennon, and so many more. I didn't listen to the following warning that it wasn't easy, and on the first day during my first rehearsal, I gave up immediately.

The first time practicing something new is never going to be perfect. However, my dad wanted me to push through the problems and play the best I could, and he did not give up on me even though I hadn't even given myself a chance. He got me to keep practicing. While I was practicing, my dad suggested a different style I should consider: fingerstyle. This style provides a variety of musical sounds on one guitar while using all my right-hand fingers creating, percussive, bass, and harmonic sounds. I took his advice, watched some videos online, and in less than a week, I was able to play an entire song with this style. "Let Her Go," by Passenger and "Stairway to Heaven," by Led Zeppelin, were the first two songs I had learned. My dad knew since I first heard him play the guitar, I would be able to do this. He believed in me and supported me through all the overthinking and setbacks I had while learning the basics and higher-level techniques.

My dad plays a significant role in my life; he has been supporting me ever since I was a baby. The guitar represents everything my dad is as a person, sturdy, elegant, and passionate. People see my dad as a rude and hostile person, but when he plays the guitar, he is an entirely different man. The guitar signifies my dad and what he is in my eyes. He didn't have the same childhood that every child should have. He started working when he was fourteen years old to help pay bills, for school, and other personal stuff. He lived in Ciudad Juarez, and back then the city was much less safe than it is today. People would either get robbed or get stabbed to death. Every day I wonder how hard it must have been for him and his family, and every time I asked him about it, his answer was always the same. He says, "If my parents were happy, then I was happy." My dad deserves everything good that is coming to him. He is a hardworking, loving, caring, and intelligent man who I look up to and hope to become like one day.

At the time when I was learning guitar, I was transitioning from elementary to middle school. During my middle school years, I wasn't a communicative person. I would repeat the same process every day: go to school, finish homework, and stay in my bedroom. I was mostly depressed during those years. I tried to talk to my parents about it and my problems, but I just couldn't. Even though my dad never knew about my depression or my situation, he would still do what any dad would do: check up on me, help me with homework, or just keep me company. Everything he did for me back then was very loving, but what topped all of that, was him giving me his guitar. My dad has always supported me with everything he possibly could. He continuously tells me stories about his childhood and how he is trying not to be like his parents when he was my age. I always remind him, "You don't have to give up everything for me. I love you and my mom for everything that both of you have done."

Music is something I am passionate about and having the skill to play the guitar that my dad has taught me, makes my life much more straightforward and happier. Music heals the heart. It has helped me during my times of being depressed. The guitar will now be a part of my family and will be passed down to my children in the future. It will be a family tradition where we will all perform one song to express ourselves every so often. As for me, every string I pluck, or every song I play, it will always be meant for my dad.