

My Father

Dear all,

I have read and appreciated all that was written about my father so far. At first, I refused to, simply because I wanted to shut out the idea of having lost such a man. Most of you wrote about his academic prowess, genius mind, incomparable wit and endless struggle for his nation and greater Africa. Having acknowledged all these attributes at a very early age, I later realised that Papa was a 'giant' not only in the intellectual sense but as a human being.

My father was critical but humane, fierce but compassionate, sarcastic but gentle, silly, but brilliant, stubborn but loyal, but most of all he was passionate.

Behind the cynical façade, my father was one of the kindest, warmest and most giving men I ever met. I vividly remember

Dana Mafeje
Cairo, Egypt

him getting me dressed for school every day (militarily), asking me what I wanted to eat for lunch religiously (until I was 26!), never telling me to study because to him exams were for idiots, having serious chats with me without ever looking me in the eye (those of you who know him personally will relate), speaking to me logically in the most illogical situations, pushing me to excel just to be worthy of being his daughter and mostly for being my ultimate reference.

Last time I saw Papa was late 2005. We spent a week together in Pretoria. Some-

how I felt he didn't want to lose a minute, he introduced me to my South African family and friends, gave me advice on relationships, life and tennis, he even taught me his famous curry recipe. On my way back, I called my mother from the airport, crying and I told her I knew it would be the last time I ever saw my father. Unfortunately I was right.

I was always told by him that 'life isn't fair', I never really understood what that meant until he left me. I wish I had seen him one last time, I wish I had told him what a hero he was in my eyes. I wish he had known how loved and admired he was. To me he will always remain Papa, Archie Mafeje, the man who got on the pedestal and never fell down.

His daughter, Dana

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After 71 years of life, this is what Archie Mafeje would have told you:

My Way

And now, the end is near;
And so I face the final curtain.
My friend, I' ll say it clear,
I' ll state my case, of which I' m certain.

I' ve lived a life that' s full.
I' ve traveled each and every highway;
And more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

Regrets, I' ve had a few;
But then again, too few to mention.
I did what I had to do
And saw it through without exemption.

I planned each charted course;
Each careful step along the high-way,
But more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

Yes, there were times, I' m sure you knew
When I bit off more than I could chew.
But through it all, when there was doubt,
I ate it up and spat it out.
I faced it all and I stood tall;
And did it my way.

I' ve loved, I' ve laughed and cried.
I' ve had my fill; my share of losing.
And now, as tears subside,
I find it all so amusing.

To think I did all that;
And may I say - not in a shy way,
No, oh no not me,
I did it my way.

For what is a man, what has he got?
If not himself, then he has naught.
To say the things he truly feels;
And not the words of one who kneels.
The record shows I took the blows -
And did it my way!

Written by Paul Anka

God rest his soul.

P.S. I love you Papa, Dana