

Dad, In His Own Words

OUR FAMILY MEMORIES, YOUR LIFE
AND THE MOMENTS WE TREASURE

Dad, In His Own Words

GRACE

For Dad, who always had time for one more story.

Your Story Begins

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Where it all started

I was born in a house with a tin roof and a mango tree that dropped fruit on it all night in July. My mother said I came out talking and never stopped.

Desmond · *Dad*

He was the eldest of five, so he was in charge whether he liked it or not. Mostly he liked it.

Lloyd · *Dad's brother*



The photographs in the biscuit tin

Dad kept every photograph from home in an old biscuit tin. When we were small he'd tip them out on the rug and tell us who everyone was, and the stories were never the same twice.

Grace

Growing Up



The car he saved for
1970s

Desmond · *Dad*

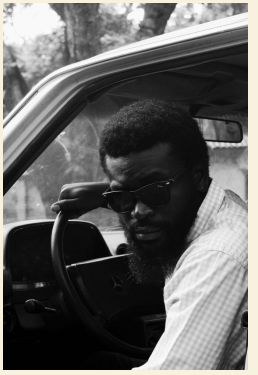
Two years of Saturday work for that car. I washed it every Sunday before church and drove it to the end of the road and back so the neighbours could see.

Lloyd · *Dad's brother*

He wouldn't let any of us eat in it. Not even a sweet.



Looking sharp



Behind the wheel



On the road



Cleaning day

His first job

I started at the bus depot sweeping floors at sixteen. By twenty I was fixing the engines. The foreman said I had good hands and a big mouth, and that one of them would get me far.

Desmond · Dad

He still can't walk past a broken engine without wanting to open it up. Mum has banned him from car boot sales.

Marcus · Grace's brother

The Life You Built



Friday night dominoes

The back room at Uncle Lloyd's

Lloyd · *Dad's brother*

He slams every tile down like it's the winning one. It almost never is.

Desmond · *Dad* · *remembers it differently*

That's slander. I am the best player in this family and everyone knows it.



The winning tile

On the very rare occasions he does win, the whole street hears about it.

Marcus · Grace's brother

Family Life



Falling in love
1979

He asked me to dance three times before I said yes. On the fourth time I said yes just so he'd stop asking, and then I didn't want the song to end.

Pauline · Mum



Becoming a dad

Desmond · *Dad*

Nobody tells you that you'll fall in love with a person you've only just met. I held Grace and thought, well, that's it now. That's my whole life sorted.

Pauline · *Mum*

He cried more than the baby did.



Bath time and bedtime



Always laughing



Story time

Every night, one story from the book and one story from Dad's head. His were always better, and always had a bus in them.

Grace



Carried everywhere

I don't think my feet touched the ground until I was five. Dad carried me to school, to the shops and up to bed.

Marcus · Grace's brother

Things Dad always says

Grace

'Measure twice, cut once.' He says it about everything, including haircuts.

Marcus · *Grace's brother*

'Leave it better than you found it.' Usually while handing me a broom.

Amara · *Granddaughter*

'Who wants a mint?' He has had a packet of mints in his pocket every day of my life.

Favourite songs and Sunday dinners

Bob Marley on a Saturday while he cleaned the car, Sam Cooke on a Sunday while I cooked. Rice and peas, chicken, and a plate of plantain he swore was for everyone but mostly ate himself.

Pauline · *Mum*

Our Favourite Memories of You



Grandad's chair

Grandad's chair

Elijah · *Grandson*

Grandad's chair is the best seat in the house and nobody else is allowed to sit in it unless they've brought him a cup of tea.

Amara · *Granddaughter*

He pretends to be asleep and then grabs your foot. Every single time. And every single time I scream.



On Grandad's shoulders

The same shoulders he carried us on, now carrying the grandchildren. He says they're getting heavier. We say he's getting older.

Grace



Looking back

Grandad showed me the photographs from when he was young. He had the same smile, just more hair.

Elijah · Grandson

A letter from your daughter

Dad, you taught me to change a tyre, to say sorry first, and to always leave the party while I was still having fun. You never missed a school play, even the one where I was a tree.

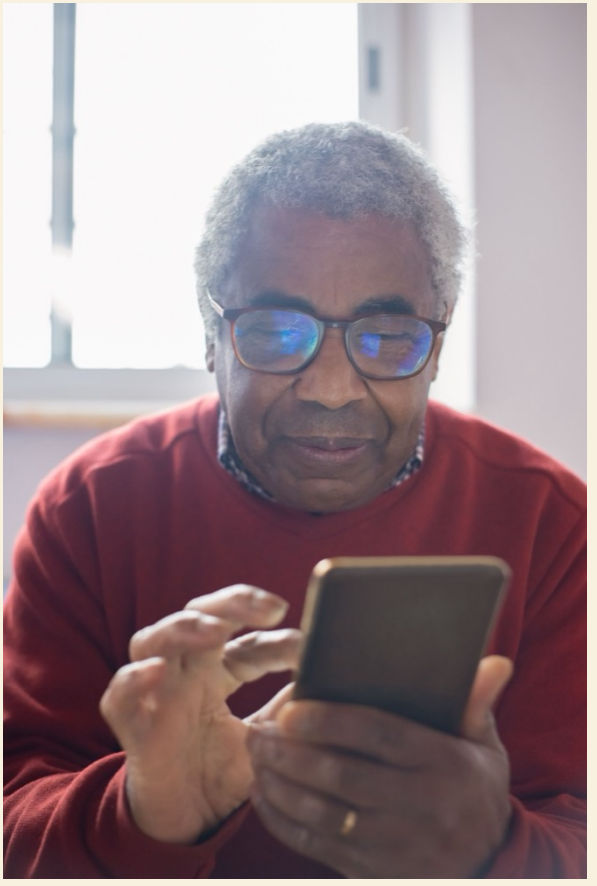
Grace

Everything good in me, I learned by watching you. Thank you for every lift, every story and every mint. We love you more than this book can hold.

Grace

With love, Grace

Always Part of Our Story



Dad's voice notes

Dad's voice notes

Desmond · *Dad*

Hear Dad tell the story of the night the bus broke down in the snow.



HEAR DESMOND TELL IT

Scan with your phone camera

Marcus · *Grace's brother*

Dad has finally learned to send voice notes. They are four minutes long and mostly about the weather. We keep every one.



Dad today

Voices in this book

Scan the card beside a memory to hear it told.

Desmond · Dad

Dad's voice notes

With memories from

Desmond

Dad

Lloyd

Dad's brother

Grace

Marcus

Grace's brother

Pauline

Mum

Amara

Granddaughter

Elijah

Grandson

Lovingly Kept

Memories made to be kept.

Our family memories, your life and the moments we treasure