

HIS FATHER

Written by

Simon K. Parker

copyright 2025
Simonkyleparker@hotmail.co.uk

FADE IN:

INT. DAVE'S CAR - NIGHT

A beat-up sedan. The air is thick with marijuana smoke. DAVE (40s), tired, stares at a darkened house. He takes a drag from a joint. He looks out at it with wild, tired eyes.

He's on the phone, loudspeaker

DAVE

I'm here. First time looking at this place in ten years and he's not changed a fucking thing.

On the other end of the call is Sarah, out of shot we can hear he busily moving around a kitchen preparing food.

SARAH

(O.S)

How long have you been sitting out there for?

DAVE

An hour. My whole body is screaming at me just to turn around and leave.

SARAH

(O.S)

Just go and talk to him.

DAVE

It's not that easy.

SARAH

(O.S)

If he has another fall and no one is there to find him what then? He's lucky that the delivery guy just so happened to look through his window and call the police. Otherwise no one would have found him. And then what?

DAVE

But doesn't that just spell out everything. He doesn't have anyone.

SARAH

He's got you.

DAVE

It would be better if he did just die. Who would go to his funeral? No one. Just drop him into a ditch and forget about him.

SARAH

(O.S)

I can't believe you're saying this shit. No matter what, he's still your dad. Sometimes you don't realise how much somebody loved you until it's too late. Might be time to forget and forget the past. Not for his sake, but for your own.

DAVE

It's easy for you to say. You're dad's great. Mine is just a piece of shit.

He takes another drag of the joint.

SARAH

(O.S)

You're not smoking are you?

He smiles.

DAVE

No. I've got to go. Time to put this trash in the worst care home that money can buy.

He hangs up the call and exits the car.

INT. JONA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dave steps into the dim, stale air of his father's house.

JONA (70s), lying awkwardly in his armchair. Flipping through a magazine.

Dave silently walks over, standing beside him. Jona looks up, clearly shocked.

JOAN

Dave? What are you doing here? I thought you were one of the carers?

DAVE

You're going into a home.

JOAN

What?

DAVE

A care home. You can't look after yourself. So, I'm going to get you into a place with people who can.

Joan twists in his armchair to face Dave better.

JOAN

You can't be serious. This is my home. I won't go.

DAVE

Too late.

INT. JONA'S HOUSE - JONA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Dave opens a small suitcase onto the bed. Jona follows him inside, in pain and very uneasy on his feet. Wincing with each footstep.

Dave starts to empty Jona clothes out of the wardrobe and into a suitcase.

DAVE

I've already looked into places.

JONA

I won't go into a care home. This is where I want to die. Not in some strange, dirty place.

DAVE

Then who's going to check in on you?

JONA

I have a career.

DAVE

And how often do they come?

JONA

Every Tuesday and Friday.

DAVE

Not good enough. You fall on a
friday night, no one is going to
find you until Tuesday morning.

JONA

Well, what about you? You're my
son. You haven't been in this house
in years.

DAVE

Ten years, but who's counting.

JONA

Don't I desire a visit every now
and then? Don't I desire something
from you?

Dave's jaw tightens. He reaches up and touches his scalp,
just above his right temple.

DAVE

Tell me DAD, do you remember this?

Jona looks confused. Dave's finger traces a faint, jagged
scar.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I was nine years old. I didn't
finish my breakfast. You screamed
at me that I was ungrateful. You
threw me to the floor, picked up my
chair and smashed it against my
skull.

JONA

(Whispering)

I... I didn't mean to.

DAVE

Yes you did dad, yes you did! So
why the fuck should I do anything
for you?

Jona moves to the bed, tries to take the suitcase from it but
Dave stops him.

JOAN

Dave please, don't do this to me.

DAVE

You've never cared about me, so
tell me why should I start caring
about you now.

Joan has to fight to stop himself from crying, but it's a real struggle.

JOAN
How wrong you are.

INT. JONA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jona drops back down into his armchair. A defeated sigh escaped him. His voice is raw, broken. He watches as Dave throws the filled up suitcase at his feet.

JONA
After your brother...

DAVE
I'm listening to this shit.

JOAN
AWell you need to... after Mark died... the drugs, then the crash... I was terrified, Dave. Terrified you'd go the same way. Your mum... she died so young. I didn't know how to raise you two. I just... I didn't know. And made such a fucking mess with Mark. I didn't want the same thing to happen to you.

DAVE
I miss my brother everyday. But bringing him up isn't going to make me feel sorry for you.

JOAN
Fucking hell Dave, that's not why I'm saying any of this.

DAVE
Then why?

JOAN
I love you. I love you so much. I just didn't know how to show it. I didn't want you to ruin your life in the same way as Mark did. But I was stupid and on my own. I fucked up so many times and I'm sorry. You're free to hate me, but please. I'm begging you. Please don't think I hate you, because I never have. I love you.

Dave freezes. The confession hangs in the air, a truth he never expected.

DAVE
(softly)
I'm only doing what I think is
right, dad.

JOAN
That was my mantra for your whole
childhood. Everyday I say that to
myself. And how wrong I was.

INT. JONA'S HOUSE - SPARE ROOM - DAY

Dave, with a fresh empty suitcase goes into a small, dusty spare room. But as soon as he opens the door he stops dead.

The walls are covered. Not with wallpaper, but with photographs.

There are pictures of a young Dave with a gap-toothed grin, graduation photos, Dave holding his newborn child, smiling with Sarah. Every success, every milestone of his life, meticulously displayed. Curated.

He walks slowly, his hand brushing against a framed snapshot of him as a child, beaming after scoring a goal. He sees a photo of his wedding day, a small, faded print of him holding his daughter for the first time.

DAVE
(muttering)
What is this? I can't believe what
I'm seeing.

INT. JONA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dave returns to the living room, staring at Jona.

DAVE
Dad, the spare room.

Joan, stuck in the armchair, aims a tired smile back at him.

JOAN
(almost whispering)
I never thought I would see you
again. Everyday I have my breakfast
in that room. Pretty sad huh?

DAVE
Decorate it yourself?

Jona nods.

JOAN
Dave... I'm so sorry. For everything. For the way I was. I was scared. So scared. I know it's no excuse, but... I was so afraid of losing you too.

DAVE
You're not going into a home.

Jona looks at him, confused, then tears well up in his eyes.

JOAN
Then what?

DAVE
I don't know, but we'll work it out.

EXT. JONA'S HOUSE - DAY

Dave helps Jona carefully into his own car. It's slow, painstaking work.

JOAN
Where are we going?

DAVE
You haven't met your grandchildren yet have you. Well, I think it's time that you did.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dave's father is sitting awkwardly on the sofa, still bruised but looking more at ease. Dave's WIFE (SARAH) approaches him, a warm smile on her face.

SARAH
It's good to have you here.

His CHILDREN (LEO, 9, and CHLOE, 7) tentatively peek around the corner.

DAVE
Kids, this is Grandpa. Come give him a hug.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
(grinning)
But be careful. He falls over
easily.

Chloe, the bolder of the two, approaches him, offering a drawing she just made. Jona's eyes soften.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave walks into the bathroom. He opens the mirrored cabinet above the sink, reaches into a small, forgotten corner, and pulls out a small, crinkled baggie of weed. The same weed he was smoking just days ago.

He stares at it for a moment, then walks to the toilet. He opens the baggie, and without a second thought, empties the contents into the bowl. He flushes.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END