

## Bittersweet

By: Bennett Herda

My house felt empty, but full at the same time. My heart was broken. The silence was filled with my own thoughts and my dogs barking. I missed my friends, but I missed my family more. Just sitting there, wondering when my dad would come out of the hospital. I felt the urge to cry more than I ever have in my whole life. Knowing that tomorrow, I would have to go back to school and live my everyday life with this heavy burden was harder than words can describe, but crying would only make things worse. After all, my dad's heart was in a worse condition than mine.

Before my grandparents came over to spend time with us in the afternoon, I felt a rush of warmth I couldn't explain. My heart suddenly felt light, like something had lifted off my chest. Not knowing what to say, but knowing that God was with me. I closed my eyes, laid back on my couch, and just let God have his time with me. I read a Bible verse in my head, and it was, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10.

My mom came back home from the hospital at night, which made me feel a lot better. "If only I could go see my dad," I thought to myself. I wanted to be there for him like he would be there for me. Turns out, I was going to be able to see my dad in the hospital, just not for a couple days. The wait was worth it and not at the same time. Seeing my dad laying in a hospital bed, bandages all over his body, and nurses tending to him made me have goosebumps. The moment was bittersweet. Finally being able to see my dad after waking up early in the morning a couple days before to say goodbye to him, not knowing if that would be my last time talking to him was something I am truly grateful for. Living in a world without my dad would be a world not worth living in.

During one of the days while my dad was at the hospital and I was at home, my mom called me. I immediately picked up the phone, not knowing if what she was about to say to me would change my life for the better or for the worse. She told me that my dad was coming home from the hospital. My heart dropped. I was so excited. The wait was unbearable. I heard my mom's car pull in the garage, and so did my dogs. They wagged their tails more than they ever have in their whole life. He walked through the door, my mom's hand in his. The whole house lit up. My life was finally back to normal.

Having to man the house and live with the fact that I might never be able to see my dad again was something I feel prepared me for the struggles of life. Sitting here now reflecting back on this time in my life made me realize that you really have to find the good in the bad. When I walk downstairs and see my dad eating dinner with my mom, I imagine how sad it would be if my dad wasn't there and my mom would have to eat dinner by herself. I am forever grateful to all the people who helped me through this hard time in my life. I can't imagine where I'd be without God's intervention.