

Daddy came home Drunk

A short story by Ivan Berezin

Daddy came home drunk. Daddy has been coming home drunk every day this week. Daddy complains about Boss. Daddy says Boss is mean, and very demanding and that he never appreciates what he does. I think this makes Daddy sad. I'm always sad when Daddy is mean and very demanding, and doesn't appreciate what I do.

The other day I gave Daddy a gift. A drawing I did. There was Mommy, and Tommy, and Daddy and me. And we all held each other's hands and smiled, and the sun was shining in the sky. I drew the sun with an orange crayon and also with a yellow crayon too. I showed Mommy and Mommy smiled and said "Now isn't that beautiful? You should show Daddy when he comes home." And so I waited up aaaaaaall night. Like, even when Mommy came to check on me if I was sleeping, I just closed my eyes a little bit so that she would think I was sleeping but I could still see a little bit through my eyes and there she was right in front of me, and then she even came up to me to give me a kiss! IT WAS SO HARD NOT TO LAUGH. And then Mommy, she went away, and I waited all night long until it was like midnight or something, I think. I don't have a clock in my room but it was very dark and there were few car noises outside. And then I heard the door open, and I snuck out of my room and there was Daddy, and I was so very happy, because I had the drawing in my hands and I was going to show him. And I showed him and I said "Look Daddy, I made a drawing for you and I even drew my very own signature, the one I'm gonna use when I grow up and I pay the check for the hamburgers." And Daddy walked up to me and he crouched. And he sighed, and I could feel the scent of alcohol from his mouth, and I was scared because I knew Daddy had been drinking, and Mommy always got angry when Daddy went out drinking and she would scream and she would say "You asshole! You are supposed to take care of this family! Not to disappear all day and drown your sorrows away!" And I didn't know what a sorrow was but it sounded like something very bad. And so, Daddy sighed in front of me with the alcohol breath and he took the drawing from my hands and without even looking at it he squeezed it all into a ball in his fist and then he stood up and he looked very tall and he said to me: "Shouldn't you be sleeping?" And I said "Yes Daddy, but I stayed up to show you my drawing." And that was when I got very scared because he didn't even

look at my drawing and now he was going to scold me and I just wanted him to smile at me but then he took me from my arm and he shoved me in the sofa, and I sat down, and he took off his belt, and he told me “You should have listened to your mother. It is bad for kids like you to stay up so late, it slows down your development.” And then he laughed and he asked me: “Do you know what we do to boys who aren’t good?” And that was when I got very scared and I think I peed my pants a little because I did know and then he walked up to me, and he played with my hair and then he whispered into my ear something which I will never forget in my whole entire life, he said: “If you tell Mommy, I will kill you.” And that is when I think I started crying and then he put me face down and pulled my pants down and he started hitting me in my butt and it really hurt and I just wanted him to stop and I cried and I cried and I cried and I cried and I cried. And then a light was turned on and Momma was there with her arms crossed and looking all crazy like she had been crying and father got on top of me and I don’t think Momma could see me because she didn’t say anything and I just cried in silence because if Momma saw me Daddy would get even more mad, and all I could think was “Why can’t you be just a little more appreciative? Why can’t you stop being so mean? Don’t you see how hard I try to make you happy?” And then I understood what Daddy felt for this Boss person, and then the lights were turned off and the talking stopped and instead I heard some kissing noises or something and the door from Mommy and Daddy’s room was shut and so I just pulled up my pants and tried to sleep on the sofa and I remember telling to myself, I said, “When Daddy drinks he becomes very mean and a bully. I will never drink alcohol not a single glass in my whole entire life because I don’t want to be a monster like Daddy and I just want to show my family love and all be happy and holding hands and smiling and with a Sun drawn with an orange crayon and also with a yellow crayon too. God, I swear to you, I will never drink in my whole entire life. I promise. Amen.”

And the years passed and I grew older, and I started making more friends at school, and sometimes we would have sleepovers and it was very fun, but when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old sometimes they would bring a bottle of alcohol to the room to “play” and to “have fun”, but I knew alcohol was no fun so I would ask for my Mom to be phoned and I would tell her to pick me up. But I didn’t want to be mean, so we had a keyword, and when I asked her

if she had found my blue sweater she would know that was me asking her to come pick me up. I don't think she ever knew what Daddy did to me that night.

And I grew older still, and I learned that alcohol was present in everyone's lives and I wouldn't be able to avoid it forever and so when other people drank I was able to stay in the room but sometimes I would get very very quiet and attentive because I was looking at people making sure no one went berserk or anything like that. As a matter of fact I had to calm down some folks who were getting all warmed up a couple of times or sometimes even break up some fights and I even got a blue eye and a cracked tooth once but it was all worth it because I stopped people from getting hurt.

And I always avoided Daddy. I don't know if he remembered what he did to me that night, and I don't know if he was sorry about it but I tried to get as far away from him as possible. Sometimes I would have these nightmares where monsters walked around the house and noises of pain and terror came from the living room. And you know what? I don't think Daddy drank alcohol anymore after that, the house never smelled, and when I helped Mommy do the laundry his clothes didn't smell of alcohol either and there was much less shouting but I was very scared of him ever since, and I never did a drawing of us as a family again, and I told God every single night before going to sleep, "God thank you very much for keeping me strong with my promise. Please help me never drink a single glass of alcohol in my whole entire life, not even by accident please, amen."

And things were decent, and I finished school and I went into trade school and began working as an electrician. And there were a couple women in my life, God knows by what silly play of destiny they just kind of seemed to come into my life. And one of them, Mary-Ann, she was the one I asked to marry me when we learned a baby was coming our way. And we didn't really want a baby, we weren't planning for it but I was very happy because perhaps one day the little baby will come up to me with a drawing of us three and a bright shining sun all drawn with crayons that I would have paid with my hard earned money, and I would be able to grab that drawing gently and smile and lift my baby up in the air and tell him just how proud I was of him and then I would put the drawing in the fridge or keep it in a nice album with all of our family's

memories. But things were not quite like that, I think because Mary-Ann never wanted to marry me and so the whole ambience was always gloomy and dark at home. But I would take our little baby into the garden to play and we would have lots of fun and sometimes he would tell me he loves me and I would start to cry but I would turn the other way because I didn't want my son to watch me cry he needed a strong father, but the tears would just get me every time he said those sacred words, because he was the only one in the whole entire world who said these words to me and I was just so happy every time he said them and I would know everything was all right.

And that beautiful little baby boy eventually became a beautiful kid, and then a handsome young man. And the time came when he started going to sleepovers, and before he went I would always say to him. "Listen son, be careful with that alcohol stuff, it can be very dangerous, please trust me on this one." And he would always listen, or at least it seemed like he did because he would always be home the next day in shape and form to go to the park to play ball with me or something, and then he became older and he also seemed to become more lonely and more miserable because my baby boy would never hang out with his friends anymore or go to any sleepovers and I didn't understand why. I tried to talk to him about it and he would just tell me he was tired or that there were no plans for the day and I felt so sad for him because I didn't know what was going on or how I could help him but I wanted him to be happy.

And then one day, out of nowhere, he disappeared. We were so scared Mary-Ann and I, we called the police and all his used to be friends' houses and nobody could find him or know where he was. And I always slept in the sofa, on the living room, waiting for him, and sometimes I would have nightmares and remember that day that Daddy hit me and I would cry a little bit and I would smell the scent of alcohol, and a voice would tell me to go to the store and buy a bottle of booze just to see how it felt, that there was no harm in trying, and I would say "Your temptations will not work on me Satan for God is and always has been by my side and I promised never to drink alcohol not a single glass of it in my whole entire life because I didn't want to end up like monster Daddy."

And then on the fifth night there was rain and lightning and then a knock on the door. And there was a silhouette against the lightning and I thought the Devil was finally here to get me, and the

Devil took a step forward and it wasn't the Devil it was my son. And I hugged my son and I held onto him and although I always tried not to cry in front of him I cried and I cried and I cried, and I said, "Oh son! Where have you been? We were so worried, Mom and I!"

And he looked at me with eyes which were dizzy and he raised his finger and he opened his mouth and that is when I felt it. His breath stank of alcohol, the Devil's water, and he said to me, he said, "Dad. Why did you have to scare me so? Why did you have to scare me so? You always told me alcohol was so bad, and it was so dangerous. What for? What for? I would look at all my friends drinking and laughing and having fun and I would never drink not a single sip because I knew how important that was to you and the last thing I wanted to do in the universe was to hurt you or disappoint you. But Dad, why? Why? I lost all my friends because of you! I felt so guilty when I was with them I didn't even wanted to be there with them, and I felt so filthy and so disgusting because I wanted to be like all the others and have fun and be happy, and I wanted the others to laugh at my jokes and pat me in the back or tackle me or something but everyone was so doubtful of me because I was so doubtful of them. Oh Dad, please forgive, I don't want to hurt you, but I've felt so alone for such a long time and I just wanted to be happy and to feel loved, and it's no fault of yours I know how much you love me I always have known it and I love you too, so so much, but I wanted... I NEEDED something else. Please Daddy forgive me."

And I just stared at him dumbfounded, and the stench of alcohol made me feel sick and made me want to puke, but I had to listen to what he had to say, I had to listen to what Devil had consumed him. And so he continued and he said, "Dad, really. Why have you been so scared of this? Listen to what I did. I am..." He laughed, "I am so happy, and so scared... But I am so happy and so excited. I went to the bar, and I know I'm not old enough yet but I guess I looked old enough to the bartender and he gave me some alcohol, just a little and then I started dancing and talking with people and having fun and I felt so loved. And Dad you won't believe what happened next. There was this girl who was looking at me from a stool, and I took a sip from my drink and I went up to her and we talked and she played with her hair, and then she invited me to her home, and Dad." He laughed hysterically, "AND I SAID YES, DAD! And we went to her house and she kissed me and then she undressed me and we made love... Oh, father. I would never have thought someone like me would make love. I thought it was impossible for someone like me, I always felt so far from anyone else." He smiled. "And Dad," He took a pause. "I think

I am in love, Dad. She is just the best! When I woke up the next morning I told her how guilty I felt and how mad I thought you were going to get with me and she said I could stay with her and so I did, I have been staying with her the last couple of days, I can't wait to introduce her to you and to Momma."

"I know I should have called or something but I was just so scared and I was making up the courage to come tell you everything that had happened and I thought maybe it would be easier if I drank a little bit beforehand so I would feel braver like I did that night in the bar, and also so I could show you how nothing bad will happen and that you don't need to be afraid!"

He looked at me and smiled, he hugged me. "I love you, Dad. You are the best."

And while he was hugging me I felt spiders walking down my body and I felt the Devil's hands pressing into my back, and I smelled the scent of alcohol and I could smell my Daddy, and I felt like I felt when I saw my Daddy and I cried and I cried: "Why have you forsaken me! Oh Lord, why have you forsaken me? How have I failed you for thee to punish me so? Have I not been good, and decent?" And I felt so angry and so wrath, and I understood now that the hate for my Father had never vanished from inside my body and I understood now that it was too late to do anything about it, and so I grabbed my son, I looked into his eyes, and I could see my eyes shining in his, they were red eyes, glowing eyes, the eyes of the Devil, and I grabbed my son by the neck, and I squeezed, and I squeezed, and I squeezed harder and he gasped, and his eyes turned red and I kept on squeezing, and we fell down on the floor and I pulled him up from the neck and pushed his body down to the floor and I hit him one, and twice and then three times. And then I let go of his neck and he was crying, "Stop Dad! Please stop! Please forgive me!" And I wanted to stop but I couldn't stop because now the Devil was inside me and so I stuck my fingers in his eyes, and pushed and pushed and pushed, until my nails felt like they had teared into an olive and red blood came out in rivers and he screamed and he shook in the ground and every time he screamed I could smell the scent of alcohol and I just grew angrier and angrier, and I kept hitting him and punching him and biting him, and I stuck my nails and his stomach until I teared open a hole and then I took his liver and I ate it in front of him, and I hurt him so bad, so bad, until he stopped screaming and I knew he was dead. And then I stopped and I looked at my blood filled hands and I looked at the dead body and I couldn't see my son but my Father and I placed my head on his chest and I cried so hard like that night a thousand years ago and I cried and I cried and I said, "What have I done! I have killed Daddy! I have killed Daddy! Daddy

I'm sorry, Daddy forgive me! Please Daddy wake up, I am so sorry Daddy, I never wanted to do these things to you, I will go to Boss with you and we will show him, yes we will show him and we will tell him to stop being mean, and to be more appreciative because I know how hard you work Daddy. Mommy and I both do.” And I cried some more and I screamed, and I said, “Why Daddy?! WHY?! Why couldn't you be more appreciative, why couldn't you have been less mean. I always tried so hard to please you Daddy. Please wake up Daddy. Please wake up Daddy. Please wake up.”