

## Castles In The Air

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*Betty Cuanalo*

“It is too late, just make sure he gets quality life from now on”, said the doctor... but his words were more like a knife ripping my existence apart. I could not assimilate nor perceive, let alone articulate a single word out of my brain. It was clear and painful, that I had to let go of him. His immortal presence, seemed like a lethal weapon crushing my shadow.



I remember asking him in an inconsolable way: “What am I going to do when you’re gone?” My father responded joylessly kissing my hand, “You will be splendid in anything you do, you are my best creation. I will love you forever and I know you will be fine.”

All I could think of at the time were the everlasting memories that nurtured me as a child. He would take me everywhere. I remember tasting and savoring his colorful adventures during which I would explore all of my surroundings, and all of a sudden his adventures would become mine. Exotic places indeed I discovered. The views were fascinating and the interesting and charismatic people I met expanded my horizons to the fullest.

Having the world at my feet, caressing a warm smile from everybody, making castles in the air, would make me feel like a princess among knights.

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On the other hand, my circle of love shattered when my parents decided to separate thus leaving a broken spirit of love around me. Everything became sordid. Then I found myself interrupted and disconnected from everybody. Consequently, I started feeling as if all my bones were being fractured and smashed up against the wall at the same time. Therefore, the castles in the air started to vaporize gradually into thin air.

In the same way that my parents had dissolved their castles in the air, one day as an adult, my bubbles of happiness popped unexpectedly, giving my life an abrupt transformation when my family became untied, disunited.



Undoubtedly, my best friend was once again there for me. I remember vividly that whenever life would surprise me with some exasperating news, or at any time I was struggling through hard times, all I had to do was hold his hand and bare my soul in his love and support which lifted me up through all the hopeless moments.

My father helped me to see and judge circumstances in life from a different perspective. I was able to comprehend things better, instead of just hallucinating and daydreaming like I used to do when I was a child. It became clear to me that life every now and then throws unexpected surprises at you, but at the same time I knew that life goes on.

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Furthermore, as trees grow old, so did my best friend. Seeing the monstrous cancer taking his life and breath away was something I was not prepared for. Being a witness, seeing someone very close and dear to me, being disintegrated little by little, left a profound lifetime scar. Watching my father trying to fight the incurable disease and knowing that he had so much passion for life, left me with a feeling of emptiness and helplessness, which consumed my spirit slowly with an unbearable pain.

Certainly, having my best friend by my side helped my soul tremendously in defeating my demons. He would always make sure I was on the right track so I could endure until the end.

I realized that being part of the real world and going through all the struggles that life itself presents to you as an adult, has taught me many lessons, despite the challenges and troubles.

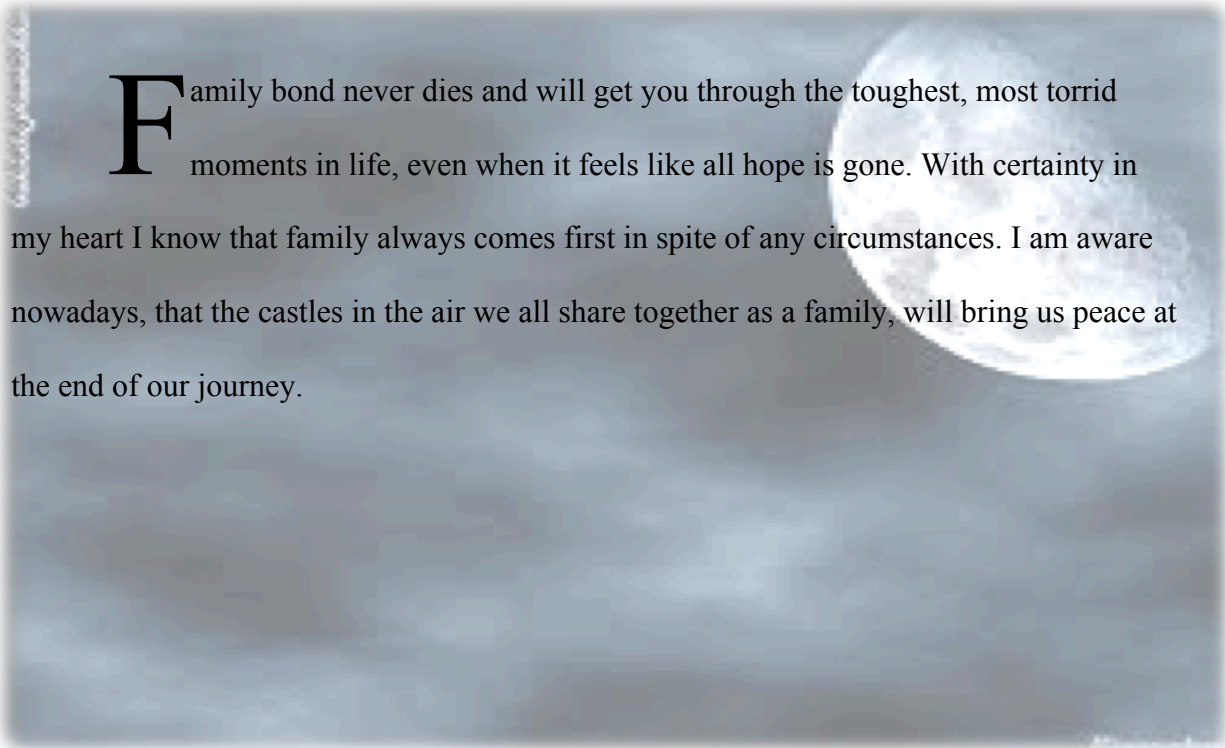
Now, I am conscious of his lovely heritage that he passed onto me throughout my life. He walked me through gloomy days with his unconditional love and wisdom, for that, I will never let go of the bonding that I had with my father.

However, knowing that my best friend is in a better place, brings peace to my mind and spirit. Most important, it is the strong affection that we always shared. All of the everlasting memories and the priceless love that my dad bestowed upon me, will remain eternal in my heart.

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**F**amily bond never dies and will get you through the toughest, most torrid moments in life, even when it feels like all hope is gone. With certainty in my heart I know that family always comes first in spite of any circumstances. I am aware nowadays, that the castles in the air we all share together as a family, will bring us peace at the end of our journey.

