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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/558/2021_2022__E8_8B_B1_E8_AF_AD_E8_8C_83_E6_c88_558927.htm The traditional holidays in our house when I was a child were spent timing elaborate meals around football games. My father tried to make pleasant chitchat and eat as much as he could during halftime. At Christmas he found time to have a cup or two of holiday cheer and do his holly-shaped bow tie¹. But he didn't truly shine until Valentines Day. I don't know whether it was because work at the office slowed during February or because the football season was over. But Valentines Day was the time my father chose to show his love for the special people in his life. Over the years I fondly² thought of him as my “Valentine Man.” My first recollection³ of the magic⁴ he could bring to Valentines Day came when I was six. For several days I had been cutting out valentines for my classmates. Each of us was to decorate a “ mailbox ” and put it on our desk for others to give us cards. That box and its contents ushered in⁵ a succession⁶ of bittersweet⁷ memories of my entrance into a world of popularity⁸ contests marked by the number of cards received, the teasing about boyfriends/girlfriends and the tender care I gave to the card from the cutest boy in class. That morning at the breakfast table I found a card and a gift- wrapped package at my chair. The card was signed “ Love, Dad ” , and the gift was a ring with a small piece of red glass to represent my birthstone⁹, a ruby¹⁰. There is little difference between red glass and rubies to a child of six, and I remember wearing that

ring with a pride that all the cards in the world could not surpass¹¹. As I grew older, the gifts gave way to heart shaped boxes filled with my favorite chocolates and always included a special card signed “ Love, Dad ” .In those years my “ thank-yous ” became more of a perfunctory¹² response. The cards seemed less important, and I took for granted the valentine that would always be there. Long past the days of having a “ mailbox ” on my desk, I had placed my hopes and dreams in receiving cards and gifts from “ significant others ” , and “ Love, Dad ” just didnt seem quite enough. If my father knew then that he had been replaced, he never let it show. If he sensed any disappointment over valentines that didnt arrive for me, he just tried that much harder to create a positive atmosphere, giving me an extra hug and doing what he could to make my day a little brighter. My mailbox eventually had a rural address, and the job of hand delivering candy and cards was relegated¹³ to the U.S.Postal Service. Never in ten years was my fathers package late-- nor was it on the Valentines Day eight years ago when I reached into the mailbox to find a card addressed to me in my mothers handwriting. It was the kind of card that comes in an inexpensive assortment¹⁴ box sold by a child going door-to-door to try to earn money for a school project. It was the kind of card that you used to get from a grandmother or an aging aunt or, in this case, a dying father. It was the kind of card that put a lump in your throat and tears in your eyes because you knew the person no longer was able to go out and buy a real valentine. It was a card that signaled¹⁵ this would be the last you receive from him. The card had a photograph of tulips¹⁶ on the outside, and on

the inside my mother had printed “ Happy Valentines Day ” .
Beneath it, scrawled¹⁷ in barely legible¹⁸ handwriting, was “ Love,
Dad ” . His final card remains on my bulletin board today. Its a
reminder of how special fathers can be and how important it had
been to me over the years to know that I had a father who continued
a tradition of love with a generosity of spirit, simple acts of
understanding and an ability to express happiness over the people in
his life. Those things never die, nor does the memory of a man who
never stopped being my valentine. 100Test 下载频道开通 , 各类
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