

I Never Sang for My Father

That night I left my father's house forever. I took the first right, and the second left, and this time went as far as California.

Peggy and I visited him once or twice, and then he came to California to visit us, and had a fever and swollen ankles, and we put him in the hospital, and he never left.

The reason we gave, and which he could accept, for not leaving... the swollen ankles. But the real reason... the arteries were hardening. And he gradually over several years, slipped into complete and speechless senility... with all of his life centered in his burning eyes.

When I would visit him, and we would sit and look at each other, his eyes would mist over and his nostrils would pinch with emotion. But I could never learn what the emotion was.. anger or love or regret.

One day, sitting in his wheel chair & staring without comprehension at television, he died, alone... without even an orange in his hand.

Death ends a life, but it does not end a relationship. Which struggles on in the survivor's mind toward some resolution, which it never finds. Alice. Alice said I would not accept the sadness of this world. What did it matter if I never loved him, or he never loved me? Perhaps she was right. But still, when I hear the word, Father, it matters.