

CAFÉ SADNESS

by
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Selena stared out the window of the small café looking at the rain as it fell gently from the sky. The clouds were dark gray. It was a cold and lonely day. It had been like this since she got up in the morning. She felt exactly the same way inside.

In front of her was a cup of cold coffee she had forgotten about. She was deep in thought about what was happening in her life.

Selena was startled when her waitress approached her.

“Would you like some more coffee?” the waitress asked.

“No thank you,” Selena replied, and then turned and stared out the window again at the falling rain with her chin in her hand.

Selena was four when her mom died. Her dad had always been there for her. Now, she could not stop worrying about him. He was only 49. She needed him. What would she do without him?

Selena looked across the street and watched the people going in and out of the small shoe store. It reminded her of when she was a little girl. Selena started working for her father in his shoe store when she was just 10 years old.

Every Saturday, she walked to work with her dad. He owned a shoe store in the town where she grew up. It was very similar to the shoe store across the street. Selena liked being with her dad. She also enjoyed helping the customers choose just the right shoes. Her dad

paid her \$1.50 for every pair of shoes she sold. The most money she ever made in one day was \$15.00. She had sold ten pairs of shoes that day. She grinned a little as she remembered her childhood.

Selena's dad taught her how to save her money, and how to use it carefully. Each week, after she came home, she wrote down how many pairs of shoes she had sold and carefully counted all her money. Her father taught her how to take care of her money and taught her how to make a budget. She put most of her money into a savings account that her dad opened for her, and she kept a little to spend on things she wanted. She did not need that much so most of her money went to her bank account. It did not take long for her savings to grow.

Selena's dad started talking to her about college when she was just 10 years old.

"It's never too early to start planning for your education," he always said, and now she realized that he was right.

Selena saved the money her dad gave to her. She did not touch the money in her savings account until her graduation day from high school. On that day, she spent some money. She bought her dad a special present for putting up with her during her teenage years.

When Selena looked at her account, she felt as if she was rich, but not for long. Her dad agreed to pay for her tuition at college each semester, but Selena would have to pay for her textbooks and other personal expenses.

Selena did not think that money for books would be that much money, but when she went to the bookstore that fall, she was surprised to find out how much it costs to go to college!

She was nearing the end of her first year of school. She planned to get a summer job to help her dad, but now things were different.

She could not stop thinking about her dad. She was living at home with him while she attended college full time. She had never thought about losing him.

It was last night at 8:00 pm when her father grabbed his chest and fell back into his

favorite chair. It really scared her. The paramedics came and took him to the hospital. She went along and waited in the lobby of the hospital until the doctor came out. He said it was not anything serious this time, but her father would have to make some changes in his life in order for this not to happen again.

Now Selena's outlook on life changed. She knew things would be different. She skipped school that day so that she could sit in her favorite café to think. She was so scared about her father. Her head was full of questions.

She asked herself, "Do I need to start taking care of my dad? Do I need to cook him healthier meals? Should I start exercising with him? What if this happens again? What if he dies? What will I do?"

Selena was making a list of important matters to discuss with her father. She needed to know what to do if he was gone. She needed to know how to take care of him now. She needed to know how she would go on without him. She needed to know so many things.

She already knew what he would say when she talked to him next.

"Oh, don't be silly. There's nothing wrong with me," he would say

She would then give him the speech about not making things seem better than they actually were. And THEN he would listen. She would ask him her questions. He would answer them, and then she would wish she was ten years old again.

Selena sat in the café most of the day. She was not hungry, even though she had not eaten all day, except for a muffin and the coffee that was in front of her.

At about 4:30, Selena looked up from her list, which was stained with tears making it hard to read. Standing in the rain outside the café window was her father. He looked through the glass at her. He gave her a nod and a smile. She smiled back at him and tears streamed down her face.

Her dad came inside and sat down across from her. They did not say anything at first.

"How did you know where to find me?" Selena asked, surprised that he was there.

"This is where you always go when you need to think. I found out you weren't in

school today, so this was the most logical place to find you,” her father answered.

He saw the napkin she was writing on and asked to read it. He just looked at the paper, trying to make out the tear stained words on the paper.

He reached across the table and gently wiped her tears away, and said, “I’m okay for now, but you’re right, we probably need to talk about some things.”

He smiled at her and gave her a big hug.

Selena thought, "I'm so glad I didn't have to give him that speech."

VOCABULARY: (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. café _____ | a. well, not sick |
| 2. waitress _____ | b. monthly costs |
| 3. budget _____ | c. cost of college education |
| 4. graduation _____ | d. place to keep money safe |
| 5. bank account _____ | e. finish school |
| 6. tuition _____ | f. monthly money plan |
| 7. expenses _____ | g. people who buy things |
| 8. paramedics _____ | h. female restaurant server |
| 9. healthy _____ | i. small coffee shop |
| 10. customers _____ | j. emergency medical staff |

TRUE / FALSE:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Selena was thinking about her dad. | T / F |
| 2. She was very happy. | T / F |
| 3. She had a lot of money. | T / F |
| 4. Her father used to own a shoe store. | T / F |
| 5. Selena enjoyed selling shoes and helping the customers. | T / F |
| 6. Selena sold ten pairs of shoes in one day. | T / F |
| 7. Selena bought a special present for her dad. | T / F |
| 8. Her father died. | T / F |
| 9. Selena was looking for a summer job. | T / F |
| 10. Selena had to pay her college tuition. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. Where was Selena when her father found her? _____
 - a) her apartment
 - b) in a café
 - c) in the shoe store
 - d) at school

2. What happened to her father? _____
 - a) he had a heart attack
 - b) he quit his job
 - c) he was in a car accident
 - d) he moved to another city

3. What did Selena save her money for? _____
 - a) food
 - b) clothes
 - c) music
 - d) college

4. How did Selena earn money when she was young? _____
 - a) selling flowers
 - b) selling shoes
 - c) asking people for money
 - d) looking for money on the ground

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Where was Selena when her father found her?

2. What happened to Selena's father?

3. What did she write her questions on?

4. What did Selena have in front of her?

5. How did Selena's dad know where to find her?

6. What did Selena buy with her money?

7. How old was Selena when she began to work in the shoe store?

8. What did the doctor say at the hospital about Selena's father?

9. What was the weather like on that day?

10. What did Selena eat in the morning?
