

## Familia

It all started when my dad went to prison. I wasn't born yet, but I couldn't imagine how my mom felt when my dad had to go. My mom was probably disappointed that he had to live with the fact that he screwed up. My dad left behind four wonderful girls. I know he was stressed and heartbroken that he would have to see his babies through a glass window. He didn't even get to hold me or kiss me on the forehead. Maybe that's when he knew he messed up really bad.

In the blink of an eye, I was five years old. My mom had wonderful news for my sisters and I. She told us we were moving to Mexico to live with my dad! The excitement running through my five year old mind was crazy. "I finally get to meet my daddy!" It took my mom maybe one day to drive there. I don't really remember the drive, but I know I was excited to meet him.

While I was sleeping, I heard my mom's voice. It cracked as if she was about to cry. "Changa, wake up! Your dad wants to meet you!" It was really strange seeing my mom embrace my dad. She finally had someone to depend on.

We got settled in with my dad. By that time I knew we were not going back to Utah. Life was going good. My mom and dad were together and with their kids. It was like a perfect family. I started growing up and I wasn't the little girl I used to be anymore. My dad and I

started to have problems with our relationship. I started saying things I didn't mean like "You're dumb, stupid, worthless," and other crazy things I didn't know I could say without getting hit with a chancla. From then on there were no more funny conversations with him. Everything had changed. The only person I was able to talk to was my mom.

I spent eight years living in Mexico, dealing with three to four hours in the border line. My mom didn't want my sisters and I to go to school in Mexico so she would wake us up at four in the morning to give us the best. We did this every day until my dad started to go downhill. Drugs started to seem more important to him than his daughters. When I came home from school, I would see him lying on his bed. I didn't even want to say "hi" to him or anything because I know he would just yell at me. The more he started doing drugs the less he knew he was losing us, again. The sad part is that my mom was starting to be a single mom again. She might have had him by her side, but she started to do everything by herself again. I thought the whole point of moving to Mexico was to be a family and have someone help my mom. I wanted to tell her this, but I knew it would crush her beautiful, caring heart.

Family is not always going to be there for you. Just know, in my life, the only family that was there for me was my mom. Knowing that at a point in my life we lived in poverty and she gave us everything we desired even though she knew we couldn't afford it. To this day, my mom is a single parent handling four crazy girl, living in an apartment, and doing it all by herself. Throughout my life, in every situation, my mom was there for me. Life might be rough and hard, but anyone can get through it with familia.