

Emma clutched her cup of coffee. Tighter. Tighter. She stared grimly at the letter. The letter that had changed her life. Ever since her father's passing, Emma hadn't eaten. She hadn't showered, and she had hardly moved at all. Tomorrow was the day of her dad's funeral, and she was NOT ready. She thought what a silly idea funerals were. Were they just to remind everyone about a loved one's passing and increase their sadness?

Emma took her seat. She tried to find the furthest seat at the back, so she wouldn't have to keep enduring the pain. She could hardly say her sweet, sickly speech without cringing.

"Don't these people understand what I'm going through?" she thought.

Emma stepped onto the stage, bracing herself as she prepared her palm cards. She began to speak.

"...he was a kind, caring, and compassionate man - my father."

Emotion welled up inside her, and before she even realised, tears were streaming from her eyes like a rushing waterfall. Then, time seemed to freeze. Everything was still. Emma looked up at the picture of her beloved father, and a bittersweet realisation washed over her.

How long was she going to keep living like this? How long would she suffer under the weight of his absence?

Would her dad want her to live like this?

No - whatever he might have thought, she knew one thing for sure: she didn't want to keep blaming herself for his death.

Yes, she could be sad. But why dwell forever on one moment, one loss?

She was going to cherish her time on earth - to live fully, even without him physically beside her. And somehow, in that quiet stillness, she could feel his spirit smiling down on her.

Emma wiped her tears, and time unfroze. She continued her speech, but this time with a renewed sense of sadness - where sadness meant learning and enjoying life to the fullest.

Though she might have still felt pain, but at least it was no longer just sorrow. Emma finally smiled for the first time since her father's passing, and remembered all the love he had gave her, finding her strength again. Every word she spoke, Emma felt a little bit more whole, like the presence of her father was growing stronger and stronger.