

My Mum, My Hero



All she could hear was the high-pitched ringing echoing off the basement walls, where fear clung to the air like dust. In Lebanon, my mum, Carole, spent her childhood sheltering from war, the sounds of bombs raining down from above. They ate stale bread, played cards by candlelight and told each other stories. She and her sisters turned fear into fantasy.

Her parents rose before sunrise. Her father would put on his customs uniform while her mother packed schoolbags and made lentils for dinner. Though money was tight and luxuries were few, education was their silver lining.

Before the war, Carole spent winters in the quiet mountains at her father's olive garden, running through forests with her siblings, returning with muddy legs and wide smiles. In Beirut, she attended a respected school, nurtured and comforted by two worlds: one academic, the other of family love.

While others rested, she worked—scrubbing the floor and walking blocks to carry bread to her grandma. Even after a bomb damaged her cluttered kitchen, even when separated from family, she didn't give up. She clung to hope and pushed herself harder in school, finding joy in reading, movies, and friends.

My Mum, My Hero



Years later, my mum stood proudly in her graduation gown, proud that she had earned her engineering degree. She taught maths by day to support her parents and finally began to treat herself by painting her nails bright red and going to parties.

After many failed interviews, she was hired at a bank. That same year, she met my dad, and they bought a cozy apartment in Hazmieh. Later, they moved to Qatar and gave birth to me and my two brothers. She told us bedtime stories about Lebanon and shared her dream of migrating to Australia. A place where we could have more than she ever had.

After years of challenges, we got our visas. Mum left first to prepare our new home while Dad, my siblings, and I stayed behind. I was counting down the days! My heart was heavy as I said goodbye, but I trusted my parents completely.

When we arrived in the 'lucky country,' it was a blazing hot Christmas day! The moment we walked into our new home, there were gifts on the bed and Mum's arms waiting to wrap around us. I started Year 4 in Strathfield, playing handball at recess while my Mum got a well-deserved promotion as a project manager at Microsoft.

My Mum, My Hero



A year later, we moved to Baulkham Hills. I attended a Catholic school and celebrated my birthday making pizza with new friends. Mum worked harder than ever—now she's a project director who travels for work and still brings home fridge magnets!

Now, my family is thriving. We'll become Australian citizens next year—and the party's already planned! I am proud of her values, her dedication as a mum and the progress she has made in her career. From war-torn Beirut to Baulkham Hills, my mum's journey shows everything James Martin stood for. She gave, served, and led—without ever needing to be asked. And I follow the path she carved with pride.