

## **My Mother's Daughter**

I have a secret. I love my mother. My mother, who loves all kinds of animals and spoils my dog rotten. My mother, whose pride ensured she would always fight for the life she wanted, always taking a stance against anyone who did not believe in her. My mother, who grinned when I told her a boy thought I was pretty. How could he not? After all, I am her daughter. My mother, who despite being an absolute neat freak, let me lay on her lap after I had thrown up my breakfast right in the car. My mother, who after hours of arguing, tearfully told me she never wanted to be my mother.

When I was young, my mother was the best person in the world. She was never strict on my academics, she always bought me whatever I wanted, and most of all, she never yelled at me. I truly do not know what changed so much in our relationship, that laughs and hugs turned to scornful eyes and countless arguments. Maybe it was because I grew up. Or maybe I wasn't grown enough to understand the struggles she faced.

On October 18th, 2019, I watched my mother cry for the first time in my life. A woman as independent and strong as her should never cry. Yet, she looked at me with tears in her eyes. The same tears she once wiped away from my cheeks rolled down hers, wave after wave after wave. She cried for the life she wished she had, for the recognition she wished she received, and for the loving family she wished would give her that recognition.

“I don't want to have a relationship with you anymore,” she said. If only she had said something more drastic, like “I never loved you” or “You're not my daughter”. It would have made it a lot more dramatic to hate her.

The following years were spent in an environment so toxically awkward you could drown in it. Countless family members had told me to forgive her. She's my mother, and I am her daughter. Family shouldn't fight, because the blood in our veins carries an innate love that can not be overcome. Though I know it is not true, for I despise my mother's very character. The traits I once found admirable soon became the reasons why I could never speak to her. Her independence made her unapproachable. Her perseverance made it so she would never back down in an argument. Her pride made her unable to admit she was ever sorry for the things she had said. Slowly, she was less and less my mother, and more and more of an ugly villain in my life. She was just a woman who never came home.

Despite my efforts to distance myself from my mother, I see her everywhere I go. I see her fingers when I flex mine, admiring the dexterous long digits that once brushed the hair out of my face. I see her ambition when I look towards my future, with the hopes of proving my worth in front of the world. And I see her in my sister, too young to understand everything, a pair of eyes brimming with hope for whatever the universe has in store for her. I cannot deny that I once hated my mother, and perhaps part of me still does. I do not know when I will ever be able to forgive her for the anguish and strife she had put my family through. I do not believe in the old traditions that all say to “respect your elders” and “forgive your family”. So perhaps the softness in my heart that I cannot get rid of, no matter how many times she leaves me, is a sign that I do not truly hate my mother. It is a sign that I am starting to understand how a woman

as talented and self-assured as her could ever feel so lost and unwanted. Her own daughter cannot look her in the eye.

One day, I will sit down with my mother and talk about all of the things we never wanted to speak about. We will laugh, and we will cry. We will reminisce about how young I was, how carefree she was, and how stupid we were to let our pride get in the way of a relationship so pure. I do not know when that day will come. That feeling of uncertainty creates an itch so deep within that I cannot stand to sit idly as I watch the world spin. But I know neither of us are ready to talk. Our wounds are fresh, and the hurt is real. I hope that I'll be mature enough to recognize when we are both ready. I don't like waiting, as I am quite an impatient person. After all, I am my mother's daughter.