

THE REST OF THE STORY

BY PAUL HARVEY

WHAT ARE FATHERS MADE OF? A father is a thing that is forced to endure childbirth without an anesthetic. A father is a thing that growls when it feels good--and laughs very loud when it's scared half to death. A father never feels entirely worthy of the worship in a child's eyes. He's never quite the hero his daughter thinks, never quite the man his son believes him to be--and this worries him, sometimes. So he works too hard to try and smooth the rough places in the road for those of his own who will follow him. A father is a thing that gets very angry when the first school grades aren't as good as he thinks they should be. He scolds his son though he knows it's the teacher's fault. Fathers are what give daughters away to other men who aren't nearly good enough so they can have grandchildren who are smarter than anybody's. Fathers make bets with insurance companies about who'll live the longest. Though they know the odds, they keep right on betting. And one day they lose. I don't know where fathers go when they die. But I've an idea that after a good rest, wherever it is, he won't be happy unless there's work to do. He won't just sit on a cloud and wait for the girl he's loved and the children she bore. He'll be busy there, too, repairing the stairs, oiling the gates, improving the streets, smoothing the way.