

Prompt:

Hey Carter! This is Cassandra Doe, you may remember communicating with my brother John. I was wondering if you could do a mock up of what a chapter one of my ghostwritten autobiography could look like? I would like for the chapter to be titled “The Corporate Ladder” and focus on my parent’s absence during my younger years, and how that drove me to succeed in business.

If you need more info, please refer to the info my brother emailed me yesterday. Just a single page from the beginning of the chapter would be great. Thanks!

Chapter 1: The Corporate Ladder

Where do I even start? I guess with talking about those bratty 90’s kids. Don’t get me wrong, I’ve changed my attitude on millennials since, but when I finally secured my first corporate position, you’d better *believe* those kids made me feel something awful.

I guess I can’t blame them, different generation and all. Looking back, I can kind of understand where they were coming from. I don’t recall a single one of them clocking in early, or staying late for that matter.

I suppose that’s not entirely fair. I had a printer guy at one point, just maintenance and such. He didn’t work for our company, he was just our technician. I had been stepping to the printer for a few reports I’d printed off, and found him still working on the machine. It was 5:03, *way* past his quitting time (which was 5:00, by the way).

As soon as I mentioned the time, his tools were back in his bag and he was out the door without even a thank you. Looking back on it, maybe some of my ill-will towards them was justified. Anyways, it’s in the past now. It’s how they were raised, and it wasn’t anything *close* to how my parents had taught me.

Neither of my parents were home very often. Both of them had jobs (in the 70’s, that was unusual) and I was often over at an aunt’s or a cousin’s house. It was always seemed strange to me the way my parents were never at home. Every aunt and uncle seemed to follow the American standard: Husband at work, wife at home with the kids. My parents were the one exception.

Sometimes I would ask my parents about this, but the answer was always the same. “Dad, why does mom go out and work instead of staying home?” “I guess it’s what she wants to do.” “Mom, what do girls do when they grow up?” “They get a good job, or otherwise a good husband, and do as good a job as they can.” “What about you, mom? Isn’t daddy a good husband to you?” “Yes.” “Then why don’t you stay home with me like aunt Joan?”

She would just smile and run her hands through my hair before leaving to attend to something else, and *always* there was something else for her to attend to. Birthdays, Christmas, even my high school graduation. I was genuinely shocked whenever both of them were present for a special occasion, which only happened twice.

The first was on my fifteenth birthday. My dad had originally planned on being in West Germany for some kind of business meeting, but plans changed, and the meeting got pushed out when East and West Germany reunited. Funny that it took something as big as the world changing for my dad to be home.

The second wasn't as pleasant. My Aunt Joan, with whom I had spent the great majority of my childhood, passed away April 2nd, 1994. Neither of my parents were there for her funeral, but both made a point to be there the following easter, along with several other out-of-state relatives who rarely came by.