



Eulogy For My Dad

Michael Chow

I'd like to thank everyone first and foremost for taking time out of your day to give my dad a final farewell. I'm sure most of you have met my dad at least once, but I'd like to spend just a couple minutes sharing with you who he was. So who is my dad? Well, the dad I knew was an intriguing character, but I think sometimes he can come off a little bit too boastful about his own accomplishments. Sorry dad, I'm going to have to call you out on this one. He would brag about how he was, at one time, the director of three separate companies. He would also brag about his favorite watch, his opal gemstone watch, which he claims that you can't buy even if you had the money... somewhat true. Sometimes, though, he would not only brag about his status and

material possessions, but just about anything else he does. Like how his cooking skills are top notch...well, let's just say that he's no Gordon Ramsay. What I find intriguing though, is the true background behind his seemingly exaggerated claims.

See, he would neglect to mention his humble beginnings. Before he was the company director of three separate companies, he grew up in a dirt poor environment. Only recently have I learned that, when he was a child, he would scavenge for the nails of gutter panels to sell just to support his dad's (my grandpa's) everyday expenses. He would also tell me about how he never spent a penny for three years and how for those

three years his piggy bank was never broken, and instead he would grab a pair of tweezers to pinch a penny or two just so his dad can get through the day. He was truly someone who came from rags to riches, but seldom would anyone ever hear about those stories, even amongst family. Similarly, I don't believe that his opal gemstone watch is his favorite because he claims that it's priceless and that it can't be bought. Sure it looked elegant, but there are more expensive watches inside his drawer. Not until a couple of days ago did we learn that, through rummaging through his desk drawer, he had numerous gifts, mainly books, given to him by my sister. They either had folded pages or were bookmarked. Either way, they looked as if they were thoroughly read, similar to how his favorite opal watch, a gift that was also given to him by his dearest daughter, had a noticeably time-worn strap. I had once heard that all items that are loved and cherished will always have battle scars.

It's regrettable that only now do I have the urge to know more about him. Even though I mock his cooking, I want to know why and how he can keep insisting on preparing me meals. This is in spite of the fact that I give him grief for not being Michelin star chef material. I think, had I taken the time to understand him more, I would appreciate his efforts that much more. When I talked to my sister the day after my dad had passed away, she asked if I remembered the last time he prepared dinner for us all. When I said no and when she started to describe that night, I

felt a sudden sadness pinch my heart. It is equally sad how I can no longer taste the food that he makes for us anymore.

There's no denying that I've been a lousy son and for that I at least owe him an apology. Dad, I'm sorry. But I believe that I owe him my gratitude more so than an apology. So dad, I would also like to thank you for being with mom for all these years, thank you for giving me the chance to be a part of this family with a wonderful mom, sister and brother. Thank you for taking my godmother Pina's (the first person he ever met in Canada) hand and immediately showed us off to her as his wife and children when you first met her. I now know that what you were truly proud was nothing material, but was and always will be: "the Family".

And I also want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to share a little bit about my thoughts on family and how important time with family is. I hope everyone can forgive me for being too preachy, but I think if there is one thing my dad and I wish for right now, it is for everyone to realize the importance of loved ones and how every minute counts when you spend time with them. Time is short, so make the most out of it, but sometimes just the simple fact of being there is enough already. If both my dad and I can ask everyone a favor, we'd want everyone to love and cherish the time that my dad and I did not have with your own families.