

A Precious Moment in My Life

One day Daisy came to my job site. We sat on the porch together. She wrapped her arm around me the way only she could. She had a way of making my heart always feel warm and toasty.

She played a song for me. It was about growing up without a dad and deciding to be the best one you could be. The song healed something inside of me that I didn't even know had been hurting since I was a small boy.

She told me that that would be the song for our first dance when I walked her down the aisle at her wedding.

She was now engaged, and we would soon be in the process of starting to build her house.

In that moment, my heart melted in a way it never had before – and never will again. It was not pride. It was not ego. It was not redemption.

A broken piece of my childhood felt restored.

I knew I had tried to be for her the dad that I always wanted for myself. I looked forward to that day more than I could ever explain to anyone, more than I could ever tell her.

She had given me a gift more precious than life itself.

She said to me without saying it, *But you helped raise me. You've earned this privilege. You've earned the right to walk me down the aisle. You've earned the honor of being the man I dance with for the first dance.*

To me, this would be a moment that would live in our hearts for the rest of our lives.

As I sat there listening to the song, I had already painted the portrait of it in my mind. I had to fight back tears.

Nothing in the world had been – or ever would be – more precious than that moment.

The honor was magnificent – to be the one who would walk this lovely woman down the aisle, to see her for the first time in that wedding dress, to fulfill the hope I had carried since she was a small child.

It is beyond words.

It is beyond description.

However, as my man Paul Harvey would say, *now here's the rest of the story.*

Life does not always follow the picture we paint in our minds.

Later, she became angry with me. She told me I would not walk her down the aisle. There would be no dance.

I asked for a few minutes. I listened. I did not argue. I did not debate.

I simply explained to her how much that moment meant to me. I poured my heart out.

Then I accepted her decision.

For two or three minutes, I spoke as gently as I could. I tried to explain what this moment would mean to both of us later in life – to her children, to her grandchildren, to the stories that could be told for generations. I told her that anger was never worth depriving ourselves of something so meaningful.

But I did not fight her.

I continued to love her.
I continued to invest in her life.

But my heart was broken.

Daisy was a young woman. I had no right to demand what I wanted. This was her wedding. It was her day, not mine.

I only wanted to be a part of it.

I don't believe that made me selfish. I simply loved her so deeply that the loss of that moment devastated me.

Love does not entitle us to anything. It only makes us hope.

Sometimes the hardest part of loving someone is accepting that the story of their life belongs to them, not to us – even when we dreamed of being in it.

So I loved her anyway. I supported her anyway. And I carried both the joy of what was once promised and the pain of what would never be.

Not with bitterness...

but with love.

Nuggets of Wisdom

- * The deepest love is not proven by what we receive, but by what we continue to give.
- * Some of the most painful losses are not of people, but of moments that will never happen.
- * Loving someone includes respecting their choices, even when those choices break your heart.
- * Hope makes promises precious; love keeps us kind when those promises change.

Proverbs

Proverbs 3:3-4

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

Proverbs 19:11

"A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."

Proverbs 17:17

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

If you want, this story would pair with one of the most powerful charcoal illustrations in your entire book – the porch moment itself. I can help design that whenever you're ready.