

Dad's Apology

written by

Have Mercy

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

THE FRONT DOOR

It stands at the end of a narrow hallway in what appears to be a modern yet modest residency.

A framed photo of an orchestra in full swing hangs from the wall, below that, a CELLO delicately rests.

THE DOORBELL SOUNDS - DING DONG. It's notably loud.

A moment

It sounds again -- DING DONG.

Through a doorway, A young woman emerges into the hallway.

She moves steadily, arms out, feeling her way forward.

She's blonde, angelic looking and her name is EMILY and whilst seemingly blind her journey to the door is effortless.

Emily unlocks the bolt and opens the door, revealing --

A 50-something MAN, dressed in smart casual, just standing there, gazing.

EMILY

Hello?

The man seems struck.

EMILY

...Hello? I know someone's there.

MAN

...Emily. I know you don't recognise this voice and I'm so sorry to intrude... but I had to see you.

Emily stands uneasy as the man summons the courage to introduce himself --

MAN

...I'm Henry. I'm your father.

She stands motionless.

Then starts to breathe heavily as this all sinks in.

She then rushes to slam the door shut but Henry reacts quickly, forcing it ajar with his hand.

HENRY (O.S)
Please, please hear me out.

EMILY
I don't want to see you.

HENRY (O.S)
Please, Emily.

EMILY
Please leave.

HENRY (O.S)
I just want to explain, I'd never
ever hurt you, I just ask for one
chance, one chance for redemption.
Please, please hear me out.

Emily remains propped up against her door.

But gradually relents and her arms soon drop.

The door swings back open.

HENRY
Thank you. Thank you, Emily.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Emily sits pensively on her couch. Henry sits adjacent in
this plainly decorated but extremely well-kept space.

HENRY
Firstly, I'm sorry for everything.

He looks for a response but she sits silently.

HENRY
Sorry for not being a father. Sorry
for not being able to guide and
support you. Sorry for...

EMILY
Raping my mother?

HENRY
...Yes.

They sit in silence for a moment.

HENRY
I was a very angry, frustrated,
stupid young man.

He reflects.

HENRY

I can't change the past. I can only
change the now.

Emily breathes troubled breaths

EMILY

...Why you here?

HENRY

It's Thanksgiving and I wanted to
see my daughter.

EMILY

You're not my father.

Henry dips his head, knowing it's true.

HENRY

...But you are my flesh and blood.

She doesn't answer. Henry thinks carefully about his next
words.

HENRY

I know it was the failed abortion
that caused your blindness. I know
it was the rape that led your
mother to that abortion.

Emily doesn't say a word, remains uncomfortable.

HENRY

I feel your blindness is my fault.
I dearly, dearly want to redeem
that. I'll do whatever it takes.
Just give me one chance to prove to
you I mean it. That I care for you.

EMILY

...I've never missed my eyesight. I
missed having a father. Mum never
trusted men after you.

Henry absorbs the full force of Emily's words. His eyes begin
to well up.

HENRY

...I don't deserve forgiveness, I
just plead to you for it.

She senses the hurt in his tone.

HENRY

You name anything, any charity, any cause -- I'll dive into it. I'll do whatever it takes -- anything just to have a tiny part in your life.

Emily now sits conflicted, his words have struck a chord. She steadily gets to her feet and walks over towards him. Holds her arms out.

EMILY

May I feel your hands?

HENRY

...Sure

He moves his hands towards hers, and she feels around them...

EMILY

...You're anxious. Maybe you're sincere.

She then walks in the direction of her OPEN-CONCEPT KITCHEN, whilst Henry draws in the consolation he just received.

EMILY

Cup of tea?

HENRY

I'll get them, you sit down.

EMILY

You've got a lot to learn about the blind.

HENRY

Sorry. Yes, please.

We stay on Henry as the kettle starts to boil.

He looks around her immaculate living room, a PHOTO on the wall catches his eye --

A strawberry blonde-haired lady, around thirty years old, guides a young Emily, who is mounted on a pony. Henry stays transfixed on it.

EMILY (O.S)

I must ask you to leave after this tea as I need to practice for my show tonight. My chaperone will be here soon.

HENRY

...Show?

EMILY (O.S)

An orchestral for Thanksgiving.

Henry looks away from the photo and in direction of her bedroom - which also has a doorless doorway.

HENRY

I hear you're a very talented musician.

He then looks in Emily's direction.

HENRY

And a very beautiful young woman, if I may say. I'm truly humbled.

She now returns with two mugs of tea.

EMILY

Thank you.

She hands a mug in the general direction of Henry who takes it.

HENRY

Cheers.

Emily makes her way back over to her couch and takes a sip from her mug.

EMILY

In my community, they're looking for volunteers to walk guide dogs and help train the puppies.

HENRY

Sign me up. I walk them all. Jus name the company.

EMILY

It's the Mira foundation.

Henry mouths a mental note - 'Mira foundation'

EMILY

I guess if you commit to that... I'd consider seeing you again. But this is difficult for me, you do understand that?

Henry nods, concurs and then remembers she's blind --

HENRY

Yes, I do. Thank you. Thank you,
Emily.

Emily takes another sip from her mug whilst that uneasy vibe still takes precedence.

HENRY

...I should get out of your hair
now.

EMILY

Well, I should practise.

HENRY

Of course... Is there any chance
you could play a tune on your cello
for me? It would mean a lot.

She looks unsure.

EMILY

...ok.

HENRY

Let me grab it for you.

EMILY

No, I'll--

Henry has already made his way to the hall.

He returns quickly with the cello.

HENRY

Here you go.

He hands it along with the bow down to Emily. She then gets herself set.

Henry takes his seat.

EMILY

This one's called The Swan.

She strikes her bow against the strings and starts churning out a beautiful melody.

Henry watches, instantly captured.

Emily manoeuvres her bow with such grace you'd think it was an angel playing to God.

The melody so moving, it would produce a tear from the devil.

We stay on her for the duration of the performance.

2 minutes of emotion-charged composition.

Emily, so lost in the music, you feel she is playing out her life's struggles through this stirring rhythm.

Her song soon comes to its riveting finale.

She then carefully rests the cello and bow against her couch and then looks in the direction of Henry.

HENRY

...Beautiful. Thank you.

Emily returns a smile, but that undercurrent of uncertainty is far from gone.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - LATER

Henry leaves Emily's flat, gently closing the door behind him.

He then walks down the corridor and into the --

EMPTY LOBBY

He stops just ahead of the main doors. Checks nobody is around.

He then reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out some cash notes. He counts them. It feels underhand.

Slips the cash back into his pocket.

Then reaches into his other pocket and pulls out a pair of KNICKERS.

He brings them up towards his nose and sniffs them.

Inhales the scent with a perverse euphoria.

Pulls the knickers from his face and gazes at them.

HENRY

Hope to see you soon, Emily...

With a grotesque smile, he stuffs the knickers back in his pocket and exits the building.

The door creaks very slowly until it shuts.

The end.