

A Tale of a Dad and His Daughter

A Soundtrack for my Dad

1. Every Breath You Take – The Police
2. Everybody Wants to Rule the World – Tears for Fears
3. Rainmaker – Kansas
4. Machinehead – Bush
5. Down – 311
6. La Vie en Rose – Louis Armstrong
7. What Would You Say? – Dave Matthews Band
8. Good Enough – Evanescence
9. Leave out all the Rest – Linkin Park
10. Lachrymosa – Evanescence, Mozart
11. Verdi's Requiem
12. Chesterfields & Aftershave – Dropkick Murphys

A Soundtrack Eulogy

Directions: Read the passage that goes with the song in “A Soundtrack for my Dad” to get a full sense of the Tale of a Dad and His Daughter.

1. Relationships are Complicated – *Every Breath You Take by The Police*

This musical journey begins, as stories often do, with a sweet melody explaining the love of two people, often parent and child. This tale begins in just such a way.

Imagine the 80's Brawney Paper Towel guy dancing happily to this song with his infant daughter. This is where our tale begins. My mom watched my Dad rock me to sleep to this song often. He told me more than once his proudest moment was when I was born (the perks of being first). It is because of this memory that we begin our tale with this song. A man with one, then 2, daughters whom he cherished.

This song meant a lot to me throughout my life, because it reminded me that my Dad was watching what I was doing, somehow, and cared about me. This knowledge was key when he left when I was 4. He might have left, but he was never gone. He participated in my life in so many meaningful ways that I found myself fortunate to be in the situation in which I grew up.

Relationships are complicated, and sometimes unfinished. This song was intended to be the father-daughter dance at my wedding, which will not happen. Nor will he ever walk me down the aisle, which is the one thing I always wanted and now can never experience. This sucks. Life isn't all wine and roses, but it is filled with love and good stories, and that is the point of our tale.

2. Christmas Tree Chopping – *Everybody Wants To Rule the World by Tears for Fears*

Two key parts of my life growing up were going to Dad's house every other weekend and chopping down our Christmas Tree every Thanksgiving Morning. Chopping down

trees was a bit of an ordeal because we got up early on a vacation day and drove up a long, winding path in the Santa Cruz Mountains to chop down our own Christmas Tree at Crest Ranch. Dad always paid for it, and the tree would last until New Years' week (especially if we remembered to water it). We would eat lunch at the ranch because family and family friends brought sandwich fixings. It was part of the larger tradition that was maintained in an era when traditions were becoming less important.

Chopping down our tree for us every year (it is not as easy as I thought) was one of Dad's way he could be the big strong man for his girls. For most years we attended, he was the one to chop down our tree. As I grew up and was old enough for alcohol, we would taste beers and Mom and I would make Bailey's and hot chocolate. It was surreal one year during Covid when he and I went alone and I had to help him chop the tree down. We had our Bailey's and chocolate and I had a beer, so it had shades of the tradition, but it was not the same.

This song is closely tied to my childhood when Dad lived in Gilroy because the Tears for Fears concert was one of three VHSs that we would watch when my sister and I were there for the weekend. The other two were Fleetwood Mac and Pink Floyd (the one with the light bulb suit). This song would play in the background while Dad predictable beat us playing monopoly, though we did play other games as well.

It was in this house listening to this song that we ate garlic and pepperoni pizza with so much garlic on it that it came out of my pores when I returned to Mom on Sunday. I also learned to fish, ride a bike, and own a small business. My sister and I had a snow cone stand that we would put out the weekend of the Garlic Festival. We would sell enough to pay Dad for the expenses of setting it up, and we used our revenue to get wax hands and extra garlic bread when we went to the festival on Sunday.

This song also matters because it was a philosophy that Dad knew was true, and we debated this point in some way or another throughout my life. He would argue the rightness of unbridled capitalism and I would argue that greed and power stop people from caring about people, and this explains the enrichment of the wealthy at the expense of the rest. Dad and I would mentally spar about things throughout my life. Often I left in tears because I felt inferior, but as I did my research, I was able to convince him that there were other ways to support a market economy that didn't require the cutthroat conquering of everything in sight. He didn't like it because he admired and aspired to be the ultra-rich in his own way, and didn't want to believe that the titans of industry were somehow lacking when they had everything. He, like most of us, stuck to his ideas with a tight fist.

3. Life in Gilroy - *Rainmaker by Kansas*

This tale within our tale played in Dad's minivan, it filled me with terror. I remember a dark and stormy night driving from San Jose to Gilroy, and this song comes on. It seems like a story of any old rascal going about his business, but then the universe decides he needs his comeuppance, and the whole town has to die with him. Kansas does an amazing job of creating the sound of a doom-bringing storm with instruments. My active

imagination pictured God being so mad at everyone for being so hateful that he decided to wipe out the area with a flood through the rainstorm. We heard the song many times on that drive, but that one instance is the one I associate with that song. To this day I do not listen to this song on a stormy day. It's a good song, though.

Dad loved music. He loved a good sound system and a full, round sound when an artist was produced. We would see bands ranging from the Alan Parsons Project to Linkin Park throughout my adulthood. The last concert we went to together was last summer to see Kansas at the Mountain Winery. It was also a concert of firsts: the first concert I went to with both my parents, and the first time Mom and I had been to the venue. He really wanted us to go to this particular concert with us in some of the last months he could really venture out, and took us for our birthdays. They did not play Rainmaker at the concert, thankfully, but the mountain drive to get to and from the venue was more than scary enough.

Dad and I would talk about how music made us feel and the fact that all the good names have been taken. We were both serious and a little silly about it. This style of our communication shows up in many ways throughout the tale.

4. Things in Common - *Machinehead* by Bush

In order to understand the main characters, it is important to know what interests them, and what drives them to make the decisions they do. I knew this as a young girl, and since I was interested in almost anything, I made it a point to be interested in what Dad was interested in. This turned into an interest in skating and hockey during my middle school years. This song was chosen because it was played at the beginning of every hockey game I have ever attended. The connection between this song and hockey is so strong that I think it played at games I went to before its release in 1996.

There were many weekends during my childhood that we would go to the skating rink. I learned how to go backwards and cross my feet when turning. Dad was always the fast tall guy in the room, so it was easy to see if I was keeping up or he was about to lap me. All the middle school dance songs would play, and it was one of my favorite forms of exercise.

The skating led to roller hockey games. The San Jose Rhinos played to small crowds in the giant Shark Tank, but they were so much fun to watch. I got to know the players on a team live for the first time. We were able to meet some of the players a couple times, and we would bring our skates with us so we could skate on the professional rink after the game.

Dad's tale also involves playing ice hockey, though I only ever attended a game or two. I don't think he wanted us to go because he was embarrassed at the number of "gravity checks" he got during a game. If you're not familiar with hockey, it means he randomly fell down while skating. It is a happy memory and fun to imagine, though I can imagine how frustrating it was for him. With Dad's start in hockey came the arrival of the San Jose Sharks, and serious hockey. I went to a couple games with him throughout the years, usually against the Dallas Stars, and they were always fun. For Christmas one year I got the jersey of my favorite player. It is the only Sharks jersey I have, and I still wear it. Every tale needs regalia.

5. The Shopping Song – *Down by 311*

Dad and I are hunter-gatherers; we do not like to shop at all. I don't know how or why we had so many opportunities to go to the mall when I was starting high school, but we did. And every time we went, we played this song on one of my radio mix tapes. This is the first of two songs on this list that remind me of Dad's chicken head dance. He would move his head, only his head, back and forth to the beat of the song.

This song also represents my rebellious year, when Dad did his best to be supportive, but gave me more license and reassurance than anything. After he told me his stories and told me to do no worse, I knew that was going to be easy; I didn't really want to be doing any of the activities my peers were asking me to engage in. I used skating as an outlet to be around other people and to keep me going to school. I knew I was smart and that was the easiest way to make my dad proud of me, so no matter what happened, my grades stayed high.

6. Paris 2000 – *La Vie en Rose* by Louis Armstrong

Okay, these are my favorite stories. They mostly take place in Paris, and since this song is the anthem of Paris, it is only appropriate. It was, ironically, the only form of art we didn't learn more about on this trip. As a graduation present from high school and passing AP French, Dad took me to France for a week and a half before I started college. I think this is something everyone should do if they can; go with a parent to a foreign country where the child speaks the language for a couple weeks before college starts. I suppose this idea only works out if you had a good time. This trip was epic.

The fact that Dad didn't know his way around Paris at all was hilarious to both of us and shows up as a plot point in the first book I wrote. Any time we were getting on a Metro or walking down a street, he would ask if we needed to go the opposite direction we were heading. I was put in charge of all directions on the first day there. We spent something like \$11 to get around Paris unlimited for 8 days. It was glorious to walk around and take public transit around a metropolitan area that was as large and world-famous as Paris.

The one day we would challenge our fear of heights was the day we ate dinner on the Eiffel Tower. We managed the first floor just fine, where the restaurant is, but I found my limit on the second of three stops (The third level is much higher up, and neither of us even mentioned the possibility of that option). He stayed inside near the elevator, just barely making it outside as I walked towards the edge. In a split second I understood why he didn't follow me this far out: the height was terrifying. I froze and forced myself to back up slowly and not run back to Dad. We got into the elevator and went down for dinner without needing to say a word about it.

When we did leave Paris in a bus, it was to Visit the Loire Valley Chateaux, Versailles, and Monet's Gardens. All of them were beautiful and we took a lot of pictures. Since this trip was before the smartphone, most of the pictures have been lost to time.

On our last full day in Paris, we looked at the Notre Dame Cathedral and decided we didn't want to climb to the top, so we took a left, then a right somewhere and ended up at the Musee Rodin. He's the guy that sculpted The Thinker, and that sculpture greeted us as we walked in the gates. The gate that had fascinated me since earlier in the trip, The Gates of Hell, was there for me to see on my right at the end of a manicured path. All of Rodin's sculptures in pure white were everywhere. The museum was filled with sculptures out of a wealthy character's garden and Grecian open-air style building in a work of historical fiction. Every one of those sculptures was in the one that had captured my imagination for days: La Porte de Fer. I bought the book on The Gates of Hell there, and Rodin was solidified as my favorite sculptor.

The tale we told most often from this adventure was the one that started with ordering a salad and ended with la vie en rose and a flirty waiter. We were getting ready for an early dinner/late lunch and decided to go to one of the nicer restaurants opposite the Eiffel Tower. After the first course and a bottle of wine, they brought our salads, and Dad's had a cockroach on it. He did the "scary dad" thing and we left the restaurant. We decided to have wine and cheese platters and watch people walk around Montmartre, which is the area in which our narrow hotel room was located. We got a table and chairs looking out to the street and took hours drinking a goblet of wine that held at least half a bottle, and a collection of cheeses and bread that you can only find in France. Once we finished our wine and cheese, I asked the waiter for the check in French. His reply had me turning bright red as he walked away. Dad asked what he said, and I told him "You are too beautiful, I cannot let you leave." Dad laughed heartily and told him to bring us another round. Not long into the second goblet of red wine did I get that light wine drunk where the world seems softer and nicer than it did before. And because we were in Paris, the light was pink and we were living La Vie en Rose.

7. College Days - *What Would You Say?* by Dave Matthews Band

College was made possible by Dad. He paid tuition and board for my Bachelor's Degree from UC Davis, and my sister's from UC Santa Barbara. If I have one regret from this time it is that I didn't walk to receive my College Diploma, and I know he would have been very proud to see me walk down that aisle.

It was going to orientation when I realized that Dad knew computers enough to hack into the school's internet, because the public access speed was way too slow for him. I don't know how he did it, nor did I try anything like that myself, but it was cool to know I had a dad who was also a hacker.

College was a time to go to a lot of concerts, and I went to at least one every year with Dad, too. These were the days when a concert ticket was \$20, so I could go to at least once a month with a part-time job to supplement my income. This was something I knew Dad also did a lot of when he was in college, and they were a great time to learn about new music and have a great time.

8. 21st in Vegas - *Good Enough* by Evanescence

Normally what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, but we did not have that kind of trip. Dad took me to Vegas for a week to celebrate my 21st birthday. We saw a lot of shows, including 2 Cirque du Soleils, Blue Man Group, and Sigfried and Roy. We also had two winetasting multicourse meals at some fancy restaurants in the Bellagio. This was after the dot com bubble burst and had come back roaring strong. I would never have been able to have so many experiences if it hadn't been for Dad's job and all the hours he put in.

The song was chosen because it is my theme song, and in a way it was his, too. All we wanted was to feel good enough. And for me, all the attention in the world couldn't make me feel that way. For Dad, all the money and success in the world couldn't do it, either. We found the album containing this song, and another by one of my favorite bands at the time, while we were in the Virgin Megastore in Ceaser's Palace. Those two albums shaped my 20s.

This tale's home is Treasure Island, where we had my favorite birthday moment.

9. Biklops and Beer – Leave Out All the Rest by Linkin Park

After college, I was able to help Dad a little while he had the recording studio. I was there when he came up with the name and logo with the high school worship band. He showed me how to work the board and I went with them to a weekend retreat to help Dad, and that was a connecting point for us. We were able to talk sound at the concerts we went to, and he taught me the basics so I could help other people out with sound once in a while.

After the studio project ended, we rediscovered hockey (well, I did anyway) and found our love for craft beer. It became tradition for us to meet up once a week if possible, and once a month at most, for beer and hockey. The reason, location, and food would change, but this was our way to hand out and connect. It was a safe space for us to talk about things we didn't think anyone else would understand. Even if life got in the way for a time, we had our beer and wings and hockey and would meet up again regularly when we were able. Up to the end.

10. Lachrymosas and Requiems – Tracks 10-14

The last concert that Dad and I attended together was Evanescence during the Pandemic. This was in the few months when he and I knew he was sick, but he didn't want to go to the doctor to start the treatment. I would ask him once in a while during this half-year what the update was, but I knew he didn't want to talk about it, so we just had a great time when we could, and I brushed off the weeks he couldn't make it because he was too sick and didn't want me to know.

Prostate cancer is painful to watch and experience, and I don't wish it on anyone. If you have one, please get it checked regularly. I don't know what the early signs were for my Dad, but I know they were there, and for months before he was told his PSA levels were high, which is what he told me in the beginning. I knew what that meant, and so did he, but we never said the C word. He didn't want to talk about it, and I was the dutiful daughter doing what she was told.

Watching Dad get weak and sickly through sheer stubbornness, and how much he was able to receive from those who cared about him, was truly impressive. I remember that by the time he agreed to get treatment, about 6 months after he told me what was happening and was getting progressively worse, he looked like he was dying and was in so much pain that he got sick every couple hours. That was three and a half years ago. He got a little better for awhile with the treatment, but the cancer was as tough as he was and would not go away, or even take a long vacation.

One of the other things that Dad loved was live orchestral music. He told me his favorite piece of music was Verdi's Requiem, and so I've included the three more famous movements in the requiem as the piece is uniquely suited to this tale.

However, we begin our requiem with three Lachrymosas: Evanescence, Mozart, and Verdi. The first took its melodies from the second, which it took Dad years to accept when I told him that Evanescence's Lachrymosa was based on Mozart's. It was definitely not from Verdi's as you will experience in these tracks. Requiems are epic and are intended to make one understand both life and death on a deeper level...

11. Musical Send Off – *Chesterfields and Aftershave* by Dropkick Murphys

The week Dad passed, I went to a real punk rock show: Dropkick Murphys and Bad Religion's Summer of Discontent Tour. It was a wonderful concert with two bands that have both a distinct sound and a good name. I had floor seats, so there was no way Dad would have been able to go with me, even a year earlier. When they played this song and I heard the end of the chorus, I knew it was special. It has become the song that cheers me up and reminds me that Dad was proud of me and all I wanted to do was make him proud. This tale ends here, with my Dad no longer in pain and me continuing on, wanting to make him proud.