

~~not I really thought with ~~the way they say they are like two empty bowls I've had to repeatedly fill on my own I think your father will have the same effect on you. Even if you sit at the table with your dad, you won't truly eat. It will be the empty bowl that you still have to fill again and again.~~~~

~~After my mother died, I wrote a letter to my dad saying that for me to have a relationship with him, he first had to explain why he'd done the things he'd done. He had to write back.~~

~~Somehow years passed. Then one day the phone rang and there I was. I felt a numbness on the answering telephone.~~

~~LETTER WRITER #4 (to Sugar's father) HOW...~~

~~(SUGAR'S LETTER WRITER #4 to her father at the moment)~~

~~SUGAR: TICHU...~~

~~LETTER WRITER #4 (to Sugar's father) Do you watch Rachael Ray?~~

~~SUGAR: Rachael Ray?~~

~~LETTER WRITER #4 (to Sugar's father.) Rachael Ray, you know. The cookbook writer. She has to be the how~~

SUGAR: Uh, yeah...

~~(SUGAR'S LETTER WRITER #4 to her father)~~

And on it went, the most flabbergasting conversation I've ever had. My father spoke to me as if we spoke every week, as if nothing that had happened had happened, as if my entire childhood did not exist. The topics were recipes, poodles, cataracts, sunscreen. I got off the phone fifteen minutes later, utterly bewildered. He wasn't ill or delusional. He was my father, talking to me as if I was his daughter. As if he had a right.

But he didn't.

~~For all those years without him in my life, I always thought of my dad on my birthday. HOW, on the day I was born, he must have held me in his hands and~~

~~thought I probably was a miracle. He ~~must have believed he could have a better person than me~~ DEER DELORS.~~

~~(SUGAR'S LETTER WRITER #5)~~

A few days after that phone call, he sent me a chatty note over email. When I replied I said what I'd said in the letter I'd written to him seventeen years before - that I would consider having a relationship with him only after we had spoken about our shared past. He replied inquiring what it was I "wanted to know."

I wrote the most loving, painful and forgiving letter of my life. Then I pressed *send*.

My father's reply came so quickly it seemed impossible that he'd read the whole thing. In enraged words he wrote that I should never contact him again and that he was glad to be finally rid of me.

~~I didn't cry. I ~~had seen my writing, he ~~must have~~ out my front door and walked through my neighborhood to get to a big hill. I didn't stop walking until I got all the way to the top and then I sat down on a bench that looked over the city.~~~~

I had that feeling you get - there is no word for this feeling - when you are simultaneously happy and sad and angry and grateful and accepting and appalled and every other possible emotion, all smashed together and amplified. Why is there no word for this feeling? I sat for so long ~~looking at the sky and the land and the trees, thinking: my father - my father!~~ - he is finally, finally, finally rid of me.

Perhaps *healing* is the word and we don't want to believe that. We want to believe the word healing is more pure and perfect, like a baby on its birthday. And when we're holding it in our hands, we'll be better people than we'd been before. Like we have to be.

Yours,

Sugar

Sugar - Monologue #1