

RESTWORDS

For David

A sample eulogy, written to show our approach. This is not a real person.

My dad wasn't one for big speeches. So it feels strange to be the one giving this one.

I'll tell you what he did instead of talking.

For thirty-one years he left the house before six in the morning. And every night he came back through the same door and asked the same thing: "Who needs me?" Some nights it was a flat tire. Some nights a homework problem he didn't understand but sat with me on anyway. He could fix almost anything — the screen door, the lawnmower, the leak under the sink. He'd have it sorted before you'd finished explaining it.

The one thing he never got to was the kitchen stool. The third leg had been loose for years. Every time someone wobbled on it he'd say he'd get to it that weekend. He never did. I was at the house last week, and I sat on it without thinking, and it still tips, and I had to leave the room.

That was my dad. He held onto things. People, mostly.

He taught me to drive in an empty lot on a Sunday, both his hands braced on the dashboard. He didn't give advice in words if he could help it. He just showed up, and showed up, until showing up was the lesson.

I'll be honest with you, because he'd want me to be. I keep forgetting he's gone. Something small and good will happen in my day, and my first thought is still that I have to tell him. I reach for the phone before I remember. People say that fades. I hope it doesn't. As long as I'm still reaching for him, he's close.

If you knew my dad, you knew you could count on him. That is a rarer thing than it sounds. So many people pass through a life. Only a few of them are someone you could build something on. He was one. I'm standing on it right now.

So thank you, Dad. For getting up before the sun. For the homework, and the leak under the sink, and all the things you fixed before we knew they were broken.

We'll take it from here. You taught us how.