

Dearest Pedar Jaanam,

I miss you the size of heaven and earth combined. Since you have flown to heaven, by each passing year my love for you has grown deeper and stronger. It might be a sign of wisdom.

I feel those who think they have the best father are somehow mistaken! You were and still are the best father a girl can dream of. I now know why and am grateful to you for that forever.

It is not because you put us, three sisters, before anything. It isn't even because you were thoughtful, knowledgeable, successful, full of life, and compassionate. I know, all is true and any one reason can be a solid one for loving you indefinitely, but in my mind what sets you apart from most other dads was the way you showed us a woman's worth. You showed it by the way you loved our mother every minute of every hour of every day. By loving her, and by that I mean pure, hundred-percent solid love. No pretentious repeating meaningless phrases rotten in mundane relationships for years, just love; the complete works.

Love was in your eyes whenever you walked through the door. It was the way you called her name the minute you came in, not to miss a minute of togetherness. It did not matter if you were tired or had tackled the hardest tasks; you were ready to stand in the kitchen alongside mom either to make one of your magical recipes or to give her a hand for the night. Love was the way you made her laugh to forget all the long struggles she had throughout the day. You made everything feel so safe and calm for her despite the war, the grandpa's surgery, the uncle's worry, and the great aunt's Alzheimer's and last but not least the endless attention we needed, your three princess-musketeers.

Mom's love gave you all you wanted to be her solid rock to lean on. I remember how you encouraged her to go to university despite having small children and the elderly to take care of. You made her two promises: one; she can do it, and two; you would help. She aced through the school and you were there every step of the way.

You were full of admiration for her and were not afraid of showing it. From turning off the music just to listen to her sing to asking her out when you were going out to bakery. Since baker's shop in our eyes seemed like the least romantic place, we would always laugh at your offer. That was when you told your famous phrase every single time: "Bread, Love and Life".

Thank you for showing me what this love is people are talking about and what is a woman's status in a relationship. I learned the most important thing in life is breaking bread and living in harmony with the love of your life,

Thank you beyond words and worlds,

M.

About the writer:

Mehrzaad Karimabadi is the author of Shireen and Nousheen Children's Book Series. Through this illustrated book series, she introduces Persian culture to English-speaking children. Mehrzaad holds an MA in Theatre Arts and currently resides in the Bay Area, CA.

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