

A Hero Who Has Always Cared

by Abigail Rocillo

Katarina Styles, the most hard working girl in this suburb of Indiana, was the daughter to a single father Landon Styles. She felt trapped in this small town, and a program to study abroad became available at the local community college. She could not afford to go to a 4 year university as the tuition was too expensive. Between her and her father, they worked 4 jobs trying to merely get by.

Her dream was to escape the small town and see the world. She heard stories from her father of the amazing adventures he went to in his youth, and how he hoped she would experience them as well. Opportunities like these were rare, but she felt bad leaving her father all alone. Even though he may not be the best parent, he does his best to provide and always be there for her.

This time, Katarina plans to finally do something for herself and hopes that her father will understand. She took on another job to save some money on the side to pay for the fees.

After 6 months of working endlessly, she ended up \$3,000 short from the \$10,000 needed to pay for the program. The due date is rapidly approaching and there is nothing she can do. She feels horrible at the thought of asking her father. Their savings account is only enough to live, not to live luxuriously. Disappointed, she goes to find her father to tell him the unfortunate news. However, when she gets home she sees that the house is decorated with old party streamers. Little decorations that have been used for her small birthday parties over the years. A memento of her life and growing up that she thought her father threw away or sold.

Confused Katarina enters looking for her father, but he approaches her with the biggest smile she's ever seen on his face.

Landon begins, "My sweet Katarina. I know you've worked so hard to make the \$10,000 for your trip, but don't worry about it anymore. You never once complained that I didn't get you a gift or questioned our minimalistic lives. You mean the world to me and I want you to go out there and see it for yourself. Here is \$10,000 so you can spend any money you have earned on your trip and treat yourself to something wonderful."

Landon hands Katarina a large envelope with all the money she needs. They embrace each other in a tearful hug. As Katarina pulls back, she tells him "You know you've always been my hero. From day one, I knew you were trying your best. We didn't need a big house or a lavish car, we had each other. We may not have been wealthy in money, but in my opinion, we're wealthy through love. Thank you for always being my biggest supporter and my biggest hero. I would never have been able to do anything without you by my side."