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Creative Starter

Literary Technique and Story Development

Fiction

Time Well Spent

Richard and I were on our fourth or fifth date ever, and I was rambling about how we were at my favorite restaurant. I used to go to Tres Hermanos with my brothers and dad a few years back. He was smiling, and I could tell he was hanging on every word.

“Pandora, are you-?” Richard started to ask before he wiped away my tear.

He stood up and switched sides so he could sit by me. He wrapped his arms around me.

“I-I’m sorry...”

He smiled softly. “It’s okay to miss your dad.”

“I just wish I could see him again.”

After our date Richard dropped me off. Matt, one of my roommates, noticed something was wrong.

“Hey, Richard didn’t upset you on your date, did he?”

I shook my head. “We went to Tres Hermanos.”

He nodded in understanding. “That got you thinking about your Dad again, didn’t it?”

“Yeah, it did,” I replied. “I know that if I miss him Twin can bring back his spirit for a while, but I wish I had one more day with him...”

“I understand. Maybe you can talk to that guy who gave you that coin shaped necklace. Didn’t he say he owed you a favor? Maybe that’s something he can do. You never know these days.”

Matt was right. With most of my close friends and I having powers that fit our personalities anything was possible. Too bad I didn’t know Daniel Harrison too well. If I knew him better maybe I could guess what his powers would be. All I knew about him was that he liked to keep to himself. I had saved his life about a year ago, and afterwards when I went to check if he was going to be okay or if he wanted some help until he got better he gave me a coin because he said he felt he owed me and left. I got the sense that he liked his solitude.

“Do you really think he can?” I asked.

“I think there’s no harm in asking.”

I pulled the coin off and flipped it like Daniel had told me to. I didn’t understand how it’d work, but Daniel showed up in our living room.

“Hey Pandora, you summoned me?”

I nodded biting my lip. “I was wondering you can help me with something...”

I think he could tell I was nervous.

“What do you need help with?”

“I was wondering if you could- I miss my Dad...”

How could I ask a stranger to bring back my dad? Daniel and I barely knew each other, and I didn't want my first real conversation with him to be a sob story about my dad. I gulped.

“Pandora was wondering if there was a way you could bring her father back even if it's just for a short time.”

“Where is your father exactly, Pandora?”

I gulped again. “He passed away about five years ago. I'm sorry about that.”

“It's okay there's no reason to apologize. You miss your dad, and that makes perfect sense. And I can make it happen, but it may take a while. What time is it?” He looked at the clock. “It's ten o'clock now. I can probably get him here by noon tomorrow. Would that be okay?”

“That's totally okay. Thank you.”

“I can only bring him back for about twenty-four hours.”

I nodded. It was going to be tough, but I really missed him and wanted to see him again.

“I'll go get him then.”

Daniel vanished and I fell against the wall and slid to the floor.

“Pandora, are you okay?” Matt asked.

“Wh-what have I done?”

“What do you mean?”

“I-I’m going to see my Dad tomorrow. What if I freeze or breakdown or...?”

“I wish I could help, but I can’t take the day off so short notice. Maybe Twin can be there with you.”

“What if he’s mad that I brought him back for a day?”

Matt sat beside me and put an arm around me. “Nonsense. Your father would be more than happy to see you and be able to hang out with you. He misses you, too. You are aware of that, right?”

“I sometimes doubt that...”

“Well stop doubting it. You were your father’s badass little princess, and he was proud of everything you did. He probably hates not being able to see you graduate and start college. If you want someone with you, and for some reason Twin can’t be there for you maybe you can ask Richard.”

“But...”

“Calm down. You can do this. I know you can.”

I hugged him tight. “Thanks Matt. You always know what to say.”

I couldn’t sleep that night. I was too nervous and too excited to see my father again. Richard had agreed to go with me. My mind was racing. Would my Dad be proud of who I am? What I was doing? How would it feel to get another hug from him? Where should we all hang out?

I could not for the life of me turn off my brain, although I wish I could sleep because I wanted to be well rested to see my father. I only had a limited time with him.

I guess I was able to fall asleep because the next thing I knew I was waking up to a phone call. I picked up my phone and answered it.

“Hello?”

“Hey Pandora, I just wanted to make sure you’re awake. Daniel said he be coming over at noon and it’s about eleven-thirty,” Matt said.

“What? Why didn’t my alarm wake me?”

“Twin told me you couldn’t sleep, so I turned it off.”

“Thanks,” I replied as I climbed out of bed.

As I was getting ready there was a knock on my door. I opened it and Richard was there for me. He looked slightly nervous.

I smiled. “Come on in. I was just finishing getting ready. Do you want anything to drink? We have water, juice, Coke?”

“I’ll take a Coke, please?”

I grabbed him a can out of the fridge then went to finish getting ready. I was wearing black leggings and a blood red tank top. I decided to wear mascara, eyeliner, and my favorite lipstick to show Dad one of my new habits since he had passed away. When I was a teenager I was very anti-makeup; in fact, my older brother wore more makeup than me. The tank top could show him the tattoo I had gotten a few months ago honoring him.

My hair was left in a side ponytail and thanks to a braid the night before my hair had gorgeous waves.

I walked to the living room and looked at the clock.

“Oh my God,” I groaned. “Dad’s going to be here soon.”

I went weak in the knees.

“I found your dad.”

I gasped and fell. I turned around at the voice. Daniel was standing there by my dad. I was frozen. I was so shocked to see my Dad alive for the first time since his passing. Dad walked over to me and helped me up then hugged me tight.

“I’ve missed you, Bright Eyes.”

I broke down crying in my father’s arms. It was the ugly, causing me to stop breathing kind of crying. I was fully overwhelmed. I was happy he was here with me again. But I was still fully aware that he was going to leave me again. I felt like I had made a huge mistake. What if I wasn’t ready for this?

“Pandora, breathe, kiddo,” Dad soothed as he gently rubbed my back. “I’m right here. Let it out, but don’t forget to breathe.”

Once I calmed down, Richard helped me to the couch while Dad went to make lunch for us.

“I’m sorry,” I whispered.

“Don’t worry about it. I would probably react the same way I were in your shoes.”

After a while Dad brought out a couple plates hamburger helper. He handed us our plates then got us drinks. After that he served himself.

“Thanks for getting Coke,” Dad said. “So Daniel told me you wanted to spend the day with me; what do you want to do?”

“I wanted to go out, but I’m exhausted...”

“It’s okay. I understand.”

“How about we watch movies?” I suggested. “We have Grown Ups and Grown Ups 2.”

“That sounds great,” Dad commented. “They made a second Grown Ups movie?”

“I think it came out a few years after the first one. I’m not sure.”

I couldn’t help but scratch my scarred left thumb. It was my usual nervous habit.

“I-I wanted to i-introduce you to Richard.”

Dad extended a hand to Richard. “Nice to meet you, Richard.”

Richard shook his hand and nodded as he finished chewing a bite. “Nice to meet you as well. Pandora speaks very highly of you.”

“She does?”

I blushed as I took another bite.

“Did I see you have a tattoo, Panda?”

I blushed even deeper as I swallowed. “Yeah, I have a tattoo in your honor.”

I put my plate down and showed him my tattoo. The tattoo was a black and turquoise feather that read ‘In Loving Memory’ above the feather and ‘Keith Gabbert’ below the feather on my right shoulder.

“It looks really cool, kiddo.”

“When’d you get it?”

“I got it a couple months ago.”

I couldn’t help but blush. It had been so long since I talked to my Dad like this.

As I went back to eating, Dad asked, “What else is new?”

“I’m attending a college program that will get me my bachelor’s degree in creative writing at an online school, Full Sail University. I’ve published a book called Head Hunters, and I’m working on the sequel as well. Oh, and I have a job at the local library.”