

2010 *What Matters?* Competition

YEAR 9/10 RUNNER-UP

Georgia Christie, Great Lakes College Forster Campus

Just the Two of Us

The year is 1995, it's 1am, on the 31st of May. My Mum has just given birth to me, my Dad is standing by her side, squeezing her hand, looking down at his new baby daughter, thinking about how she's going to grow up into a beautiful young lady, and how he's going to be there to pick her up when she falls, and how he'll be there on her first day of Kindergarten, and her last day of Year 12. My Nan is standing by my Mum's side, silent tears of joy rolling down her cheeks, admiring her new granddaughter, who is curiously looking around the room, not a sound coming from her tiny mouth. My Pa is standing outside, phoning the relatives, informing them that his little angel has finally come into the world, trying to hold his emotions in.

My Mum and Dad look at each other, their eyes filled with love, not knowing what exactly to feel at this moment that feels like it couldn't be more perfect. Dad takes me into his arms, where I seem to fit like that exact spot was made specifically for me, and he softly kisses the top of my head, knowing he couldn't love anything else in the world more than he loves me.

And then suddenly, without any warning, it's all gone, he's gone, that perfect moment is gone, never to be had again. My Mum is by herself. It's all surreal, like any moment now she feels like he's going to walk through the front door, and give her a hug and a kiss, and tell her about his day, and what the traffic was like on the way home. But it has all vanished, 'He's in a better place now,' they tell her, her eyes welling up with tears. She knows she has to push on, and stay strong, for her daughter.

Some people take their lives for granted, and when everything goes wrong, they blame it on the world.

My mum is the emotionally strongest person I know. Even though she's had to go through so much, she has always found time to be there for me when I need her. She has raised me by herself, with no one to help her, for 10 years. I love her more than anything else in the world.

She doesn't talk about my Dad a lot, but on those special rare occasions when she does, it breaks my heart to watch her. Her eyes well up with tears, and she speaks so highly of him, like he was her everything.

I can't even begin to imagine how hard it must have been for her to accept the fact that her husband was gone forever, and it would've been even harder to know that he wasn't happy in this world. We've only ever talked once about how he died, and I guess I was too young to fully understand the emotional side of things back then.

I'll never forget that conversation, it was back when I was 9, and we were sitting down, having dinner, like any other night, when I had the sudden urge to ask, 'Mum, how did Dad really die?' Up until then I had been told that he had just gotten sick and passed away in his sleep, but I knew there was something more. Mum took a deep breath in, as if preparing herself and contemplating the best way to tell her 9 year old daughter that her father had taken his own life.

I guess in the end it's just a part of life. These things happen. People come and go, but when some people go, they leave more of an impression than others.

Suicide ruins some people's lives, but Mum didn't let it ruin hers, she pushed on, and has given me the chance to live a happy and healthy life. The things she has sacrificed for me are incredible, and one day I hope she finds someone just like my Dad, who makes her happy too.