



A Father's Love is Forever

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Category: Fantasy

Description: A Fathers Love is Forever

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And, of course, shes accustomed to coming to work to listen to new cases about to come on the books, often a bit bizarre.

But she wasnt quite prepared for Adam Harrison and his son Josh, the latter being among the spirits.

But theyd left the book on her desk for a reason; history can repeat itself.

And the case Josh has brought forward is for one of the men in the book shes been reading, a dead man now, but a father determined that his daughter wont be following him into the afterworld before her time.

And thus, they begin on a speedy, strange quest to find Celia Wagner before most of the world even know shes missing.

But getting to her expediently is desperate and necessary.

And the ghost of Julian Wagner will do anything he can to find her.

Because, of course, a fathers love is forever.

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Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 11:59 am

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A Father's Love is Forever

The book had simply appeared on Angela Hawkins Crow's desk.

She'd assumed that one of their agents, knowing the way she loved history, had left it for her.

It was a wonderful story at first, about a man named Martin Wagner, born 1910, deceased 1975, who had been a political prisoner at the Dachau concentration camp during World War II.

He'd fought against the Nazi regime and hidden friends of the Jewish faith and others who were political dissidents—until he'd been caught himself.

But with his then ten-year-old son Hank, he'd survived the camp until it had been liberated and the two had made their way to the United States.

In America, despite all that had happened, Martin Wagner had remained an advocate who fought for human rights and taught his son to do the same.

And that's where it had gone from uplifting to tragic.

Hank's son, Julian, had followed in his father's and grandfather's footsteps—and then been shot dead at a rally supporting veteran's rights by someone with a twisted mind.

And, of course, Angela could remember the news stories that had appeared on everything from the major networks to every form of social media known to man.

There were dozens of theories; none were ever proven, and Julian's killer remained at large.

The book had been written by Julian's daughter, Celia Wagner, who was following in

her father's, grandfather's, and great-grandfather's footsteps, despite her father's murder, speaking up against anyone practicing any kind of discrimination, fighting for the rights of all, and while only twenty-five, accruing one of the largest social media audiences in the country.

Angela was impressed.

The girl simply sounded like a wonderful human being;

she didn't rub people's noses into the dirt, she just pointed out any kind of discrimination in the wrong hands could be far more than rude, it could create a terrifying climate—that it could bring about the deaths of millions of people, including those put in camps, those brought down for protesting, and the military men and women killed in the fights that being hurtful to others could cause.

She still had her nose in the book when she entered the Krewe of Hunter offices on the Tuesday before Father's Day.

And when she glanced up, realizing someone was seated in the chair before her desk in her office, she frowned and put the book into her bag.

Actually . . .

There were two people sitting in front of her desk.

One was alive.

And one was dead.

Adam Harrison was there, in the flesh, and the soul sitting next to him was that of his son, Josh.

Josh had really been the one to ignite his philanthropist father to first become involved in law enforcement, and then, through what he had seen and learned, start the Krewe of Hunters.

Josh had simply been special, but he'd been killed stupidly in a car accident caused by a jealous high school rival.

And it hadn't been his father he had come to first, but rather his best friend.

While Josh's strange ability wasn't something that he had, Adam realized Josh had passed that ability on to a dear friend who had loved him.

And Adam had sent that friend to help solve a murder.

Then he had studied people and known there were a few more "Joshes" in the world.

Many in law enforcement.

And he started putting the right people in the right places a few more times, and then .
..

Angela and now Special Agent in Charge, her husband, Jackson Crow, had come together beneath Adam's tutelage for the first "Krewe" investigation event in New Orleans and they had simply grown and grown and now had a European division and another unit encompassing those with "special" talents within their "special talents."

And finally, years ago now, Adam had been gifted for all he had done for others through the decades.

He'd been able to see his own son.

But Angela had rarely seen—no, not rarely, never seen the two of them sitting in front of her desk together before.

“Hey!” she said, greeting Adam with a real hug and Josh with a sweep of her arms around the place where she could see his image.

She was hugged in return.

Then, just perching on the corner of her desk, she asked, “To what do I owe this pleasure? And it is a pleasure!”

“We really do need to see more of one another,” Adam said.

“But sometimes you’re running off around the world that I rather caused for you—”

“Dad,” Josh protested, shaking his head and then looking at Angela with a grin.

“I think Angela is pretty happy where she is, working with and married to Jackson, their great home and family and this place where they’re not worried about being weird and all the great people they work with!”

“He’s right,” Angela assured Adam, grinning at Josh in return. “But—”

“Help,” Adam said simply.

“On an assignment that Josh can explain to you.”

“You read the book?” Josh asked her.

“I did.

It was excellent and so sad,” Angela said.

She frowned.

“Julian’s murder, though, law enforcement tried hard back then to find whoever shot him, but in that kind of crowd, well ...

I’m not sure what we can do. Julian existed in the past—”

“As did I,” Josh reminded her softly.

He had died as a teenager, a tall teen with shaggy hair and a lanky body, a slim face and the kind of smile that could light up his face and make those around him smile as well.

Angela nodded, thinking if Josh had been able to grow up and be anything like Adam, he would have been a great force for good in the world.

She looked at the two of them curiously.

“And you are here now because you want Jackson and I to reopen the case?”

Adam leaned forward.

“No,” he said flatly.

“We’re here because Celia Wagner is now paying the price for being a decent human being.

She’s disappeared.”

“I haven’t seen anything in the news—” Angela began.

“Because I’m the only one who knows that she’s been abducted,” Josh said.

“And you try being a ghost and reporting that to most authorities!”

“Gotcha—” Angela began.

The door to her office opened; of course.

Jackson had arrived at their offices.

He’d let her off in front while he’d been parking the car.

And he didn’t appear to be surprised that Adam and Josh were there.

If he was, he gave no sign.

He realized, Angela thought, far more quickly than she had that if they were there, something was very wrong.

Hearing what Josh and Adam were telling Angela, he walked into Angela’s office, nodding to Adam and Josh.

“Let us know what’s going on.

The faster we move, the better chance we have of getting this young woman back.”

“Josh, tell them,” Adam said.

“Celia’s father came to me—” Josh began.

“Julian? The man who was shot and killed while speaking?” Jackson asked.

Josh nodded.

“Celia followed right in his footsteps.

She was speaking at an event right off the Shenandoah and so she was staying at a little boutique hotel right by the river.

She came downstairs to their little coffee shop and there was an explosion in the street and, of course, everyone ran out to see what was happening.

It was a car, no one was hurt, no one had been in it, the whole thing was a diversion.

When she ran out, two men swooped her up—one of them injected her with something so that it would look like she just went with them willingly.

Then they headed to the river and whisked her off to Virginia somewhere—according to Julian, he tried to board the boat, too, but slipped into the water instead and all he knows is that they kidnapped her and he’s terrified about their intentions.”

“The spirit who came to you is that of Julian Wagner,” Angela said.

“And he knew to come to you because—”

“Julian and I became friends because we like to like to watch sports together at a bar not far from the Museum of the American People.

Celia was just twelve when Julian was killed, and, of course, he watches over her.”
Josh winced.

“I mean, he leaves her alone, too, she’s twenty-five now, and she has a fiancé and, um, you know, he respects her privacy.”

“The fiancé hasn’t reported her missing?” Angela asked.

Josh shook his head.

“Angela! This all just happened.

Her fiancé, Sam Marinelli, thinks she’s just gone to her morning meeting.

He’s a good guy, perfect for Celia.

He’s an attorney who works hard with men and women who he believes with his whole heart are innocent of crimes for which they’ve been accused or incarcerated—hey, he brought down one of the major drug cartels by proving a young woman had been set up to take the fall in a drug bust.

But we’re wasting time.

They’ve got her over the river! Celia needs help!”

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 11:59 am

“Let’s go,” Jackson said, looking at Angela.

“Meet you at the car; I’ll let our office ‘krewe’ know we’re heading out and to deal with whatever comes in,” she told him.

Adam and Josh rose, heading out with Jackson, and, of course, greeting others in the office quickly as they left—no one was in their unit unless chosen or approved by Adam Harrison and he—and Josh—were loved and honored by all.

While they greeted others and quickly explained the situation, Angela gathered her work for the day, and made sure Bruce McFadden, often in charge of the office when she and Jackson were out, was aware of everything on her calendar.

Then she was out herself, hopping into the car that awaited her in front of the office.

She was startled to see there were two men already seated in the middle row of Jackson’s SUV, and she hesitated.

Technically, two spirits.

Josh, and a man who appeared to have been in his mid-forties at death, buried in a handsome suit.

He’d departed the earth with a headful of slightly graying dark hair and fine cheek bones along with discerning brown eyes.

“There’s room, honest!” Josh told her, scooting closer to the man.

“I’m in, no worries,” she told him. “I just—”

“Angela, please, meet Julian Wagner,” Josh told her.

“Julian, a pleasure.

I wish it were other circumstances and I’m so sorry—” Angela began.

“Don’t be sorry for me!” the man said softly.

“And the fellow who shot me died a slow and miserable death from cancer and came to me immediately, or I should say, as soon as he could find me.

And he has apologized profusely, horrified by what he did, and, in our case, well, he’s learned all about getting caught up in hate movements and I have forgiven him completely.

But my daughter! I’ve never been so afraid!”

“Of course, I understand!” Angela murmured.

“Do we have any idea of where we’re going?” she asked.

“We were hoping you had an idea; Jackson tells me you’re the true brains of the situation,” Julian Wagner told her.

“On this, I . . .”

“You know more history than anyone I know!” Jackson said.

For a moment she was blank.

She began to think of all the research she had done regarding the past when it might have an impact on the present.

Some people became criminals for earthly gain or simple revenge.

Others committed crimes because they were down and out; they felt the world had betrayed them and they looked for others who felt they'd been put upon, who sought out any kind of group or affiliation that helped them by making them believe others were responsible for their misfortunes, even all misfortunes in the world.

Concentrate on the area! She told herself.

And then it came to her.

“Wait!” she said aloud, and explained, “In some of the research I was doing for a situation there was a case in Virginia in the late sixteen hundreds ..

the witchcraft accusations and trials in Salem tend to overshadow the fact they were going on all over the colonies.

Virginia was already Virginia, I believe, from ‘Wingina,’ who supposedly from a native king in the area and many believed the god the Native Americans admired most was Satan.

The earliest accusation there was against a woman named Joan Wright, another would-be settler, Katherine Grady was hanged aboard the ship bringing her to Virginia.

Anyway, the point is, it went on, and usually, as in most cases, a group of people were unhappy and had to blame their misfortunes on others.” She took a deep breath. “Pigs!”

“Pigs.”

“Happened a few times.

Anyway, a group of angry colonists descended upon a woman named Francine Morrison who they had determined was a witch, saying she’d cursed their pigs, goats, and cattle while flying over their land at night.

In truth, she was a friendly woman, advocating for freedom of religion and trying to explain that the Native Americans grew up with a totally different culture.

They didn’t bother to formally charge her but rather brought her to a particular glen in a forest right off the river; they tied her between two trees and tortured her before lighting a massive fire beneath her.

Like I said, this was without any legal machination, it was done by the darkness of night and everyone played innocent after, claiming Satan had come to bring her home.

And, of course, court cases on record in the colonies had so-called witches being hanged, not burned at the stake, but this one—this one was just a murder committed by a group of people miserable with life.

Never made it to the courts. Those guilty of the crime got away with it because they lived in such a secluded area and there was no DNA at the time, no fingerprint analysis. . . and sorry! Here's the thing. The area where it happened is still a forested area off the river! And perhaps whoever kidnapped Celia, did so because they see her as a ‘witch,’ someone promoting a concept they don’t believe in, something that might take something away from them. If they put her on a boat—”

“Then we need to get to a boat,” Jackson said, looking at Angela through the

rearview mirror.

“Can you find this place—”

“Well, there should be a boat on the shore near their destination!” Angela said, looking back at them. And ...”

She paused, and said, “head straight west now Jackson, we know where there is a pier where we can grab a rental there, we’ve used them before!”

He nodded and put on his blinker.

Angela turned to Julian Wagner.

“How did you get to Josh and Adam so fast?”

He smiled at her.

They both knew that spirits had to travel from place to place as if they were still in their corporal bodies.

Planes, trains, and automobiles. And feet.

“My daughter!” he said softly.

“I’m still her dad.

She doesn’t hear me, but I talk to her all the time.

And when she’s in need . . .”

“And he knew where to find me; I knew where to find my dad, and we all knew how to find you and Jackson!” Josh said, trying to smile and be light.

Because he knew, of course, just how worried his friend was.

They reached the docks; Jackson had a boat rented in minutes, and they were quickly moving across the water.

Josh groaned suddenly.

“Jackson, Angela, this is crazy.

I should have made you bring more agents, I mean, what if—”

“We’ll be fine,” Jackson said.

“We can hope, and Angela’s reasoning is usually excellent, but we don’t even know if we’re going the right way, or if—”

“She’s not dead! I know she’s not dead!” Julian said.

“I’d know it; I know it in my he—sorry, I’d know it in my soul!” he finished with a whisper.

“That wasn’t my suggestion,” Jackson said quietly.

“I was about to say I can’t help but doubt this could be a huge group.

Two men slipped her away.

They may have more followers, flunkies, or whatever, but at this stage of life, Angela

and I are pretty good at what we do.”

“And it could be a gang of twenty with semi-automatics,” Josh said worriedly.

“We’ll manage what we need to manage,” Jackson assured him.

“We find too many people, we have cell phone and when we know where we are, help can be with us in a matter of minutes.”

Jackson always spoke honestly, but he could also do so with assurance.

All their time working together, sharing their family together .

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Angela admired him more and loved him more daily.

Professional to a fault sometimes, she thought, lowering her head to smile, but besides their ability to see and speak with the dead who chose to be seen and spoken with, they’d gained something almost like another extrasensory perception—and ability to read one another, valuable in risky situations.

Not to mention he was one hell of a father to Corby and Victoria, and still, she thought, further amused, tall, dark, with striking features that were a mix of his Native American and Northern European heritage.

They could come up against almost anything.

But they would handle it.

“There,” Jackson said, cutting the motor on the little boat he’d rented.

They were still some distance from the shore, but Angela knew he didn’t want the motor to be heard.

Get “Get your paddles.

We’ll just slide her in over there, by that tree with all the heavy dripping branches.

And, as far as I can see, there is just the one boat in front of that grove, couldn’t have been too many people in it, though, of course, more people could be waiting.”

“There will be more waiting. They ...she must be alive! They wouldn’t have been able to pull anything off this quickly,” Julian said.

The man’s voice sounded desperate.

Angela prayed he was right.

Like the others, she grabbed a paddle, and they began to move the boat closer and closer.

The roots of the trees stretched into the water, but Jackson was making use of the trees and the roots.

He knew the spirits of Josh and Julian would do fine; he was probably worried about Adam because of his age.

And Adam knew it, of course, quickly telling Jackson in a very low tone, “I can do it, just give me a hand.

This is perfect.

We can slip through the trees without being seen.”

Of course, it meant getting soaked but that was the least of their problems.

Angela and Jackson found a way to step between the roots, reached back together, and hiked Adam as close as they could to the shore.

Jackson kept an arm out for Adam to balance on until they reached solid ground, still hidden by a wealth of trees.

Naturally, Josh and Julian were right behind them.

“Wait.

Be still,” Angela murmured.

She could hear voices, and she was trying to determine how many.

“Watch out not just for guns, but anyone running around with a needle.

Seems like Celia was hit with a sedative of some kind, not enough to incapacitate her, but enough so that they could move her along,” Julian told Angela.

“Wait,” Julian said.

“Josh and I will go ahead and one of us will move forward and see what’s going on while the other keeps moving back to you to report.”

“Good plan,” Jackson said. “Adam—”

“I’m old but still have a heavy hand and I’m a damned good shot,” Adam told him.

“Let’s move forward.”

With Julian and Josh in the lead, they began to move as silently through the trees as possible, seeking to reach a clearing .

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perhaps the same clearing that had been utilized hundreds of years before, or one like it now.

It was about ten minutes before Josh came hurrying back to them, his voice low and urgent.

“Looks like a gathering of about twenty.

Right now, they’re rigging the trees — getting ready to string Celia up.

She’s on the ground, barely conscious.

Julian’s gone over to sit with her.

Just...

to be with her. Most of the people seem like they’re just there to watch. Spectacle, maybe. There are four guards stationed around the clearing, positioned like the corners of a square. All of them are armed. The closest is straight ahead, just right of the break in the trees. They’ve set up around the trees at angles — looks like they’re

preparing to lift her body, raise her into place, so she's surrounded... exposed to their spears, their sticks, and whatever else the others decide to throw. So—"

"The first guard.

And we're going to need your help, Josh.

I know you can rustle some leaves," Jackson told him.

"When he turns to check the noise—"

"I'll clock him fast.

He'll go down, and you and Jackson move to the next.

Jackson takes him, while I circle around the other way.

We could use Julian—" Angela began.

"I'll get him moving counterclockwise.

That'll give Angela the opening to slip in.

We all converge on the last guard—he's closest to Celia and the hanging trees," Josh said.

"And I—" Adam began.

"You will keep your eye on the first jerk we bring down and make him behave," Josh said.

“Dad! Sunday may be Father’s Day, but it’s not time for you to join me yet!”

Adam groaned softly.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 11:59 am

“You need to call Bruce McFadden for me, Feds or local police near to get out here while we’re at it, gather up the group in case some decide they want to fight it out; we’re going to try to get through this without anyone winding up dead,” Jackson told him.

“Maybe a few should wind up dead,” Adam said, shaking his head.

“Except for Celia! Jackson, Angela—”

“Saving Celia is our first priority,” Angela assured him.

But she knew Jackson, too.

Sometimes, law enforcement was in a position in which to save others or themselves they had no choice but to shoot to kill.

They all hated it.

But they hated it equally when an officer wound up dead themselves because they didn’t shoot when they could have done so.

She was personally a fan of getting someone in the ankles or knees, disabling them, taking the initial moment of agony, and seizing their weapons.

But this wasn’t that kind of day; they needed as much silence as they could manage and, as Jackson had said, maybe none in the crowd would need to die.

And they began their movement.

Slipping ahead, Josh distracted the guard.

As he did so, Angela slipped up silently behind him, her jacket wrapped around her Glock as she brought it down on his head with a massive swing.

Without a word, he fell.

Jackson collected his weapon.

Thankfully, there were forest noises all around them.

Birds and insects chirping, trees rustling in the soft, damp breeze that was swirling softly around them that day.

Josh walked easily through the crowd to speak with Julian.

She looked at Jackson and they nodded to one another and headed in their opposite directions.

She felt the soft earth beneath her feet, and she was grateful that it wasn't fall, that it hadn't been dry, and her easy footsteps could not be heard.

In a minute, she saw Julian was ahead of her, and she saw the position to the left of the trees where ropes had been rigged, where they were about to pull Celia up to hang suspended between them so she could be cut by the long-handled knives that awaited and struck with the rocks left in piles.

The makings of a fire had already been set below the position where she would hang.

Fire ...if they did it right, they could see to it that no fingerprints, footprints, or DNA remained to give away identifications on those propelling the murder.

She headed silently along the trail, feeling the touch of leaves upon her shoulders, keenly aware of even the scent of the dirt and grass and leaves beneath her feet, careful lest she trip on a root or the length of a vine.

But she reached a point where Julian nodded at her.

And she saw the back of the second guard's head.

Again, she used the heavy butt of her Glock, wrapped in her jacket, and slammed it down as hard as she could on the man's head.

And, thankfully, once again, a guard went down to the soft earth, barely making a sound.

She collected his weapon.

Julian lifted a finger; a silent communication for her to hold for a second.

She did so as he hurried through the shouting, taunting crowd to reach Jackson.

Angela did her best to study the crowd.

Just people.

Homemakers, teachers, office workers, maybe even a few leaders in tech, bankers, men, women . . .

All afraid that by someone else surviving they might lose out?

It was so difficult to fathom!

Julian gave her a nod, and she realized she was going to have to go behind the trees where the ropes had been cast and meet up with Jackson at the position taken on by the last guard.

She did so, aware Jackson and Josh would be coming from the other side.

But even as they reached the guard, two of the men at the front of the crowd were lifting Celia and she was being manipulated with the ropes, circlets around her wrists and her ankles to pull her up, up . . .

Her shoulders would wind up dislocated, along with all else.

She decided to take a chance, a chance on Jackson and their ghosts.

Instead of heading toward the last guard, she stepped out, standing right in front of the two men who were getting Celia ready, hoisting her up.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” she demanded, hands on her hips—her Glock within easy reach.

“And who the hell are you?” the one man demanded, staring at her hard.

He was about forty, wiry and fit, slightly balding—and dirty.

He must have been in on creating the rope hold in the trees and perhaps the fire.

“I’m stopping you from a life sentence!” Angela told him.

Then she shrugged.

“Maybe even a death sentence; I’m a Fed, and the Federal courts still have a death penalty, especially for hate crimes.”

“Screw you!” he shouted, and he turned to the crowd, perhaps hoping that one of his guards would appear.

“Kill her!”

As he shouted, the man grabbed one of his makeshift spears, aiming it toward Celia.

Perhaps he thought that his guards would shoot Angela.

Perhaps he didn’t care.

Celia, still drugged but feeling the pain tearing at her body, sobbed softly.

But things began to happen simultaneously.

Angela pulled her Glock.

As she did so, the spear the man was holding began to waiver and weave in the air.

Angela realized that Julian was trying to wrest it from him.

In her day, she’d seen spirits who had managed to use the power of their will to do a few things—some could push the start buttons on coffee pots, cause doors to drift open and other such things.

She’d never seen anything quite so powerful as what Julian was doing then.

“Don’t make me shoot you!” Angela charged.

And Jackson who stepped from the trees.

“Listen to her!” he demanded.

The battle was waging, and they would win it.

Eventually, Angela thought.

But in the meantime, Celia remained in grave danger if not of death, of serious injury.

“Last chance, last chance!” Angela shouted.

But the man was determined.

Celia’s arms could dislocate, or . . .

The makeshift spear could pierce one of her vital organs.

Angela used her old, tried and true method of stopping a fatal happening.

Angela fired, hitting the man in an angle.

His scream was horrendous, filling the forest.

And he fell; his spear fell.

Jackson rushed forward, but somehow, the spirit of Julian Wagner was already lowering Celia to the ground.

There were all manner of screams and shouts from the crowd then, someone shouting, “Next time, next time,” while someone else shouted, “It was wrong; I knew

that it was wrong!”

Then she heard, “We need to get them; get some balls, get those Feds!”

But that was answered with, “Hell, no! I’m out of here!”

Page 4

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 11:59 am

The crowd was trampling itself; no one was coming after them, and still, she and Jackson had their system, so she looked at him quickly.

He nodded, turning to the crowd, Glock aimed and ready, while she ran to gather Celia in her arms and bring her gently down on her lap.

She quickly saw the puncture mark on the young woman's arm, but she could find no other injury.

Julian was down beside her, his hand gently reaching out, stroking her cheek.

Celia opened her eyes.

She looked up at Angela and whispered, "Thank you!"

"Help is coming!" she said softly in return.

And it was.

They heard sirens from the edge of the forest and sirens from the water.

EMTs were quickly there, and Angela opted to head out with them as they got Celia to the hospital.

Of course, Julian Wagner was there with her as well.

Even in the ambulance, they were assured that Celia would be okay, the sedative put

into her would be flushed out, but it might be a good idea if she spent one night at the hospital for observation.

Once Celia had been taken away for treatment, Angela sat in the waiting room.

Jackson, Adam, and Josh joined her shortly.

And Josh, too, looked at them and said, "Thank you!"

"Hey, they're my team.

I put them together!" Adam teased.

"And I thank all of you," Josh said, grinning at his father.

"Days like this are the best!" Angela assured him.

As she softly spoke, smiling.

Celia's doctor came out and said that she was weak, he'd be happiest if she'd see just one of them for a few minutes.

They'd all be welcome back the next day; she'd probably be released.

They all looked at Angela and she smiled and headed into Celia's room.

Once again, she thanked Angela and shook her head.

"How did you know? How did you even know that something had happened? I mean, my poor fiancé couldn't have even known; I head out early when I have meetings."

Of course, Julian Wagner was still in the room, seated at his daughter's side.

But . . .

Angela thought quickly.

“Anonymous tip,” she said simply.

But Celia shook her head.

“I think I saw him!” she said softly.

“Pardon?” Angela asked.

“My dad.

In the woods.

I opened my eyes for a moment, and I think that I saw him.

And I know that I scare him, but ...” She paused and smiled.

“I have learned that I must be much more careful. But I will never change. He taught me about humanity, about fairness, about the fact that we’re all human beings and . . . well, I’m still me. Just a more careful me!”

Angela smiled.

“Good for you! But of course—”

“You will be seeing to my protection, and I heard a nurse murmuring about the fact that half the people arrested when the bulk of law enforcement arrived are claiming that they had no idea what was meant to happen and that ...

well, some might have changed! They might be kinder and more tolerant now.

A win from a bout of terror!" she said.

Angela smiled.

She didn't need to answer.

A tall blond man, dressed in a casual beige suit, was hurrying in anxiously.

"Sam!" Celia breathed.

"Oh, my God!" He was at Celia's side, taking her into his arms, and turning to Angela, starting to stumble out words of thanks.

Angela rose quickly, smiling, interrupting him, "I'm going to leave you two alone! Doc said one person, so .

.

.

hey, so very happy that we're all here!" she said.

And she escaped.

Jackson, Adam, and Josh were waiting for her.

And to her surprise, the spirit of Julian Wagner quickly followed her out.

"Hey, I give them privacy too, of course!" he said.

Angela nodded, studying the man, smiling.

“You were amazing, sir.

I’ve seen—” she broke off.

She’d been about to say, “the dead.” It seemed a bit crass.

“I’ve seen spirits do many, many things, but you were amazing, stopping that spear!”

He laughed softly.

“Hey.

I may be dead, but I’m Celia’s father! And,” he added quietly, “A Father’s love is forever!”

“And Sunday is Father’s Day!” Angela said, looking at Jackson.

“And you know that the kids are planning a big day!”

Jackson smiled and nodded.

“And Father’s Day is for fathers.

You are all invited to spend it with Angela, Victoria, Corby and me, you know!

“I will be hanging around Celia, but thank you,” Julian said.

“Dad and I will happily hang around with you.

But ...for now.” Josh said, grinning.

“Don’t you guys have an office of amazing agents to run?”

“We do,” Jackson said.

“But Bruce McFadden has everything in control and it’s getting on to night, so ...

well, we’re going home to hug our kids.” He looked at Angela and said softly, “I like that.

A father’s love is forever.”

“I like it, too,” she assured him.

She looked at the others.

“We’re heading home.

Time for all fathers—to be father.!”

And when they got home that night, they hugged their kids a little too fiercely.

But that was oka’! Because, Angela knew, love was the very best of human emotion.

Fear could thrive, hate could arise, bitterness, jealousy ...

all could exist.

But there was still love.

The very best of all human emotions.