

# HOME AT LAST

## senior talks about her father returning home for Christmas

BY AMBER FELKINS



Late nights barbecuing, banging the drums or watching Friday the 13th were some of the few things that I use to do often with my father. It's been almost a year and half since I've seen the man I used to call my best friend. Recently, he has been spending time in a county prison in Arkansas for mistakes he's managed to clean up on his own. My father is a recovering heroin addict. I've never expected sympathy in return for my father's addiction, just the chance to talk to him for more than 15 minutes on the phone or a quick email he had hardly any time to send.

"Don't ever feel sorry for yourself; it'll get you nowhere in life," is one of the many things he taught to me. It still stands true to this day. I've stuck by this because I knew getting other people's sympathy would only keep me standing in the same place.

I've managed to gather my life together piece by piece, by getting my license, getting a job and such, but honestly, it did take some time to motivate myself to grow up; I didn't really want to. It was difficult for me to fathom the idea of becoming a woman without my father by my side to cheer me on. I was 15 when I moved in with my aunt

Through an email my father has told me that he's proud of me, but it still means the same. All I've ever

wanted is to become somebody that'll make him proud, and now I know I've managed to accomplish that much. I know that I have become that person. He has pointed out to me the things that most people in my situation wouldn't have even thought of doing. In fact I will be the first person going to college in my family with big intentions of doing something with my life.

It's made me feel as though I can do anything I set my mind to, and in time, and with a lot of work, it'll come

to me eventually. Things aren't just handed to you, no matter who you are, or what your situation is. For a long time, I used to think I deserved everything I wanted, but having a job and buying everything for myself has shown me I'd rather earn the things that I want than just receive them as a hand out. It has shown me the things I really want versus the things I think I want because they catch my eye.

I am also proud of my father. I cannot wait for him to read this

“

IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO FATHOM THE IDEA OF BECOMING A WOMAN WITHOUT MY FATHER BY MY SIDE

article and see that I don't blame him anymore for the position we were put in. He has cleaned himself up, and done everything he could to come home to his kids. Luckily, in time for Christmas.

This Christmas will be the first Christmas in three years I will be able to spend with him. Even though it's only been a year and a half without seeing him, we haven't spent a holiday together since I was 15. I'm not complaining and I'm aware that there are so many people with problems much worse than mine. I am just grateful that Nov. 28, he came back home to me and my two little brothers. There was nothing better in the world than to hug my dad. I am also grateful for the fact that I've made such good friends that have been here with me every step of the way, and I could feel the love and warmth they felt for me when they found out my dad was home.

I don't want anything for Christmas. I don't need a big meal. My one and only wish has come true. It's what I've hoped for every night before I go to sleep and now it's finally here and it's all finally over. My only advice to you is to be grateful and appreciate the people you have in your life because they aren't always going to be here and you'll regret the day you took advantage of that.



**NATHAN  
THIMMESCH**

SHOULD WE WORRY ABOUT THE WORLD ENDING?

— *find out* —  
**@ SMSPATRIOT.ORG**