

My Reflections of Dan

“But love in time will come to all. Take your breath and break your fall. All of those who hunger will be fed and just when things are looking dark, love will come and take your heart and waken in you a promise long unsaid.” (Fogelberg. Love In Time)

As I sit here listening to his last signature CD, Love in Time, bright, full of hope, I think of an event that influenced me in a way no other has and that was the death of singer/ songwriter Dan Fogelberg. He took the words of the common person and put them in perspective, making them feel as if they could get through the tough times such as a broken heart, financial difficulties, or just life in general.

However, he is gone now and all I have left is his music. Upon learning about his death, I was perusing his website listening to some of his past successes such as “Leader of the Band,” “ The Power of Gold,” and “Nexus”, saw the memorial photo of him and underneath it said Daniel Grayling Fogelberg August 13, 1951- December 16, 2007. My head was spinning and the word “NO,” kept building in my head but then I read the letter from his wife Jean, thanking all of Dan’s fans for their well wishes; mine was among them, for the support during his battle with prostate cancer and realized that it was indeed true. A golden voice had been silenced forever. During the coming days, Communicating with other fans via Facebook and www.thelivinglegacy.net , discovered that they too were experiencing the same grief as I but something was posted on the website that gave me pause and that was that we still had his music. However, it was not the same but at least I had a part of him and that was something no one could take away.

Dan’s music was such an influence in my life in that whenever I had instances that seemed insurmountable. For instance, the death of my grandmother, which was a great blow to me because we were very close, Dan’s positive strains helped me overcome losing her because many of his songs tell people that death is not the end but part of the journey and could finally accept that I would eventually see her again.

Being bullied at school was very difficult for me because I am not much for confrontation and for the most part hid from the antagonists in my life. I was very shy when I was in high school and I tended to let

people get the best of me. However, his music was always my friend, giving me a place of refuge when I allowed those people to make me feel inferior. His music gave me the attitude that “no one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” (“Alonzo. (As Joe”)

My father’s alcoholism and his subsequent liver transplant due to Hepatitis C was an extremely trying time because he was on the transplant list for 14 months and one night we had to fly to Baylor Medical Center in Dallas, Texas at a moment’s notice. I stayed with my father for three months during his recovery. Consequently, I could always count on songs like “Leader of the Band” especially the many times; I thought my father would not make it through. The song “Leader of the Band” kept me going because of the words, “The leader of the Band is tired and his eyes are growing old, but his blood runs through my instrument and song is in my soul. My life has been a poor attempt to imitate the man. I’m just a living legacy to the leader of the band.” (Fogelberg. 1981) My father’s recovery was wrought with him getting up during the night and wandering off as the toxins worked their way out of his system. However, gradually, he was able to sleep through the night and eventually go to his appointments by himself. I felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders when he finally was allowed to come home and I knew he was the “leader” of our band once again. That song was of particular significance to me because I was never able to tell my father that I loved him because to a certain degree, I held his once alcoholic nature against him and that song made me realize that life is too short to be wasted on holding onto the past.

More recently, after the breakup of my abusive marriage, I could always count on that music to take me out of myself to a place of tranquility and peace so the healing process could begin. I had a renewed sense of being that these times were indeed temporary. Especially when I found out that, my own husband had molested my daughter. I carried around a lot of guilt in the early days of my divorce but the music, particularly the song “ Love in Time” taught me that I would eventually have a second chance to be happy again. I could also be content to know that although my daughter carries much resentment towards her father, she had met someone and was happy with him.

Now, because of Dan's music, I am very active in environmental causes such as The Wilderness Society and am trying to encourage everyone I meet to discourage the senseless slaughter of America's last vestige of our heritage—The American Wild Horse. Every time I see things in nature such as birds, or think about the plight of the wild horses, or just everyday instances, I am left wondering what Dan would have thought about that particular event.

“When you see me fly away without you. Shadow all the things you know. Feathers fall around you and show you the way to go. It's over. It's over.” (Young. Birds)

“Works Cited”

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