My father believed in me, way before I even thought I was worth anything. He was my number one fan, my mentor, my rock. He would speak about the works of great authors and my own in the same breath! Me, a nothing me, who was still in elementary school, was told by my father how I was going to be a success like all those writers who started from step one and became what they are in time!

He saw a future for me that I couldn’t have imagined at age ten! I was just a precocious child who transcribed in pencil every feeling she felt in a little lined notebook. I enjoyed doodling with words and my father, through his leap of faith and imagination, saw a Hemingway in the making at that very elemental stage. He came upon my nondescript notebook one day and began reading it. He savored the stories I’d written and talked about them to everyone in the family who in turn all rolled their eyes. Never did I realize how anyone could appreciate something I had created as he did. By his excitement, one might think, he had just read a great literary work in contention for the Nobel Prize!

He was persistent with his encouragement. “I just knew,” he said. There’ll be no statue erected or street named after him but he is just as great as the men who have received such honors because he inspired me so. His was the strength I have taken comfort in and his teachings have provided me with the balls I’ve needed to be gutsy all these years. He loved to tell me, “You can do it!” or “Never be intimidated by anyone. His/her fart is as bad as yours,” or “You don’t need to be God Himself to do that chore.” My father passed away too much too young, way before I could thank him. He was gone way too soon and did not live to see how the future he saw for me has turned out, no matter that I didn’t turn out to be another Hemingway. To paraphrase the lyrics of a forgotten song, “If anyone should ever write my life’s story, for whatever reason there might be, my father will be there between each
line of fame and glory...” He laid out the tracks for me on that fateful
day when I was just ten years old and it is on them that I am running
my life.

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