

Father

They said twenty minutes an hour ago. Yet here we are, still frozen on the runway. Is it so hard to fly a plane? Can no one do anything right nowadays? They're all so... privileged and constantly whining and demanding rights and whatnot just stop complaining! It used to be so much easier. I'd never talk back to my father. How could I? Why would I? Knowing the consequences? So why is it that she- Is it me? Have I been too lenient too nice too... fatherly? But wasn't that what I wanted- No. I didn't need him to love me to ask me how my day went to sit by my bed when I couldn't fall asleep to hold my hand to hug me no, that's not him that could never be him that *can't* be him he's my father. My father. Father. I'm her father. So what's changed? How can she just talk back like I'm just someone like nothing matters like I don't matter? I'd never have- but I'm not him! I don't want to be him! I hate- no, I can't say that. He *raised* me goddammit. Well, did he? Yes, no- no, he did. He did. He raised me. How can I be so cruel as to discredit all that he's done? I'm who I am because of him I'm strong and comfortable and and I have a stable job and a daughter who- does she hate me? She can't hate me, can she? I can't possibly hate him so how can she- what right does she have I'm not him! I'm better, I care, I love her, I tell her I love her but she turns away she hates it why? It's everything I could have ever wanted if he just gave me a hug was that so hard to just... to show that you care? Did you ever care?

He had to have. Yes. He must have. He was just good at hiding it he must have been I'm his kid! But what if- No. No he doesn't remember anymore there's no point. I'll never find out. He can't remember. He doesn't know me anymore but did he ever know me? What do I know about her? What *is* there to know? She's my daughter! I've raised her I've known her since birth it's been eighteen years eighteen. Yet I don't know her.

I'm him.

I'm him, aren't I?

No no no that's not right I've done everything he hasn't I've made things right there's no way but she doesn't talk to me not like she does with her mom- Her mom.

She's stealing her from me, turning her against me, twisting every little thing I've ever done I've said I'm ever going to say- Now why would she do that? You're insane. No. Not insane. I'm just my father's son. Insane doesn't even begin to cover it.

But maybe it doesn't have to be this way.

Things will figure themselves out eventually. Even if it has been an hour the plane still took off, didn't it? And soon the city lights will be too far to see and he'll be too far away to have any power over me. Why is it that he has so much power over me he's an old man on his death bed Wow. I'm pathetic. So that's how she sees me...

What did he think about me? What *does* he think about me? *Does* he think about me? Even now even after all these years I need to know I need to know. But the plane but- He'll hold on a bit longer right what's the rush? It'll be fine. She'll be there at the airport. Her face will be the first I see. And she'll smile at me. What more can I want? I love her. Maybe she'll understand that one day. That I...

He just cared in a different way.

His way.