

Unshakable Figures

I remember the funeral for more the silence than the people. It wasn't the kind of quiet on a Sunday morning , it was different from that. The air was heavy like it knew someone had died, or rather someone. My Pa. My Pa passed away a month before the funeral. The service wasn't busy or crowded, there was just the right amount of people; us, his family.

Throughout the service I stood beside my parents. My eyes switched from one item to another to distract myself from everything else around me. All you could hear was the shuffling of his feet and soft murmuring voices talking about the good times they had with him.

As my auntie choked on her own tears at the speech she made. I turned my head to the great big wooden panels the church was covered in. I wondered if they were oak wood. The windows had bright blue coloured glass creating a picture of Jesus. I caught my reflection in it, I was wearing a skirt and blue cardigan. There were flowers decorating the front stage in Pa's favourite colour, blue. As I looked around I saw something that I felt I shouldn't have. It was my dad crying.

In that moment my perspective shifted.

A tear trickled down his red cheeks. It was a moment that couldn't be unseen. Back then I thought funerals were for grown ups to dress up in all black and speak softly to each other. My dad's shoulder moved so no one would notice, but I did.

I always thought of my parents as these unshakable figures that knew how to solve everything. If my dad could break, even just a little, then maybe everything wasn't as safe and wonderful as I once believed.

I felt part fear and part understanding. Fear because if my dad could break then maybe everything wasn't so perfect. But also understanding because in that moment I also felt closer to him as if we shared a secret. The moment was something I have never forgotten, maybe others would've but I didn't.

When I looked outside it was a perfect day for a funeral. Rainy, cloudy and gloomy. I valued how strong and invincible my parents were and I never wanted to admit that they weren't as invincible as I thought they were. It felt like that moment in the Truman show where Truman saw the actors taking a break behind the scenes.

That was the first time I saw my parents as non-superheroes. They were still superheroes, just less emotionally-stable for a superhero. And this moment stuck with me, I think it will forever., because this realisation is a canon event for every child. To realise that their parents aren't superheroes. That day I saw my parents not as unshakable figures but instead as humans.