



Dead Dads Club

Visual Arts and Literature Zine for
those who have experienced loss

Curated by Katherine Leung

Dead Dads Club Volume 1

Call for submissions ended November 29, 2019
Magazine was completed January 26, 2020

Dead Dads Club is a collaborative visual arts and literature zine that showcases the work of artists and writers that have experienced the loss of a father or father-figure. We honor the nuanced experiences and showcase them in a volunteer-run juried-submission print and online zine. The mission is to use this platform to uplift artists/writers and their work as well as foster a space for grieving and unanswered questions caused by the loss of a father or father-figure.

Featuring work by:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| David Wyatt | Austin, USA |
| Meadhbh Hayden | Galway, Ireland |
| Megan Tresca | Providence, USA |
| Rachel Lowes | Welwyn Garden City, England |
| Seren Kalila | Middletown, USA |
| Elaine Hulihan | Cleveland, USA |
| Orla Clancy | Ballingarry, Ireland |
| Pit Kinzer | Markt Rettenbach, Germany |
| Rainey | Philadelphia, USA |
| Ruth A. Keitz | Los Fresnos, USA |
| Emi Night | Philadelphia, USA |
| Katherine Holmes | Chicago, USA |

Cover Image: Emi Night



Untitled
Megan Tresca

After all, it was always about us

David Wyatt

Like most men of my age or older, I didn't really understand my father. While we were all watching Phil Donahue and "Terms of Endearment", getting in touch with our feelings and analyzing the family, he was busting his hump and generally playing the heavy. It wasn't until his final moments that I realized he was the most vulnerable one of us all.

Like most men of my age or older, I didn't really understand my father. I was the third of three boys, the 'surprise baby' that came along when my dad was 40. At that point he was well-along in his banking career, pulling himself up and out of the poverty he'd grown up so ashamed of. His father was an alcoholic and had utterly let him down. As the oldest, he therefore became the defacto man of the house, joining the military and serving in Korea to put himself through college via the G.I. Bill. From when he and my mom met, perhaps before, his life was about providing. But to me at the time, he just seemed to be tired.

As the baby of the family, I was a happy-heart. I watched cartoons and played the family piano. I drew and I cooked with my mom and watched her soap operas. While I was the picture of the comfort and safety my dad had never had and for which he worked every day, I never felt like we understood one another. I was very communicative and he... was very not. He was fairly stoic, always sort of watching from the sidelines.

He was fairly stoic, always sort of watching from the sidelines.

While we were all watching Phil Donahue and “Terms of Endearment”, getting in touch with our feelings and analyzing the family, he was busting his hump and generally playing the heavy. It was he that had to make all the unpopular decisions about money and moving. So naturally, we sided with our mother, who is a creative soul and who we saw as the underdog in our story.

Dad wasn't like a Clint Eastwood type. He didn't grab our arms or whisper-yell at us through his teeth. He didn't forbid us to be ourselves. Not me, anyhow. But he just wasn't in touch. He didn't take a knee or give us talks about anything important really — besides finances. He was a quiet man and maybe a touch impatient. As a small boy, I remember trying to hang with him or help only for him to get hassled in an Alan Hale (“The Skipper”) sort of way.

This became how we type-cast him. To us, he was the odd-man-out. The hard ass. He was the subject of our jokes. He was the Darth Vader to our Rebellion. And as we got older, we'd roast him a little more openly. But we were still sort of afraid of him. I don't even really know why. My mom would perpetuate this idea that he “just couldn't take it” if we were to talk about the brother who was not yet out of the closet, for example. Or that Dad would “come apart” if he had to talk about his own father. We took her word for it.

Then, when he was diagnosed with bone cancer the spring after retiring at age 68, we were all so caught off guard. The leathery giant we'd always feared and teased both... was suddenly, shockingly vulnerable both physically and emotionally. This is a guy who would slice his hand open and barely wince. Now he was losing his hair, his left, and his life.

We didn't really have the footing to start speaking from the heart as it was clear the treatments weren't going to save him. I think we each tried in our own way, him included. But he especially didn't know how. In the rear-view mirror, objects are much closer than they appear and this was especially true with him. As a child and teenager, I wanted him to be fun and silly, but he had no context for any of that. His dad was a selfish drunk who only called when he wanted money. I can see now that Dad was doing his level best to keep his eye on the prize and probably did feel like sensitivity and openness were luxuries he did not have. Most importantly though, he was present. He had always taken the time to do things with us even if they weren't the things we had in mind.

It was December of 2000 when we finally brought in hospice. In his final weeks, he started to move into his memories, not talking to us about them but seemingly experiencing them. And it was only then that I could see him as the little boy he had once been. And then a couple of days before Christmas, he started slipping out of lucidity. Gathered around his bed, before he eased into his final slumber, he uttered his last words, which defied everything I had always told myself about him. One short sentence that was so beautiful and perfect undid a lifetime of distance and uncertainty. It healed most of the wounds I foolishly thought he'd inflicted. In his purest and most unguarded, final gesture to us — his wife and his ‘babies’ — he finally said to us what he'd shown to us in innumerable ways our entire lives. Always a man of economy and few words, he summed it up succinctly. After all, it was always about us.

“It was such a pleasure.”



Pre-School
Megan Tresca

Burn it all and leave

Meadhbh Hayden

My dad passed away unexpectedly about a year and a half ago. These poems were written in the first few months after he died, and describe what it was like for me, and my family, to learn to live with unending grief and to learn to live without my dad. The poems are sad, but for me, they are cathartic and create sense.

Inside the circle of stones
Scrape down to your bones
Burn it while the sun sets
Leave only what time forgets

The breezes will take the remains
Watch the ash wither to grains
Feel the dust seep out of your skin
Know it is the only way to begin

Flickering out into the blue light
Lose all the grief to the night
Hold the pain down in the centre
Allow the cooling air to enter

Burn it all and lie
Into the soil
Burn it all and cry
Tears that boil

Burn it all and heave
The body to the hearth
Burn it all and leave
The rest to the earth

Burn it all
and leave.

Nobody sleeps in this house

Meadhbh Hayden

It's late now but
Nobody sleeps in this house
Instead they
Strum a guitar
Look for wine
Watch another movie

Nobody sleeps in this house
But there is tiredness here
Where grief seeps from the walls
And it gets dark before the evening
And the sadness pulls out of them
Like the moon tugs at the sea
Enough to exhaust anyone but
Nobody sleeps in this house

Nobody sleeps in this house
What keeps them awake
Is what keeps them from being whole
What will be here forever
Drifting in from the garden
Steaming up the windows
Making the doors swing

Nobody sleeps in this house
What keeps them awake
Will follow them from now on
And even when they lie in a bed
And try to close their eyes
It will creep out from underneath
Crawl to the opposite corner
And sit.



I don't want to know

Megan Tresca

My work often examines the topics of grief, anxieties, and oddities. It explores feelings of loneliness and social weaknesses. Art is my outlet for externalizing my inner feelings and personal experiences.



An Open Letter to my Father

Seren Kalila

An Open Letter reflects my process of learning to grieve my dad and learning to live with the many contradictions he created for me. I've tried to use this piece as a way to make space for both my sadness over losing the good times he gave me as well as my anger over the ways he mistreated me. In the two years since I stopped living with him, I've written a lot of pieces about him, but this is the first one that has really started to capture the complexity of our relationship.

Goliath

Rachel Lowes

Angels remind us of passed loved ones. This image and its counterpart are representative of my daughter's father who was killed tragically through knife crime.

An open letter to my father, who was abusive but also loved me
who both failed and succeeded to raise me.

It's been two years since I lived with you and I still only survive
Father's Day by pretending that it doesn't exist.

See, in my ideal world there was never a day to celebrate you because
every day is a minefield of the scars you left behind
Toasting to each one of them with puddles of tears.

Every moment, second, minute, I'm trapped - me with you, a delicate
balancing act
but I have now learned to wear the clothes I left with you.

I think it's wrong they aren't stained
But you stole my innocence and the right to the narrative of a bloody
white dress
I don't get a story like this.

I don't get easy, not love, not forgiveness, a happy ending.
But no one said anything about not stealing them for myself.

It's been two years since I left you and I still suppress the urge to
vomit every time someone says "daddy" and smirks
I shouldn't have to go into detail about why this is horrible and I
mean you always said you understood me
Without explaining that maybe you got it because you knew where
my disorders came from in the first place.

You didn't just steal my innocence you took my chance at a happy
childhood
You made me someone else's inspiration porn instead of a birthday
party
Because my happiness will always be a miracle instead of hard work
Tell me, are you proud of yourself yet?

It's been two years since I left, just how you raised me to
And if I hadn't been your daughter I wouldn't have done it in the first
place
Brave and unapologetic, you taught me to stand up for what I believe
in
And well, I believe in a life without you.

I dream of it, I need it.
A life with you will only ever be survival
And you taught me to never settle.
So I won't.

It's been two years since I left you and some days I still can't feel
anything
It's been two years and I still kinda love you some days
Because the girl I was before the post-traumatic stress disorder was
as much your creation as mine
And you were proud of her, I know that.
You only stopped being proud when you created Frankenstein's
monster
Your own creation that learned too much
Learned you too much
Learned to leave you.

Things I learned from you:
How to love learning
How to fall into books and into love
How to make small talk at dinner parties.
And also how to be kind and somehow manipulative at the same time?

How I got something beautiful-broken from you,
And also why I don't want to have children?
How to break yourself.
How to break your daughter.
How to be brave, how to survive you, you gave me all I needed.
I wouldn't have left you without you.

It's been two years since I left you
And I am still your daughter
But maybe you're not my father.
I outgrew your woven-word chrysalis and spread my own goddamn
wings.
Don't tell me you didn't see it coming -
I thought you knew everything.

First Acorn

Elaine Hullihen



First Acorn is a woodcut printed on canvas. It is inspired by a cell phone photo my dad sent to me a few months before he died. He was excited that he had just completed one of his first carved wood pieces- an acorn. Ever since I took wood carving in college he would talk about wanting to give it a try. And now, over 10 years later, he finally began to experiment. He completed two carvings, and had started a third, before his death.

Vision of his new home

Elaine Hullihen

In the first few months after my dad died I felt as if I was taken over. I didn't have control over myself in the way I was used to. It felt like the very atoms of existence shifted and nothing felt the same. Vision of His New Home was an attempt to document what this fresh grief was like.

The visions never come if I try. They happen to me. The first one came just a few weeks after he died, I found myself looking up into the sky and heard the question: "where are you, dad?" Then the vision of him behind some clear faraway barrier, like plexiglass, waving his arms and smiling and trying to get my attention. This was just another one of his jokes. He was right there on the other side.

Then there are the imaginations. I can imagine him walking out of the woods in the backyard with one hand in the front pocket of his jeans, eyes on the ground.

I can participate in the imaginations. I can't participate in the visions.

A week ago, I had a vision. I closed my eyes and was right up against that clear barrier. Nose so close I could almost touch it. This time it wasn't clear, but the dark purplish color behind my eyes. It was much thinner than before, and soft, like a curtain rather than plexi. I didn't sense that he was anywhere near, but I kept my nose right where it was trying not to move forward or back. Every nerve in my body was alertly still, every cell waiting for the next moment. It seemed that it would have been very easy to reach out and push aside the curtain and walk on through.

It might have been the beginning of that thought, thinking I might be able to come find you, that made the vision suddenly disappear and the purplish color behind my eyes was just the purplish color behind my eyes.



Painting of the artist aged 10 from a photograph taken by her father

Orla Clancy

He was a singer but had a farm, and the horse was my mother's, and she was very gentle and would let us climb onto her back and would walk around very gently. Sometimes we needed to be rescued if she stopped walking in the middle of the paddock, and it was usually Dad who did the rescuing. He liked taking pictures of us and over the years took thousands. After he died in 1998, Mum went through his photos and sent me a few she thought I'd like, this was one. I like the 'Memento Mori' aspect of this shot, and the idea that we made a painting together, over 20 years after he passed. In memoriam Paddy Clancy, 1922-1998.



In Company of Absence

Orla Clancy

It took me a long time to process my father's death in 1998, and this particular painting from 2005 was a personal milestone. I had not known that Dad's friend writer and poet Michael Coady had written a poem called *The Company of Absence* marking my father's passing, with wonderful imagery, which is included in his anthology *'One Another'* published by the Gallery Press in 2003. I just happened to find it while leaving through it, and I must have reread it and copied it over a hundred times - how often do you find such a lovely tribute to someone you loved by someone else who loved and admired them enough to write about them? So I made this triptych painting as a reaction, it's a composite of various drawings and sketches in a strange landscape with tiny figures on horseback in the distance, and quotations from Michael Coady's beautiful poem on each part.



Gerngroß Models Zzeitensprünge: Tagtraum am Meer 2
Pit Kinzer

Storm

Rainey

I had a very tumultuous relationship with my father growing up and we are now estranged. This poem is a testimony of my experiences of mental abuse through gas lighting. An inoculation of the tumult by validating my reality and the emotional whiplash that comes with fathers that don't know how to love.

There was something violent about the way you quietly swallowed the sky.

How it was my fault your roar rattled my bones and echoed in my marrow.

“I’m sorry”, spilled from my lips like a mantra.

How I still flinch out of muscle memory from anything that sounds like you harvesting lightning.

I was so desperate and desolate for you to rain

That I nearly drowned in your floods.

And when you tried to bury me in your clouds and erode my existence

I bloomed in your darkness.

I learned through numbing myself into a state of thanatosis

While feeling the force of your teeth in me

That even diamonds are formed under pressure.

That the fractures you left on my skin from your firebolts

Allowed light to seep in.

And when you realized your grip couldn’t keep me from leaving

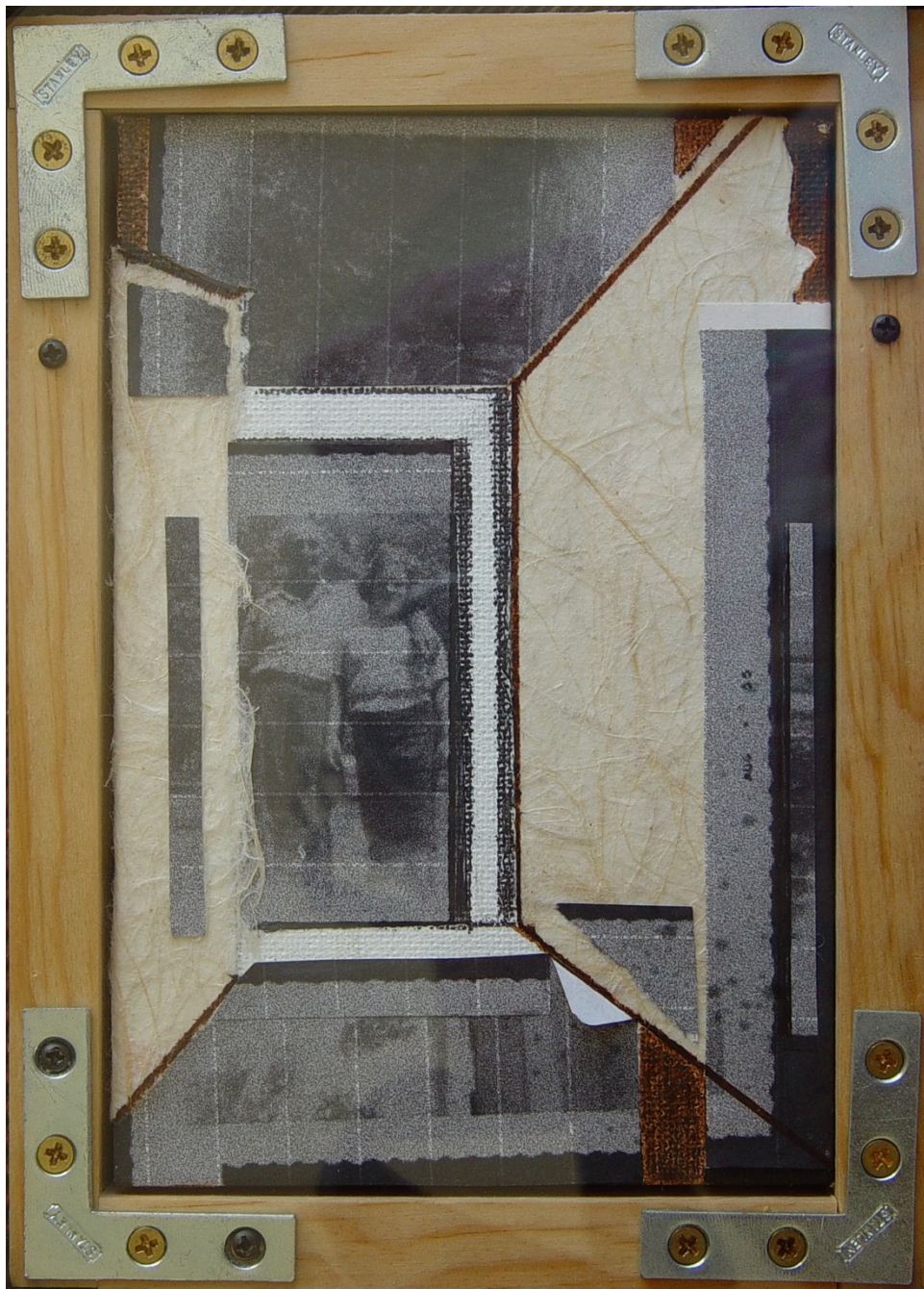
You tried to shift the ground beneath me.

As I left you burning red, hemorrhaging in rage

You hissed in my ear

“You know I love you, right?”

***There was
something violent
about the way you
quietly swallowed
the sky.***



Pop and Me from Series Postcards from the Past
Ruth A. Keitz



The "Postcards from the Past" series explores images of my family and images from my childhood: digitized photographs disassembled and reassembled into collages with mixed media. The digitizing and collage processes are parallel to the memory process which allows me to duplicate and relive and reconstruct the past.

Neutral images from the past carry with them good or bad messages depending upon their interpretation in the present. Some provide comfort. Some provide closure.

"Pop and Me," from the "Postcards from the Past" series, uses my favorite photograph of my father and me. We were at Presque Isle on Lake Erie. We had a wonderful day in the water!

Wild Man

Emi Night

A memoir that grapples with my memory and mythology of my dad
Trigger warning: Abuse, violence, language

The first cordial conversation I had with my dad lasted 24 minutes.
I was 19.

The last time I visited him before he went into hospice, I didn't want to see the facade fall —I tried to leave early. But Dad wanted to take me to the barn. I hesitated. I could tell he was pissed or maybe just hurt. I wasn't sure how to respond. "Come on, get in the truck. It'll take an hour. You've only been here two goddam days."

I thought of insisting that I had to leave. I wondered if I'd see him again. I looked at his shrunken body as he stood in the yard, waiting for my response. I felt ashamed. I got in the truck.

He tore onto the highway, yelling about other cars, people on the street, a person of color leaving a grocery store, swerving dangerously close to oncoming traffic. He nearly hit a pedestrian and then moved on to me. "Why do you need to run away so fast? What? Did your mom tell you some lies about me?" As he sped down the road, my heart sank into my stomach. I was a kid again, only this time I had a choice. Why did I ever get into his truck?

"What's the matter with you Yump? You scared? You think your old dad's crazy?" He paused before he looked me in the eye. "You think I'm gonna kill you?" He veered onto the side of the road, and back into the lane, pushing the gas.



Limestone
Emi Night

My skin felt cold. It was hard to breathe. The hairs on the back of my neck stood up when I responded. “No dad, I came with you because I love you and I want to spend some time with you. When you drive like this it scares me. Can you please be careful?” He growled and got quiet. We didn’t talk much for the rest of the day. We didn’t talk much for the rest of the year.

I didn’t recognize the old man he’d become. He was smaller than my dad, and at least twenty years older. My dad’s arms were strong, turning the crank of the printing press in his studio, shifting the long gear stick in his old red truck, throwing my brother’s head through the thin plaster wall. The old man was gray, hunched, and skinny. He had the same straight shoulders, the same veiny arms, and bony wrists, into the same strong, calloused hands, big knuckles, long fingers, broad fingernails, but he was embarrassed; he didn’t know how to look at me or what to do with his hands. My dad’s hands were precise and effortless tools — quick and menacing like the snap of a leather belt or the grip around my mother’s throat. His hands could draw anything, could write in pristine, elegant cursive; his fingers were deft and nimble in the big, colorful elastic band, teaching me to play cat’s cradle. This man wore the same pewter blue Hanes pocket t-shirt, faded blue jeans, and soft forest green cotton “Remington” baseball cap over unfamiliar wispy gray hair. His piercing, cold, grey-blue eyes were more striking than I remembered; their reflected light now emerging from the deep grey caves of his sunken sockets.

“Hi, Dad.” “Hi, Yump.” His voice, hoarse and thin, was still recognizable. I felt sick to look at him, so I hugged him. He was much smaller than the last time I’d hugged him. Some things change with time, and some stay the same. The doctors know; we’ve all got an expiration date. It’s printed on the defects, the weakest links. If you let them dig around enough, they’ll find it for you. For my dad, it was in his brain. It was in his brain and his kidneys and his liver. But it was his brain that made him crazy, they told me. Maybe that’s why he was mean. If there’s a reason for it, then it doesn’t have to hurt so bad. And we don’t need to think about it anymore.

If there’s a reason for it, then it doesn’t have to hurt

But I still think about it. Because Mike knew my dad since he was a kid. Before the cancer. He says dad used to swing the dog around by his chain. Throw him against the house. Mike says he lit the cat’s tail on fire. He says Nana locked him in the closet as punishment when he was little, but when dad was a teenager, he’d knock her down if she fought him. Mike says that he would throw Molotov cocktails from his car window, at peoples’ houses and into passing cars when the city started integrating his neighborhood. Dad thought that was pretty funny. Mike says that Nana didn’t fall down the stairs on her own, but no one asked any questions when they found her body in the morning.

I wonder if someone could be so wicked that he could poison his body with hatred. Some scholars write about violence as reciprocity. But in the case of abuse, reciprocity is disordered. The victim is a placeholder, a reminder, a messenger. Confused for the original, absent violator of the abuser’s safety. I try to imagine my dad’s basic goodness. The part of a person that we see, and the part of ourselves that we use when we love. When he was innocent, his first experience of hurt, he was a newborn, abandoned at St. Anthony’s. It was a Catholic orphanage in 1950. They kept no record of his mother, for her protection. Someone told me the nuns barely touched the babies. When he was adopted a year later, people at the orphanage urged the Knights to keep his adoption a secret. So that’s what they did.

While my dad was in hospice, I waded through his barn full of hoarded belongings: tools, books, furniture, vehicles, photographs, letters, weapons, art, computers, guitars, putrid garbage bags of unwashed clothes, four dead kittens, their dead mother, and one live bird in a cage, all incrustated with cat piss and shit — everything he bought or found to try and solve his problem. Sweat and a fog of fleas blanketed my bare legs for weeks in the August heat. I swept, washed, piled, sorted, counted, and trashed. One afternoon, in the drawer of my nana’s dresser, I found a magazine clipping. It was a short article from the late sixties about the importance of telling your adopted child the truth about their adoption as early as possible. He was 17 when they told him. I wonder if, somehow, he knew all along.

so bad. And we don’t need to think about it anymore.

In October of 2008, he called me; breaking four years of silence between us. I told him about my life, school, the bike I had just built, my cats, learning to drive manual, painting, music, and he would listen and respond. He told me about his cats, his motorcycle, a guitar he was selling, his girlfriend, his most recent lawsuit with the neighbors. We never got personal, but we were on good terms for the first time, so I called him back the next week.

Sometimes I heard his anger, the way it resonated when I was a kid; he'd get irate about an issue with the neighbors, cursing them in a cutting, icy tone with the Chicago accent he reserved for insults and intimidation. He thought someone was always screwing him over, but he knew how to get even, and he'd have the last word. Broken glass in the sand on the neighbor's shoreline. When he got worked up, it scared me. I'd quiet the way I used to. He spat threats in desperation. "Don't you love me? Why don't you ever come to visit? You'll be sorry. You're just a stupid hillbilly like your mom. You think you're smart." He'd snarl.

"Don't you love me? Why don't you ever come to visit? You'll be sorry. You're just a stupid hillbilly like your mom. You think you're smart." He'd snarl.

I hung up the phone. Nothing had changed. He was the same monster I knew. I never wanted to hear his voice again.

I didn't answer his calls for a week or two. He called and left a message. He told me about the chicken he was grilling. It was a new recipe; Lemongrass. He had tried it at a Thai restaurant in South Bend. He thought it wasn't bad. His voice was gentle. Clear, like a bell. He was singing. I listened to his voice, tinny from the little speaker in my little plastic phone, alone in the kitchen in the morning and I would cry. He knew he was sick then. But he didn't tell me until the following April.



Ghost
Emi Night

After his first operation, they put him on medication and he had to stop drinking. He told me that this might be the first time he had ever talked to me sober. I didn't believe it, but I never knew when to believe him. I had plans to visit him that summer. My mom worried for me. She knew how he could be when he was desperate, how he could lie, and charm, and manipulate people. How angry he was with her for leaving him, a decade earlier. It could all be a lie. The cancer, the operation, the prognosis. A ploy to draw me closer, to get revenge against my mom. We didn't trust him, so I told him I couldn't make it this time. He got angry. I didn't talk to him again for a couple of months, and I waited another year to visit.

In the year following our last, manic drive in the truck, he changed quickly. The medication effected his temperament. He was kinder, more placid. He rarely spoke out against anything. His voice was soft, his demeanor calm. He spoke tenderly. He told me he was lonely. He laughed sometimes. He seemed sad and afraid. Once he told me he was proud of me. That he listened to my music all the time. He asked me for extra copies of my CD so that he could give them to his buddies at work. He said that the song about my cat made him cry. It made him think of when his favorite cat, Horsey Hair, died. And why did I write such sad songs? I told him they were only sad if you believed that things could never get better.

***I told him they were only
sad if you believed that
things could never get better.***

He wanted an affirmation that someone loved him. It's easier to see that in someone when you recognize their vulnerability. He didn't scare me anymore. I knew he'd never make it out this far west, even though we entertained the idea of him coming for a visit. We talked about catching a baseball game and visiting the breweries. He was weaker, his voice was thinner. He said he couldn't drive his truck anymore. I wondered how much time he had left.

A few weeks later he had a heart attack. On the phone, he said he was doing better. He was back home from the hospital. He told me he was still scared, but not as scared as before. He said that one night when he was asleep in the hospital bed, he had a dream that he talked to God. Dad's voice was quiet and he spoke slowly, leaving long pauses for shallow, dry breaths,

"That night before I went to sleep, I prayed. Emi, I haven't prayed since I was a kid. But I told God that I was scared. I asked him what to do, how am I gonna get through this? And I went to sleep. And you know what? He came to me in my dream. I couldn't see him but he spoke to me, he said something, but it didn't make any sense. He just said, 'forgiveness.' I thought, what the hell's that supposed to mean? I couldn't figure it out.

In the morning a priest came in and gave me my last rights. It's an awful thing. But it's what we have to do Emily because when you die, you're all alone. You're alone with everything you've ever done and the things you never did and wished you did, and you've got to take it by yourself because there's nobody there to take it for you. And the priest is there to make sure you're ready to do that. And I was thinking about it. You know, Emi, I've always been so angry."

He paused for a long moment.

"But I think I've got to forgive the people who hurt me. I've got to let some of that go, for them."

He was crying. On the phone with me. I was standing on the sidewalk, in the shade of the hickory tree, on the corner of the street where I grew up. I was looking at my feet, stepping on a skinny stick, breaking it in two. I was crying too.

"I love you, Dad."

He said he wanted to come visit in August.

"You can't bring your gun, dad. Mom won't let you, and no one feels safe with you bringing your gun here."

"What the hell's the matter with you? I can do whatever the hell I want! You think I'm gonna come down there without my gun? I'm a crippled old man!"

"Dad, seriously!? Who's going to try and get you? You would be staying with us! Look, if you have to bring your gun, then you're not invited to visit."

***"Dad, seriously!? Who's going to try
and get you? You would be staying
with us! Look, if you have to bring your
gun, then you're not invited to visit."***

He hung up on me. A week later he had a stroke and wasn't doing well. The doctor said he had to stay in the nursing home and that I should come soon.

I took my brothers to South Bend to see my dad for the last time. Before I watched him die, I could only imagine if, how, and when it would happen. Why shouldn't he live forever? He was always bigger and stronger than everything, but he was as skinny as me on the hospital bed; all sunken in and shriveled, all bones and skin, stiff and slow. He was bald, except for a few cotton wisps of hair under the green Remington baseball cap. His jaw hung slack, and a long, wiry white beard reached his chest. He wore a diaper. When I touched his skin, it was cold and loose, it slid over his muscles. His hands, his knuckles were still big, his toenails long. He rubbed his feet together. His eyes were grey.

I wanted him to be a monster. I wanted him to be a victim. I wanted him to be a hero. I wanted to mythologize him but it wasn't possible.

Grief & Memory: My Grandmother

Katherine Holmes

This series represents the process of grief, loss, and relationship with memory that I've personally experienced in the last few years, after my grandmother passed away.

Artworks by Emi Night

Limestone

Because my childhood home didn't feel safe, I spent a lot of time alone outside and developed confidence and curiosity in solitude. The limestone quarry I swam in as a teenager is a place where I felt safe.

Ghost

A painting that illustrates dissociation and the terror of my dad's memory; set in the woods surrounding his farm





Contributors

David Wyatt

Austin, United States

David Wyatt is a husband, father, musician, camper, vegetarian, publicist, and coffee enthusiast living in Austin, Texas.

Meadhbh Hayden

o-matthieu.tumblr.com

Galway, Ireland

Meadhbh Hayden is a twenty year old student living in Galway, Ireland, and has been writing stories since she learned how to write.

Megan Tresca

cargocollective.com/megantresca

[@oldwelshwitch23](https://www.instagram.com/oldwelshwitch23)

Providence, United States

Megan Tresca is an artist from Providence, Rhode Island. She holds a BFA in Painting and an MAT in Art and Design Education from the Rhode Island School of Design. She teaches at a boarding school in Massachusetts.

Rachel Lowes

[@rosieisabelart](https://www.instagram.com/rosieisabelart)

Welwyn Garden City, England

Rachel Lowes is a keen acrylic portrait artist and hobbyist, newly experimenting with using gild and entomology within my works as well as crystals and feathers or taxidermy items. She has displayed nationwide in the US and sold internationally. Rachel Lowes runs an etsy shop for art and makes soy candles and dreamcatchers using sustainable and upcycled materials.

Seren Kalila

Middletown, United States

Seren is a college student with a passion for languages, writing, and the many weirdnesses of the human brain. When she isn't writing, she spends her time playing cello and piano or talking with friends.

Elaine Hullihen

elainehullihen.com

[@smeeismee](https://www.instagram.com/smeeismee)

Cleveland, United States

Elaine Hullihen is a multi-media artist who uses actions and experiences to try to touch the vibrating energy that is the essence of life. She searches for an embodied experience that fuels the creative spirit.

Orla Clancy

orlasart.blogspot.com

Ballingarry, Ireland

Orla Clancy: "I have a dual approach to making work, but observation is the foundation. I react to what is around me and what I am drawn to at any given time, and some days I am called to explore a possible narrative between random people I might have sketched or photographed, while other days I just want to draw or paint a landscape or still life or anatomy study – on the days I want to give the narrative a rest, as it were."

Pit Kinzer

www.pitkinzer.de

Markt Rettenbach, Germany

Pit Kinzer (born 1951) is a German freelance artists with more than 180 solo exhibitions and over 500 exhibition participations in Europe, Asia and America.

Rainey

@raindemitree

Philadelphia, USA

Rainey is a multidisciplinary artist that uses text and poetry to deepen the narrative of actual and fictional events.

Ruth A. Keitz

ruthkeitzart.com

Los Fresnos, United States

Elementary through high school, Ruth A. Keitz attended Saturday art classes at the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA. She holds a BA in art, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA, and an MFA in art education/studio art and a PhD in curriculum and instruction/studio art, University of Texas at Austin. She is a Signature Member of the National Collage Society.

Emi Night

@emi.night (visual art)

@strawberry_runners (music/songwriting)

Philadelphia, USA

Emi Night is an artist, writer, and musician living and working in Philadelphia, PA. She writes and plays music under the moniker Strawberry Runners.

Katherine Holmes

@katherineholmesphoto

Chicago, USA

Katherine Holmes grew up in Texas, later moving to Chicago, IL to attend DePaul University. She currently studies photography and has had work published in Architectural Digest and Vogue.com.

About Dead Dads Club

Katherine Leung

leungart.com

San Jose, California

Dead Dads Club is created and curated by California-based artist and youth arts educator Katherine Leung. This zine is created in memory of her dad, Ka Yin Leung (April 13, 1964 - October 24, 2012).



Website: DeadDads.Club

Call for submissions for Volume 2 coming out soon!