

## *Life as a Fisherman's Daughter*

"My family owns an offshore lobster company on Cape Cod." I say as I introduce myself to a group of colleagues in Boston.

"Oh cool, so your dad is a fisherman?" Someone replies.

No. It goes far beyond that. Not only was my dad a valedictorian at Massachusetts Maritime Academy, but has a degree in extreme weather, a graduate degree in the Atlantic Ocean, and a PHD in functioning efficiently on 3 hours a sleep for over twenty years.



There is a certain stigma that lies behind being a "fisherman" or a "lobsterman". And as I've gotten older I find myself biting my tongue harder when I get that response from people who haven't been raised by men of the sea.

I come from a family who are no strangers to the lobstering industry. My grandfather, Raymond Palombo, was a shipbuilder in Nahant, Massachusetts. Raymond handcrafted wooden fishing vessels with his sons, Marc and Raymond Jr., in his backyard on 40 Steps Lane. At the end of his career, he had built and sold eight ships. One of these ships were kept for the other family business; lobstering.

So, Marc Palombo (my father) was too raised by a lobsterman. Marc's expertise of the ocean was nurtured by his father through his life and ongoing career. Marc founded Calico Lobster Company in 1982 after the completion of the Terri Ann. This beautiful eighty-foot steel vessel was named after my mother, Teresa Ann Palombo, and was the first ship in the Calico Lobster fleet. She's harbored in Sandwich, Massachusetts on beautiful Cape Cod where my family currently resides.

Lobstering, especially offshore, is a career an entire family is involved in. Everyone is a deck hand. As some know, it requires an extreme amount of sacrifice and hard work for each member. As I mature, I find it easier to sympathize and respect my dad for the feelings of regret he must have had and the sacrifice that involved shipping out for a week at a time.

The influence this has had on my life is substantial. Growing up, I always struggled between how much I admired my dad for his





cool, unique career and the hard work, sacrifice, absence, and worry that comes with lobster fishing. For example, in elementary school my dad came one day a week to present to my classes about lobsters. My fondest childhood memories were how proud I was of my dad and what he did. After one presentation, someone gave us the Perfect Storm DVD as a gift. Afraid of the worry that would ensue for our family, the DVD sat hidden in the pantry and wrapped in the plastic for 8 years before we finally threw it away.

As I have matured and now enter the workforce to make a paycheck of my own, I feel I have a deepened respect for my father. I feel my upbringing has defined what it means to work hard and sacrifice in a way few others are lucky enough to understand.

At times I get disgruntled about a grueling work day commute into Boston. Other times I stress over how hard it is to meet a demanding deadline. When I find myself feeling these such things, I think about my dad. I think about *his* commute and *his* deadlines. That is what inspires me. That is what makes me a better person, a harder worker. It's what drives me to be a master of my trade.

These lessons and invaluable traits are what make up so much more than being a "lobsterman". And most importantly, they are why I am proud to tell everyone I meet that I am a fisherman's daughter.

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