

MY MOTHER'S HURT

Often father and daughter look down on mother(woman) together. They exchange meaningful glances when she misses a point. They agree that she is not as bright as they are, cannot reason as they do. This collision does not save the daughter from the mothers fate - Bonnie Burstow

The first time I read this quote I was in university and I got so triggered I had to leave my phone and go crochet for a while. I had been that daughter and I had followed the exact same pipeline.

My mother got separated from my father when I was 10yrs old. My dad would still come to visit and I loved it when he was around. I was his golden baby, his baby girl and he would dote on me, buy me snacks. The whole time our school fees were not paid but he'd be so extravagant with what I wanted. To me that proved that my dad loved me more than my mum. My mum to me seemed too frugal to the point of mean I know now that she was the sole breadwinner and my dad was just a placeholder.

On one of his visits I remember we were in the sitting room while my mum was in the kitchen cooking. We were all sprawled on the couches, tired from the walk we just took with our father. My brother and I thought my dad was so cool since he'd take us on these spontaneous walks and he'd buy us whatever we wanted on the way.

My mum left the food simmering and came to sit with us. She then proceeded to ask my dad for money to do her hair. I remember laughing in a very stupid way(cringing even at the memory) and asking my dad not to give her any money since it wasn't his head getting plaited. I thought I was being funny especially since my dad always agreed with me and took my side. We even had a running joke about how much my mother loved yelling and we'd bet how soon she'd start yelling as soon as she got home and when she did we would exchange looks and laugh with our eyes.

She obviously didn't laugh at my pathetic excuse of a joke. For the first time I looked at my mother and saw a coldness I had never witnessed. She served us food and went to bed immediately. She had none of it herself. I felt my heart sink, I had hurt my mother.

Being my fathers baby girl didn't stop him from hurting and abandoning us ,same way with always taking his side. To say I was naive would be to hoodwink since I was an aware kid for a long time. When my father used to be abusive I remember always telling my mum that we could always leave him and go start a new life together and she did only for me to side with him anyway. I guess it was like betrayal in a way to her.

It's been over 10yrs since the incident but it's one of those things that fundamentally change you as a person ,makes your character what it is and for me that is being conscious of how I interact with men. Especially men who give me the validation my father did. He was big on literature and through him I got my love for books. My mother on the other hand didn't care much for the arts and she'd tell me to quit singing and go study or to stop writing my silly novels . Of Course she had reason for making me value education since she never got to finish high school because my dad got her pregnant.

We rarely talk about that day but in a way I guess this is an open apology letter to my mother. I understand it now, I didn't then and I'm sorry my understanding came at your expense.

Paris Paloma has a line in her song Labour that says "If we had a daughter ,I'd watch and could not save her,the emotional torture from the head of your high table.She'd do what you taught her shed meet the same cruel fate" she did try to save me ,my mother but in the end even the best of us fall short,or fall far down below from patriarchy's pedestal.