

2nd PLACE LEVEL III

Dear Ms. Vara,

He never told me anything so I was not surprised he didn't tell me this.

But now I find myself in bliss.

Some say stay focused and don't try to do much but

I cannot help to try and change our luck.

Tears can only dampen a life for a short period of time

Because one day they will dry

There will be a drought of pain

An estate of happiness, peace and tranquility

Will overcome the current doubt

But I will always have her to show me

What love is really about.

Things have not been clear *Until Now*

So go on father take a bow

My fathers drinking problem and infidelity has reached a point in my senior year that he is no longer in my life. Not an extension by chance because she was going to make a call but by the epidemic of text messages when she went to check the time on his cellular phone. A big time general manager, carpenter and snow remover on the side was it a client? A friend? Or was it a stranger to the world but a familiar facade to him? At that point who knew? How do you explain what seems to be an affair in the eyes of a seventeen year old to someone who's only ten year into life?

I learned to play the guitar around that time and not even an instrument so beautiful can transfer the pain that I felt. When alone she would tell me that in the past there were others but it is now 2008 and women have the ability to be completely independent. Life without a father for me seemed possible because my relationship with him even though we lived under the same roof was nonexistent. He had many best friends during the week it was his evening six packs and during

Over, please

the weekend it was his 24/7 anything in sight that had alcohol. He was a big drinker and was not completely honest about multiple situations which led to the deterioration of our relationship. Supposedly he moved our family out to East Granby to pursue a better life. But now a month or two away from moving to a new home with just me, my brother, my mother and my dog who by his actions has obviously witnessed the rapid changes. So many promises, that he broke saying that he would stop drinking, yea right like that would ever happen.

He cared enough to have her number and to respond to her text messages until he was caught. I was until that point a seventeen year old boy. Tired of his actions by the time we come home from school he no longer had a place in our lives and his clothes were horrendously packed in his truck. Tears that have been engraved in my heart and that'll never be forgotten flowed down my brother's face. Feeding off everyone else's reaction I too could do nothing but cry of the rapid changes. Did I mention that this all happened the night of my 17th birthday? He was nowhere to be seen nowhere to be found. He was nowhere to be found throughout my entire life when it came to education so this in my eyes was another case of him not being there. Not even one parent teacher conference not even one truth for seventeen years.

Though initially hard for us all it was a household full of cursing and weeping every night. Not the environment we were hoping to live in when we moved out here but now everyone knows he just wanted to move us away from the red zone. The situation has been much harder for my brother than it has been for me because my brother has not lived through it all and is too young to understand. In my senior year of high school I did not expect to try and become a man.

Reading your poem motivated me to continue doing well and to jump over the hurdles that will be placed in front of me not only now but for the rest of my life. I am like a flower that grows annually no matter what it goes through during the offseason it grows the next year beautifully and even more mature than had in the past year. That is what I will continue to do as I grow older and try to become the best that I can be. This situation has only served me as a motivation. If you expressed your pain through poetry to become the beautiful person you are today, then that is what I shall do also.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Díaz

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