

Inner Demons

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Part I

Act 1

Chapter 1

Early August

Part II

Act 2

Chapter 2

Early November

Part III

Act 3

Chapter 3

Christmas

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A Letter to my Daughter

Kayla, my dear Kayla.

My lovely, beautiful daughter, Kayla.

I hope that living with your aunt has proven to be good move for you to make. Sometimes, I still have a hard time accepting the fact that that is what is best for you, but in the end, I think that it was healthier for you to move away from here, just as it was healthier for me to stay. I think we each have our own way of grieving.

For me, I needed to stay here and go through the motions of putting life back together. The house is paid off, and the market isn't right for me to try and sell it. I know this isn't the type of thing you want to here, but this is the type of thing that occupies my day-to-day thoughts – “What is the house worth?” “Could I get a decent deal on it in the market?” “Is it worth moving somewhere else within the same town to keep my job, or should I look for something else outside of this little neighborhood?”

I'm sure you're thinking about school, about the friends you've made, and about what you'll make, what you'll do. Everything moves so much faster when you're younger – you have less tying you down to one place, nothing except the grown-ups who seem to make all of the decisions for you.

I've been reading (I know, surprise surprise, right?), and I found your mother's old Bible. The first few pages inform me that it is the “Today's New International Version”, which seems like rather a mouthful to me. I've never read the bible, so I don't know about these things.

Did you know that your mother was a spiritual person? It's something that we had talked about early on during our courtship, but something which never seemed to come up during the time that we were raising you before her death. She wasn't practicing, if I'm getting that term right. She never went to church, and never mentioned her spirituality to either you or Justin as far as I knew. I never stopped her, but it seemed that my belief that there was no God was stronger than her belief in God, because we wound up raising you to be agnostic, and decidedly not Christian.

When she died, when Karen died, my atheism was strengthened. 'How could any just God put any just (for so I thought myself at the time) man through such torture?'

I didn't know the story of Job at the time.

... Well, okay, that's a bit of a stretch. I didn't know the story of Job, true, but I also think that I greatly misunderstood a lot of what went on behind the scenes of Christianity.

I'd been raised by an agnostic and an atheist, and, similar to what I mentioned about you two, the atheism won out. My father's staunch belief that there was no God was stronger than my mother's apathy, and that left me feeling as though there simply mustn't be a God. This is the power that fathers weave over their sons.

When Karen died, it was confirmation, in some small way, that my father was right. No benevolent figure, however distant, could allow its creations to feel such pain.

TODO

The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O absalom, my son, my son!"

TODO

I will be honest and say that I have heard from your aunt. I'm proud of you, Kayla, and all that you've been able to accomplish this last year. I want to see you, I really do, but I understand how difficult it will be for you to come back and visit me here. I'll make my way out there some day, out where it's clean and cool, out where I can walk with you down the block from the school to your house.

The house next door has been demolished, and some corporation has taken ownership of the land in some complex agreement with the homeowners' associataion that I don't understand. I haven't read to deeply into it, truthfully, for reasons that I'm sure you can appreciate. After the investigation, the police had the area cordoned off, and after the yellow tape disappeared, I couldn't bring myself over to the skeleton of a house, or the bare plot of land that it has become.

I know that this is hard for you, Kayla, that it must still be hard. Your aunt Alice has mentioned that you have only just begun talking to her, talking to anyone outside of school. I know that you're excelling in school, but I know that it's proved difficult for you to move on outside of school.

I know that it hurts, Kayla love. I still hurt; I hurt every day. I know that you and I share the problem of the doubt we get when we tell our story. Even so, I want you to keep trying. I want you to keep excelling at school, and I want you to keep trying to open up and make more friends, to open up to Alice. No one means you harm, and everyone is rooting for you to feel better.

I'll see you soon, Kay-bear, I promise. I'll get things sorted out and I'll see you soon.

Love,

Daddy