

MY FATHER'S LOVE (A short story)

MY FATHER used to say that life is a tale that must be lived and the tale is determined by how we live life and also the choices we make can make our life's tale good or bad. I never really understood what he meant by those words until I got to a stage in my life where I had to decide how my life's tale would look like.

It was the day I became a full blown teen. It was my birthday, my 18th birthday. The palace was filled with gifts from subjects, even without them we had a lot and always had more than enough. My birthday was a day that was important to me because my father always bought me new things I never had. My 18th birthday though a little different from others because my mother was no more, was unique. My father bought a set of priceless bead just for me. He told me it was a mark of his unending love for me and I should never let

anyone take it away from me because that meant separation from him. I promised him I would never allow any one take me away from him.

That day, as I went to show my friends the mark of my father's love, I was very excited because I knew none of them had a father who loved so much like my father. None of them had a king as their father. I knew they were not princesses nor princes but my subjects also. Surprisingly they laughed at my bead and said I was daddy's girl and I should grow up because girls no longer wore what I was wearing. They told me they would rather be free than be in bondage as a princess to be limited by palace rules. They showed me what was in voke. Finally, they told me if I did not break away from my father's jinx I would grow old without friends. I would become a princess with only her maids as her friends. They gave me an option which was to pull off my father's mark of love and

take the ones that was really meant for me, because I was a princess and I needed to make my own rules. Then they continued their party and laughter and I could still hear the echo of their laughter as I entered my father's house. I thought about what they said and I felt it. I felt chained to my father. I wanted to be like my friends and experience what freedom looked like. So with the mirror in front of me, I started changing my father's mark for their own.

My father entered the house and saw what I was doing. He was not happy and I understood his point but he refused to understand mine. I told him that I would never stop loving him that I just wanted to look like my friends a bit but he said I should not change it. He reminded me that I was a princess and the people I was changing to be like were my subjects. Then I told him I would wear both his own and my friend's own but he said no.

And that was it. Why couldn't he just understand that I was no longer a baby to be told what to do and not to do all the time? Did he not see I needed other friends too? Couldn't he understand I would be a loner if I only wore his mark of love? Nobody would want to be my friend but my father did not listen.

I was fed up, I was tired, if he was not ready to share me with my friends then I'd made my decision. I was leaving. I was leaving him and his rules. I gave him back his gift and left. I left to meet freedom and no rules. He tried to call me back but going back meant going back to bondage. That day, I concluded he was using love and royalty to keep me in bondage.

I met my friends and they helped me remove the remaining mark of my father's love. I was so happy. I had a lot of friends and freedom. There were no rules.

With time, I completely forgot everything about my father.

MY FATHER taught me about unending love but my friends taught me their love had an end. So it ended and I was left alone, exactly the reason I left my father's love so I wouldn't be alone. At a point, life became unbearable and I wanted to end it but then I remembered my mother's instructions, I remembered my Father's love. I remembered him and wept.

I wanted to have a glimpse of my father although I knew I would never be welcomed again for I took away his mark of love. I sent my father a note telling him I wanted to see him one more time but if only he wanted to see me too. I told him I would pass by and I would stop only when I see a red clothe by the house but if I didn't see any red clothe I would continue my journey and never stop by again.

So I embarked on my journey knowing I won't see him but at least I would have a glimpse of the house before I ended my life's tale but what I saw was not what I could ever imagine. I did not see one red clothe but so many red clothes and my father who had many red clothes on his neck was waiting for my arrival. When he saw me, he ran towards me and with my eyes filled with tears I begged for his mercy.

“Father, I know I'm no longer worthy of your love, I know I should be sent away. But I want you to know that I've learnt my lessons. I thought I was free but I never knew that bondage with you was freedom and freedom with my friends was bondage. I've had all I ever wanted in you. I was sufficient. It has always been you father.”

Then I wept. I wept on my father's welcoming shoulder. He told me that his love still remains unending and no matter how far I had gone away he had been waiting for me to come

back to him. My father did not only forgive me but gave me back his mark of love.

As I wore my father's mark of love, I knew I will never remove it again no matter what.