

MY FATHER AND GILLETTE

Ferdinando Frega — Nando the Scribe

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MY FATHER

My father passed away in April 2025.

Not a single day has passed since without his presence crossing my mind.

Death removes a man from the room.

It does not remove him from the conversation.

The older I become, the more I discover pieces of him hidden inside myself.

Gestures. Silences. Reactions. Ways of looking at people.

The inheritance that matters are never money.

It is recognition.

When I was young, he used to look at me and tell me that I was capable of things beyond his own reach.

I thought he was teasing me.

I thought fathers said these things because fathers are required to believe the impossible about their sons.

Now I understand.

He was not complimenting me.

He was lending me confidence that I had not yet earned.

He saw roads I could not see.

Doors I did not know existed.

Possibilities I would spend decades trying to discover.

We were father and son.

Then we became friends.

The kind of friends who speak honestly about life, women, victories, humiliations, and dreams.

Then we became colleagues.

Conspirators connected by work, blood, and the stubborn refusal to accept ordinary limits.

Beyond everything else, we shared a surname.

A surname that now survives not because it is written on documents, but because it has entered narrative.

Entered memory.

Entered GilletteNarrative.

Sometimes I have the strange sensation that he is still watching.

Not as a judge.

Not as a critic.

Not as the man saying:

“I told you so.”

No.

More like a silent observer studying an experiment he helped create.

A son who never followed the instruction manual.

A son who repeatedly stepped outside the format.

A son whose life produced outcomes nobody could reasonably have predicted.

I miss him.

His smile.

His pauses.

His silence.

His decisions.

Those small frames preserved in memory that no archive can store and no technology can recover.

He was a Captain in the Italian Army at twenty-seven.

But rank never explained to him.

The thing that made him unique was simpler.

He was my father.

The quiet part of my existence while the rest of the world competed to make noise.

And so, I will write to him.

To wherever he may be.

Wait for me.

But not yet.

There is still work unfinished.

There are still mysteries unsolved.

There are still stories that need to be written.

One day I will arrive.

And when I do, we will laugh together.

Not about success.

Not about failure.

About the absurdity of the journey.

Because lived experience can tell stories that imagination will never equal.

Goodbye, Papa. For now.

Your son,
Ferdinando

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