

MUSINGS

A Father's Day tribute to Don Corleone

"A man who doesn't spend time with his family can never be a real man."

— Vito Corleone, The Godfather

Don Corleone hardly needs an introduction. After all, he is one of the most iconic characters in cinema, appearing in The Godfather, a crime saga adapted from Mario Puzo's classic.

I reckon it is as much a family drama as it is a crime saga. And as the head of the family, Vito Corleone is not just a wise businessman and leader who built a criminal empire from scratch, but also a virtuous man who placed a lot on loyalty, friendship, and family values.

Vito Corleone was a marvellous father to his children.

The movie celebrates fatherhood with numerous scenes, such as the traditional father-daughter dance at the wedding, the slightest affectionate pat on the cheek, the occasional scolding — and not to forget the love and concern young Vito had for his toddlers, in The Godfather II, when he was struggling in life.

The Godfather portrays father-and-son bond in subtle, but strangely at the same time, monumental ways! And you have to agree that the Vito-Michael Corleone duo is one of the most iconic father-son relationships in fiction.

Here are my top two father-son scenes from The Godfather:

"I'm with you now," A son comes to terms

Having survived an assassination attempt, Vito Corleone (played by Marlon Brando) lies in the hospital bed, helpless. His son Michael (played by Al Pacino), who was a little aloof from the family and uninterested in his father's business till then, suspects that a second attempt was going to occur at the hospital and in that defining moment takes charge and moves him to another room for security.

A magical father-son moment happens right after that, in the dark colour palette frame of filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola.

The son bends down towards him and says ever so softly: "Just lie here, Pop. I'll take care of



you now. I'm with you now. I'm with you." He then picks up his frail father's hand and kisses it; the don smiles but tears roll out of his eyes at the same time. The Godfather's soundtrack plays on the background.

This tiny scene, in the subtlest way

imaginable, shows immense warmth between a father and a son.

"I never wanted this for you," A father confesses

Later, after Michael has taken over the family business, he has an intimate

conversation with his aging father.

In the garden, the 'semi-retired' Corleone looks back into his life. "I never wanted this for you," he admits to his youngest son, who had taken the helm of the criminal enterprise. "I work my whole life, I don't apologise, to take care of my family. And I refused to be a fool dancing on the string, held by all those big shots."

He goes on to say that he always wished that one day his son would be the one to hold the strings: "Senator Corleone. Governor Corleone, or something."

To me at least, the scene gives a rare sneak peek into the well-hidden insecure and timid side of the otherwise strong and powerful don.

We all can connect with him, because don't most fathers share these same dreams and thoughts — and aren't fathers, no matter how superman-like they seem, just mere human beings at the end of the day?

"We'll get there, Pop," his son had promised him.

He kept his promise; became a legitimate businessman, renowned and respectable, as we see in The Godfather III. In the latter two installations of the trilogy, we see Michael Corleone as the head of the family.

Was he a failed parent, though? His son Anthony said to his face, "I will never work for you. I have bad memories."

And yet we see Michael letting go off his son to pursue a career in music. We sympathise with him as he exclaims: "I spent my whole life protecting my family!" We cherish the bond he tries to nurture with his daughter, and we shudder when he screams at the top of his lungs after she gets shot and killed in front of his eyes.

Michael Corleone was a misunderstood father, an unsung hero, like many fathers are.

The Godfather trilogy, through the eyes of Vito and Michael Corleone, truly sheds light on fatherhood, and inspires us to be better fathers and sons.

By M H Haider
Photo: Collected

IN SEARCH OF COMFORT FOOD

BY SOBIA AMEEN



Father's Day brunch

Most fathers around the world love eggs for breakfast. This year make your father (or father figure) this easy but delicious brunch to make his day brighter.

TURKISH EGGS (CILBIR) WITH A TWIST

Ingredients

2 cups Greek yoghurt
2 cloves garlic (minced)
3-4 chopped gherkins (save some pickle juice)
2 large eggs
3 tbsp salted butter
3 jalapeños
½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Half a lime
½ tsp cumin powder
Paprika
Salt
Pepper

Method

In a large bowl, mix the Greek yoghurt, minced garlic, chopped gherkins, salt, pepper and paprika. Mix and set aside in the fridge to chill.

In a pot of simmering water, poach the eggs for about 3 minutes to get the perfect runny yolk. Place on a kitchen towel to get rid of the excess water.

In a small pan, melt the butter and add the paprika when the butter is nice and frothy. Leave over low heat and add the cumin.

Put the pickle juice from the pickles, extra olive oil and 3 whole jalapeños and half a freshly squeezed lime into a blender to create a luscious jalapeño oil.

Now, create a bed for the eggs with the chilled yoghurt, place the poached eggs on top, and drizzle with the melted paprika butter and the jalapeño oil. Serve with freshly toasted bread.

Food and Photo: Sobia Ameen

