

■ CHOOSING BETWEEN MOM AND DAD

Belinda's parents' divorce was final. No one except Belinda and her parents knew the real reason why the divorce had occurred. Belinda's dad was a homosexual. Belinda felt sorry for her mom because she had been humiliated, embarrassed, and deeply depressed over the whole thing.

Belinda had decided to stay with her mom after the divorce. Her dad did seem genuinely sorry for what had happened, and most important to Belinda, he told her that he still loved her very much. He had written Belinda a beautiful letter in which he apologized for hurting both Belinda and her mother. In the letter, her father described his battle with homosexuality—a battle that had been going on since he was a little boy. He shared that he had tried therapy and had sought help from a number of ministers, but nothing had worked. Finally, he came to the conclusion that he could no longer fight his homosexuality.

Belinda still loved her father, and his letter only made her love him more. She wanted to talk with him and be with him, but she knew if she did, her mother would be deeply hurt. Even the mention of her father's name made her mother become hysterical.

Belinda was torn between her father and mother but decided it was better for both of them if she stayed with her mother and had limited contact with her father. She knew her father would be hurt too, but she thought he could handle the hurt better.

One afternoon, about two months after the divorce, Belinda went with a friend to a local shopping center. Her friend had to use the bathroom, so they both went to a restaurant in the mall. As they walked through the lounge to the bathroom, Belinda saw her mother and a strange man holding hands and talking intimately. She was crushed. All of a sudden, everything was upside down, and nothing made sense anymore.

When Belinda came home she called her father and told him what she had seen. Her father told her that he wasn't surprised. He said he had known about her mother's affair for a long time, but that under the circumstances, he could understand. He encouraged Belinda not to be so harsh on her mother, but Belinda could not get herself to forgive her mother. Maybe her father was a homosexual, but at least he wasn't an adulterer.

Belinda made up her mind to go stay with her father. After she packed, Belinda left a note for her mother and then left.

► Rank the following characters from best to worst: Belinda, Belinda's mother, Belinda's father.

● Scripture Guide:

Exodus 20:14	1 Corinthians 6:9–11
Deuteronomy 6:6–7	1 Corinthians 7:3–4
Psalms 103:10–12	Hebrews 13:4
Mark 10:9	