

It happened near here

“Look sweetie!” I say pointing to a street sign reading ‘Spring st.’ “It happened near here. Just around the corner to be exact.” I grab her hand as we cross the downtown streets, the nice breeze blowing our hair and the sun warming our backs. “What happened near here, mommy?” She asks. “Well..” I start, but the sight of the small building stops me. I slowly look up to see the small sign on it’s roof. Lombardi’s. We walk closer and I get a better view. “What happened near here, mommy?” She asks again. “This is how I met your father.” “My daddy?” She squeals. “Yes, your daddy.” I still stare in awe at the building. “I haven’t been here since.” I say under my breath. It looks the same. The brick still red, the windows still clean, and the love I felt in this building, still there. She tugs my sleeve, waking me from my trance. “Can we please go inside?” She asks looking up at me. She has my beautiful blue eyes, but her fathers blonde curls. “Yes, of course.” She leads me inside and I barely have time to breathe before we enter. I take a deep breath and open my eyes. The sight brings me joy. Pictures of the beach hang on the wall, the chandeliers hanging right above. “So, you and daddy met here?” “Yes, it was my first date ever and I was very nervous.” I chuckle. “We couldn’t decide on a pizza because the only thing he likes is cheese and olives!” “Ewww!” She laughs. “We ended up getting half pepperoni and half olives.” I sigh. “Can we just get plain cheese?” She asks. “Yes,” I reply. I order the cheese pizza and we take a seat outside. It’s a beautiful day. God couldn’t have given us better weather. We sit for a while and I look around. When I was younger I always thought that I would leave this city and go far away. Far away to a small town. I was never a social person. Especially after he left. I know what you’re thinking, poor little highschool girl who got pregnant right after her graduation and then the baby daddy left. But no. Well yes. The first part is true, but he stayed. He would’ve stayed his whole life if he

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could. He just couldn't. We had settled down and I had given up everything for this life. We both wanted it. When the baby came we were overjoyed. We had just enough money, he had a job, and the rent was paid. But good things never last long. It was dinner time, I had waited for hours for him to come home, then I got the call. Car accident. Did you know that 38,000 people die each year from that? The odds weren't in his favor. I lost myself. The only thing that kept me going was the fact that I had a child to take care of. He would've wanted me to take care of her. So I did. Not just for him, but for me too. So here I am with my little girl eating at the place where it all began. I look to my right and see a large aspen tree. "Look!" I say, pointing to the tree. "Do you see that aspen tree right there?" I ask. "Yes, I do," she replies. "Me and your dad had our first kiss there. That's why we named you Aspen. A beautiful name, from a beautiful place, for a beautiful girl." Aspen giggles. "I love you mommy," she says. "I love you too," I reply. She grabs a piece of pizza and munches away. There is no one I would rather share this moment with than her. No place I would rather be than here. The place where it all started. It happened near here.