EULOGY

FOR

SHAREN DAYAN

Hello everyone. I stand before all of you and I am numb. I am numb with grief at the loss of my father, my protector, the light of my family, and the light of my life, Enayat Laed. I don’t know where to begin or how to express the rush of sadness, and although the past several days have been like a bad dream, in tribute to my father, I want to try and give you a glimpse of who he was, what a privilege it was to be his daughter, and to explore the possibility and hope the he is watching over us now, at peace, happy, and pain free at last.

My father had dreams for his entire life. He also had the courage, strength and resourcefulness to realize them. I was his little girl and if it weren’t for his dream of having a daughter, and if it weren’t for his persistence, I wouldn’t be here. My parents had two sons eleven years before I was born, and although my mother and father often fought about having a third child, my father’s dream was to have a daughter and here I am. I was his heart, his breath, his princess. He may have spoiled me and I may have loved it, but he also made sure to teach me the really important things. He made sure I understood and valued what really mattered in life, especially the deep, unconditional love and respect for family. He practiced what he preached and all of us are better people for having been blessed with the presence of this man in our lives.

While some of his contemporaries may have led more sheltered lives, my father was quite worldly. At the age of eighteen, he went off to Manchester to study. With him were a bunch of his peers who became some of the most successful people in our community. While in Manchester, Baba met and fell in love with a young beautiful Danish woman but my grandfather threatened to disown him if he didn’t marry someone in his own religion. He returned home from England heartbroken, downtrodden, but as charming as ever. He was classy and elegant and loved people. He would look at someone with that gleam in his eye… his eyes were so bright and expressive and so full of light and life. He loved people and he loved to party and soon his heart healed… when a match was made with him and a young girl from Isfahan named Touran Gabbay. She was a relative of his uncle and she was young. Still a school girl, on the day of their meeting, dressed in her school uniform, skipping home, she had no idea that she was about to meet her destiny. The pangs of lost love may have lingered for the Danish girl but even SHE was no match for the beautiful, kind, elegant Touran. Once my father laid eyes on my mother, everything seemed right to him. He knew that somehow he had found his home. Although she was young, the proper time was allowed to pass and my grandfather arranged for Touran’s hand in marriage for my father and within six months they were married.

My mother left Isfahan for Tehran and her new life with the entire Laed family. My mother’s exotic blend of Persian and Russian beauty gave her the mystique of a movie star… and still does. Her sweetness captivated her new relatives and she was and is loved by all. Imagine my classy, elegant, **continental** father with this “movie star!” What a gorgeous couple they made! It was clear to everyone that they were special. As my father’s family had become one of the richest families in Tehran, their star was shining bright.

Soon she was pregnant with my first brother and when Joseph was born it was a joyous event. Four years later my wonderful brother David was born. I have to say that David reminds me the most of my father. He’s a social, fun loving, sophisticated man of the world and although I love both of my brothers, I think that David will be the person I think of as I search for the essence and legacy my father has left.

In spite of their differences, my parents loved each other deeply and no matter what might have caused “discussions” or “debates,” they would always overcome whatever might have been between them. Their mutual love was like the type you might find in a fairy tale. I mentioned one of their differences earlier…. that would be **me**… My mother was 29 and had two almost teenage boys, but someone let her know she had no choice and little Miss Sharen Laed was born. Guess who was ECSTATIC. Yes…. my wonderful father had realized his lifelong dream. And like I said, boy did HE spoil ME!! This elegant, sophisticated, man of the world was reduced to…. well… the most doting father one could ever imagine. He cooked for me. He sang to me. He played with me. There wasn’t anything he wouldn’t do for me.

After the revolution of 1979, we came to the USA and our family experienced one of the most difficult times of my parents’ lives. Transition is never easy, but this one was particularly difficult on so many families and especially ours. My father made many attempts at starting businesses but none were successful. Since my mother’s family was in the jewelry business, David went to study gemology and that opened the door for the future of our family. Joseph also studied at GIA and in 1985, in a 500 square foot space, LADD Diamonds was born. Since then, with incredible determination, hard work, intelligence and an unbreakable sense of the importance of family, Ladd Diamonds has grown to be one of the most prominent businesses in Downtown LA.

Joseph proved his talents as an astute and talented buyer and David had the EYE… the gift for cutting and shaping stones. It was fitting that they worked with diamonds because they REALLY proved that together they were and are the DYNAMIC DUO. With my father as the president of the company handling the finances, he really was the glue that held the family business together. While all of this was going on I was a young girl but by the time I was sixteen I knew where my future would be, and of course my father was my wonderful, supportive, open-minded, dad. His encouragement inspired me then and continues to guide me today. Back in those days his words of wisdom drove me to seek my success. He told me the only difference between my brothers and me was “**anatomy**.” He told me that I was as capable and as strong as my brothers, and most of all he told me to learn to stand on my own two feet. I was about to find my way in a traditionally male dominated business and although I struggled for fifteen years, with the love and support of the three most important men in my life, I did it. As I think of him today and as I think of all of the love and support he has given me throughout my life, I wonder how I will be able to stand on my own two feet without him.

In 1996 my father suffered a stroke that left him partially paralyzed. That’s when life’s true tests began. We thanked God that he was still alive but it broke our hearts to witness the suffering and struggles. Although he bravely came to the office every day, his health deteriorated and his responsibilities became ours. It was like watching a flower endure its last days of blooming, but it was so much more poignant and painful for all of us…. there was nothing we could do… or so it seemed…. except there was one constant life force that refused to accept defeat…our mother, his wife and muse…our beautiful, loving, dedicated Touran. My mother had devoted her entire life to the unconditional love and care for and of my father. I have NEVER seen anything like the attention this woman lavished on my father. Her life’s purpose was clear to all of us. Her existence was one hundred percent devoted to taking care of her husband, to ensure his comfort, to make sure he was fed and clean and alive. Her devotion for twenty years has been relentless and non-stop. Every waking minute was for her Enayat. There wasn’t anything she would not do for this man and she was relentless. Her determination was clearly stronger than her own physical abilities. She pushed until her own heart couldn’t hold any more and she needed to have a pacemaker. Something had to be done to ease the situation so my father was placed in an assisted living facility… but who was there every single day? You guessed it!! Touran!! She still did everything for him… from making smoothies to buying supplies; she lived to love him and keep him alive.

But at some point even Touran’s fierce and loving devotion could not stop the deterioration. As my father’s condition worsened, we all held our vigil…. and finally, on the morning of February 26, 2016, at 9.37 am, with Touran rubbing his head, Joseph clutching his hand, and Sharen holding his fingers, Enayat Laed took his last breath. He looked so peaceful as he found his way to heaven and we remain wondering how we will ever find our way in this world without him.

It is heartbreaking to lose a parent, especially one who was so dear to all of us, but to see the unimaginable grief my mother has been going through just tears me apart. As we all sat there, my mother wept and cried, “Baba, what will I do without you? For sixty years you’ve been EVERYTHING to me and for me… my friend and lover; my father, my brother… my **heart**. “

My mother cannot imagine life without this wonderful man and neither can we. Joseph, David and I are so grateful to our mother for keeping our father alive and I am so thankful to my brothers for all they have done for my father and my mother through this heartbreaking time. Thank you Joseph and David for being the best sons any parent could ever wish for.

And to all of you, although we are so touched and comforted by your presence and by all of the kind wishes of love and support, we will never get over the loss of Enayat Laed. We will be reminded of him in every facet of every stone, in every bright sparkle of a diamond that rivaled his brilliant personality, in every fatherly gesture we see in someone else. Each time we comfort our mother we will remember that only those that have the gift to love so deeply can be so devastated by loss, and in some strange way that’s a blessing.

To many he was a charming, smart, successful and witty man of the world. He was sophisticated, determined, devoted, and resourceful. To us he was a great man and it was a privilege to call him Baba. As for me, I may have lost my crown on this physical plane but I will always be his princess. I love you Daddy (**Baba? Use whichever you would call him**). Thank you all.