

I'm just gonna... stop... with the warnings at this point and trust you won't burn me at the stake for writing with gay people. So yeah, here's chapter three.

And also, I don't own Silent Hill or anything, I just obsess about it. Konami owns it. And the movie belongs to Silent Hill DCP. Inc.-Davis Films, although this book will have little, if anything, to do with the first movie.

Silent Hill – Vows of the Broken
By Eric Wythe
Chp. 3

I bought a bouquet of gardenias. My mom's favorite. Thankfully, the flower shop never closed my account, the owner even recognized me. Something I wouldn't really want, except for this case. The flower shop lady has always been nice to me. I'm not sure why. I'm sure I'll never know.

I hated driving to see my mom. It's not because of my general distaste for driving in this town. I just always felt it wasn't right. So, John and I left our large truck and found the small underpass that led to the one-lane road to the ranches on the outskirts of the town. I always enjoyed the trek. It always cleared my mind before it was assaulted by all the feelings that came back to me whenever I thought of my mom. For some reason though, I couldn't help thinking of the night that brought me to take this walk so many times.

“Dad, mom, I’m home.”

Silence.

The lights were off; I couldn't help feel something was off. Mom knew I was out with Johnny. She was excited about it honestly. Dad was still having a hard time with me. I was just doing my best to be me. And all my mom wants is for me to be happy. I wish my dad would say the same. He hasn't touched me since I came out to him a couple years ago. I miss his hugs; I'm secure enough to admit that, at least to myself.

It was cold. Winter had crept its way up to our town. The only thing that ever changed weather-wise was that in the winter the fog turned to snow. It was a small trickle though. Never enough to really affect the town at large. Tonight, however, would be a remarkably cold night.

“Hello-“A light switched on.

I jumped; this was quickly becoming something out of a bad movie. I could see my dad's arm still hanging onto the pull-string. He was in his usual chair. But its back was facing me. I was having a hard time determining whether I should be scared shitless or wondering if this is a joke

“Where've you been, boy?”

“Boy? Dad, you're from New York, since when did you start driving the General Lee?”

“Answer the question.”

“I was... out.”

“Out with who?”

“Johnny, you know? The guy who just moved across the street a few weeks ago-look dad, what's this all about?”

“Yeah, I know him. That poor excuse for a man. Limp-wristed just like my own faggot son.”

“Where the hell is this coming from..?” I looked over to the table with the lamp and discovered an empty bottle of Jack Daniels. Shit. “Dad... You know you can't drink when you're on your heart meds.”

“I know what I ain't supposed to be doing. I know I ain't supposed to have some sodomite living under my god-faring roof!” He got up suddenly, and turned around. He'd been crying, for reason I don't know why, even today. His eyes had gone blank. He looked like he'd died, but was still breathing.

“I've hoped. I've *dreamed*. I've *prayed*. That this whole thing was just some fucking phase. You're mother can accept it. Ain't my fault her parents raised her to be fag lovers. But the fact you were out with your pretty-boy just proves you're nothing but a low-life faggot.”

“Dad...” Where the hell was this coming from?

“I ain't your daddy! I ain't got a son! And I'm going to prove it.” He held up a gun. Him right across from me, his arm wasn't shaking, he wasn't crying. He just had a cold dead stare that paralyzed me.

I wanted to move. I wanted to say something. But I just... couldn't. I was trapped. At least I thought I was.

“Peter, I told you the store would be closed right now-“Mom walked in, I couldn’t see her face. But I knew she just broke out into a panic of some sort. “Peter... what are you doing with that thing? Put it down, whatever this is about we can talk about it as a family-“

“We are *not* a family! I refuse to call a faggot my blood. I will *not* have such a vile thing walking around on this earth. And I *will not* be the one to blame for it.”

“Peter... stop, you don’t want to do this... Daryl. Go up to your room, please. I will talk with your father.” I wasn’t relieved at all that she was here. For some reason I knew it wouldn’t make any difference. I knew something awful would come from this.

“But I do! I want to kill him!” Dad’s eyes lit up like they were on fire. I saw a strange splotch of black at the corner of his left eye. I didn’t know if it was blood, or something else but it made my father much more frightening than I could ever imagine.

He raised the gun, the silver steel reflecting the burning anger and derived smirk curling up in the corner of my father’s mouth.

There was silence for a few seconds. My mom had slowly crept closer to me. I didn’t know what was going to happen.

What happened next all played out much faster than any bullshit writer would’ve liked it.

My father pulled the trigger. I didn’t move. But I wasn’t hit. I heard a shout; I still don’t know what it was. I’ll never know.

My mom collapsed, with a small thud. She had taken the bullet for me. The last gift she’d ever give me. The last instance I’d ever have someone to call my mother. I suddenly found my head somewhere among my fear. I quickly knelt down and picked her up by her head. Straight in the heart, my father was a good shot.

It was odd. I was the calmest I’d ever been in my life. I never once looked at my father after the shot was fired. I knew his mistake was too great for him to finish the job. Of course, I didn’t realize that until after the fact. At the time I was just concerned about my mother.

I held her in my arms. She was wearing her tan trench-coat we bought on our last vacation visiting my father’s family. I remembered getting it with her because I had bought the leather jacket I was currently wearing at the same store. The one thing that I really noticed was her scarf. It was the silk purple one I bought for her on mother’s day a year back. Purple was her mother’s favorite color, and Mother’s Day was the day her mother died six years before then. I always thought purple brought out my mother’s complexion. She always wore it whenever it was cold after that.

“Mom...” I sobbed. “Don’t leave me. You’re the only person who really understands me. You can’t leave me here alone like this.”

“Daryl.” She smiled. Blood was beginning to pour from the corner of her mouth. The color matched her shade of lipstick. “I could never leave you alone. You’re my baby; I love you more than life itself. I could never-“She began to cough.

I clenched her to my chest. “Mom stop, don’t talk. I’ll get you help! I promise! Just-hang on!” I was bawling at this point. In my heart of hearts I knew I couldn’t do anything at this point.

“I could never... live with myself... if I just...” She was coughing more. I began to feel the blood seep through my shirt. “Stood there... and let him hurt you.”

“Mom, I love you.” It was all I could say. Neither my tongue nor my mind would let me do anything else.

“I love you more...” And that was when the world stopped. She stopped breathing, and I just held her there in my arms sobbing like the world was crumbling around me, because it was. My mother was dead. My father shot her, and I wasn’t able to do anything.

“Mom...”

The graveyard was probably the only thing in Silent Hill that wasn’t leveled or rebuilt when the coal-fire stopped burning. It was small and placed near a small marsh that leads to the lake. It always had a pungent smell that I always associated with death. At least the realtors had respect for the dead. When my mother was killed my dad was arrested. I didn’t care why; the fact I never had to see him again was enough for me. I was put in charge of her funeral arrangements. Ronnie was right beside me the entire time. I wasn’t the only who lost a mother. Ron was practically my brother; I had no problem sharing my mom with him. Especially since he only had his father.

He nearly murdered mine when he found out he was the one who did it. I did nothing to stop him. Too bad the police did. Peter Kaufman was no longer my father. He could die for all I cared.

There has only been one strange occurrence in the weather in Silent Hill while I lived there. And that was the day of my mom’s funeral. As the ceremony began, Johnny was there keeping me in his arms. We both knew at this point, I’d break down and do something I’d regret if I wasn’t. I hired no pastor, no priest, nobody. I did not believe in God, I never asked him for anything nor did I thank him for anything. After the few days preceding I knew there was no God.

But if there was, he definitely did something to start to make up for lack of presence.

I let people who knew my mother speak about my mom. I made this very private. I only allowed people from my mother's side of the family to attend. No one argued.

At some point that afternoon, I decided to get up and say something. John began to get up; I knew he didn't want me to go through this alone.

"No, I need to do this" He nodded and sat back down.

I slowly made my way to the podium that was placed outside under the giant willow tree that I decided my mom would like. I looked up at it and smiled.

"You know, my mom reminds me way too much of this tree. She was always strong and sheltering, sometimes even overbearing. I didn't really understand her a lot of the times. But then again, I didn't really have to. She loved me, and that's all I honestly needed to know I guess."

I looked around the small group of people here. Ron was sitting next to John, holding his hand. I smiled because Ron was holding it way too tight. My uncle Marty was being held by his husband, surely going through the same amount of hurt I was.

"For the past few days, I've been sitting in my mom's room. Going through all her memories, I felt like I grew up with her to some extent. She and I are very similar. We're both too stubborn for our good."

My aunt Gertrude was smiling at me. My music teacher Beth was my mom's best friend; she had a hanky and was dabbing her right eye.

"All she ever wanted for me was to be happy. She thought everyone deserved to be. She told me that I had the right to be happy, and she'd never get in my way of my pursuit." I looked over to John, he was getting misty. "She died, protecting my right. She won't die in vain. I loved my mom's smile. It always lit up the room. I can take comfort in knowing she's somewhere, looking down on us, using her smile to light up everything else"

I looked around all the relatives, friends, acquaintances, and I smiled. And they smiled back.

Slowly, the fog began to draw back, as if being sucked into the marsh. The offending odor was beginning to break. And at first, a small ray of light broke through the clouds and shone on the cherry-wood coffin that was laid out in front of the podium.

"My mom, was the only ray of sunlight, this town ever knew."

The fog began to thin, and more sunlight poured around everyone. That was all I had to say. The sun stayed out for a long time. I made my way over to John, he held me tightly as I looked up into the sun.

To this day, the only thing I've ever thanked God for was seeing sun that day.

“Hey Ma.” I said putting my hand on her plaque. I held up my left hand. “Check it, I gots me some bling!”

I unwrapped the flowers and placed them around the old tree. Once I was done I sat in front of her plaque cross-legged and stared at the tree. John made his way over to the tree and sat against it.

“I always hated the smell of this place.” I said.

“Me too, but it is really peaceful. It’s probably the only place I’ve ever been able to relax around here.”

“My mom has that effect on places. She always lit up everything.”

“I barely remember her. I regret not getting to know her better.”

“She died like, three months after you moved out here.”

“Still… I don’t know. I just wish I knew her like you did. I only knew her long enough to know she approved of me.”

“That’s really all you needed to know from her, hehe.”

“I guess haha.”

I crawled over to John and sat up against him. He wrapped his arms around me and I closed my eyes.

“She knew you make me happy. That’s all she really wanted. We have our moments, yeah. But at the end of the day, I’m happy I have you. I’m sure she knows that.”

“You knew her best.”

We fell asleep against the tree. But that was okay. I dreamt of my mom.

Heavy stuff, right? I had a really hard time making that seem sort of cliché while not being cliché at the same time. Er, did I pull that off?

Let me know! You can email me at eric.wythe@gmail.com.