

## What's a Father?

The day you were born, his life changed. He traded in his motorcycle for a minivan and said goodbye to his childish past. With tears in his eyes and a sweat drenched t-shirt on, he stayed up every night for weeks wondering what the future would be like. His beautiful apartment was turned into a garbage dump as dirty diapers and old baby food surrounded him. His fun loving wife had turned into a possessed mother who only cared about you. You were a little bundle of joy that he had to protect.

On your first day of football, he couldn't watch. Imaginary butterflies flew through his stomach as his nerves got to him. He could barely see your little body as it was hidden behind all your football gear. Every time you finished practice, he would always be there to pick you up. With a sparkle in his eyes, he would treat you to dinner and talk about football for hours. When it came to injuries, he would always sooth your worrisome mother by telling her that pain was a part of the game. With his callous filled hands he would tuck you in at night and check under the bed to make sure that all the monsters were gone. You felt safe, and slept soundly. He was tired, but chose to work late into the night.

Years flew by and you grew. Your voice grew deeper and your body grew larger. His hair became grey and his stomach began to grow. Time became a figment of his imagination. He turned around today and saw you in your vibrant varsity jersey. His eyes widened as he couldn't believe you were a senior. With a gentle sigh he sat down this morning and wondered if he did everything he could to raise you right. After 16 years of your life, had you become a respectable man?

With a confident stride in your step, you greeted your father this morning. You stood up tall and let his eyes meet your eyes. You let him see the goodness that has developed in your heart and the knowledge that has developed in your head. You showed him that you will protect the family name and that you will cherish it. But most importantly, you gave him a hug and told him that you are thankful for everything he has done for you.

I love you dad.

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