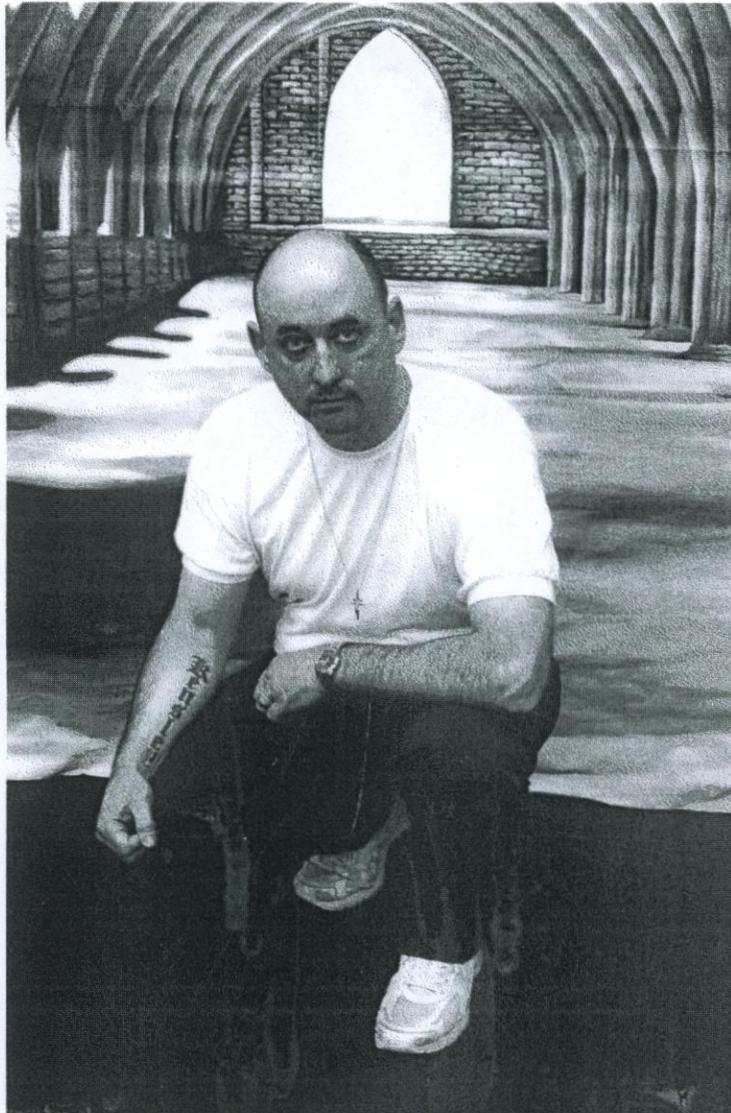


Pappy Lives in the Big House

A Non-Fiction Book



Date:

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Title of the book: *Pappy Lives in the Big House*

Introductory: *How a Mother goes to see her estranged Father and at the same time allows her Daughter to visit her Grandfather for the first time.*

Pappy Lives In The
Big House

Written by
John Gerholt, Sr.

2016

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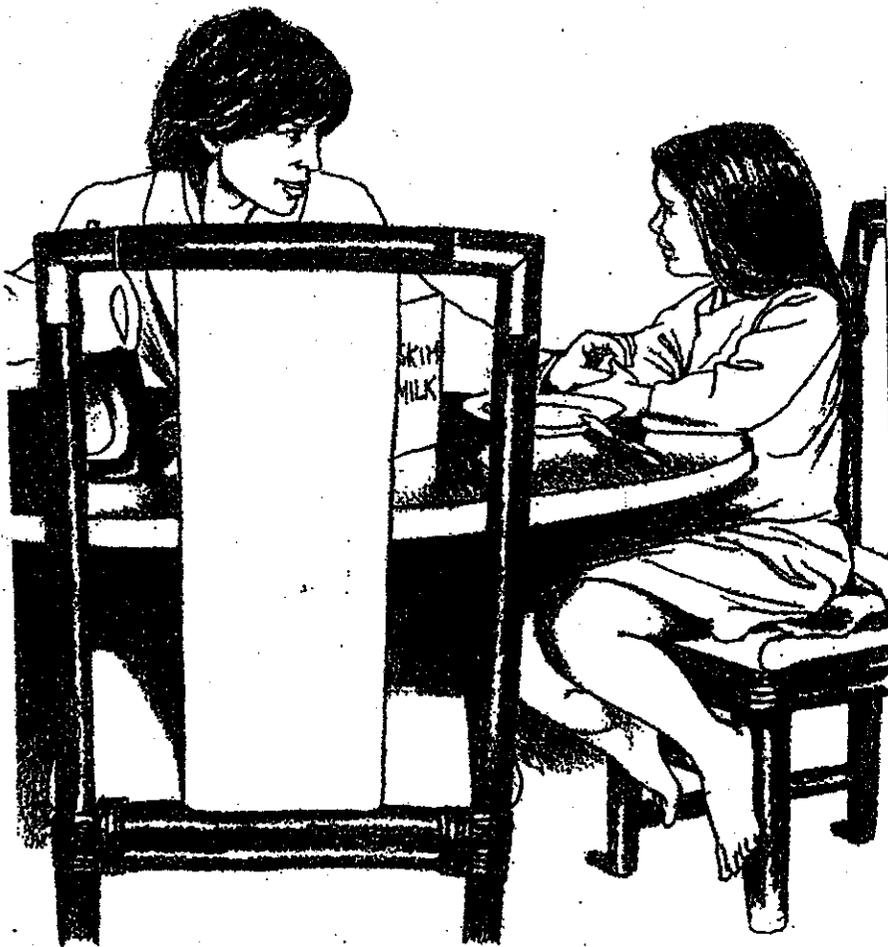


Early Saturday morning was like any other Saturday. Jennifer was making homemade pancakes for her daughter, Ava, and herself. Ava was only five and she loved to help her Mommy do everything ... with the exception of cleaning her room. Ava asked, "Mommy, can I make you a pancake?"

Jennifer started to laugh to herself, then said, "Sure, why not."

Jennifer held the hot pan so that Ava wouldn't get burned. Then Ava started to pour out the hot batter saying, "Mommy, my pancakes is better than yours, isn't it Mommy?"

Jennifer looked at the batter dripping down Ava's arm and said, "They sure are."



Once Ava was done eating her pancakes, her mother said, "Sweetheart, do you know where we're going tomorrow?"

Ava looked up at her mother and said, "Yep, I sure do. You said we're going to see my Pappy, isn't that right, Mommy?"

Her mother looked into Ava's beautiful eyes and told her, "That's right, sweetheart. Tomorrow will be the first time since you were born that you'll finally get to meet your Pappy. And you'll be able to visit him all afternoon. Then, if you want, we can visit him every two weeks."



Jennifer knew it was going to be a special day for Ava. Since Jennifer worked at the local Correctional Facility, she knew what they would encounter before they were permitted to go inside. There would be long lines of family members waiting patiently to see their loved ones. Jennifer explained this to Ava. But Ava still very much wanted to meet her Pappy.



The following morning, Ava went running into the kitchen, yelling to her mother; "Mommy, Mommy, today's the day. I get to visit my Pappy, right Mommy."

Jennifer replied, "That's right sweetheart. So right after you eat your breakfast, you can put your new outfit on."

Ava was very excited, yelling, "I'm going to see my Pappy!"



Jennifer told Ava, "Let's get the house straightened up so we can go. But on the way to see your Pappy, we'll stop for some lunch. It's a pretty long drive before we get to SCI Graterford. So make sure you take along your crayons and paper and one of your favorite dolls."



As they were driving towards the prison, Jennifer was worrying about her old car, wondering if they would make it there on time. Earlier in the week, the car had made some unusual noises under the hood. She hoped it would last one more week, when she would be picking up her new car. Ava looked up at her mother and said, "What's wrong, Mommy?"

Jennifer answered, "I'm just hoping our car doesn't break down before you get to see Pappy."

Ava replied, "If Daddy was here, he'd know how to fix it." Her mother reassured her by saying, "If we break down, we'll call Daddy at work to come get us."



As they drove, Ava said to her mother, "How do we get to see Pappy? Will they bring Pappy outside to see us?"

"No," her mother replied, "We'll go inside the prison to see your Pappy. They have a visiting room, like you have at your school."

Ava then asked, "Are you sure they'll let us back out again?"

Her mother told her, "Of course they will. They have no reason to keep us. We haven't done anything wrong, sweetheart."



As they drove into the parking lot of SCI Graterford, Ava's eyes lit up with excitement. "Mommy, is this where Pappy lives?"

"Yes," her mother replied, "it is, sweetheart."

Ava exclaimed, "My Pappy lives in the Big House!"

Once they were both out of the car, Jennifer took Ava by the hand and started to walk toward the front door of the prison with a big gate behind it. The prison had huge walls with barbed wire on top of the walls. Ava was very curious. "Is this prison?" she whispered.

Her mother said, "It sure is. But don't worry."



Once they finally got inside the prison gate there were people standing everywhere waiting to see their loved ones. To the right stood a guard in his gray shirt and black pants. The guard asked, "What's your name and who are you here to see?"

Ava spoke up proudly, "I'm here to see my Pappy!"

Her mother said, "We're here to see my father, John Gerholt." Without any further delay, the guard gave her mother a pass to take to the sergeant in the building next door. But before moving on, Jennifer had to sign their name in a big black book.



As they proceeded through the door and walked along the sidewalk, Ava kept looking at the huge walls that were inside the prison. When they got inside, Ava said, "Mommy, there are a lot of people in here."

People were sitting on benches all around the sides of a big room. There were several guards standing around, watching the visitors and the prisoners.



Ava was still amazed. She kept looking at all the children that were sitting around waiting to visit their loved ones. A few of the little boys were reading books. Others were standing on the benches. A few little girls were sleeping on their mothers' shoulders. One little girl was sitting by herself. Maybe, Ava thought, she was waiting to see her Pappy, just like me.



As Ava and her mother were waiting, the guard finally called out their names. Jennifer took Ava by the hand. Ava asked, "Are you scared, Mommy."

"No," she answered, "Why would you ask?"

Ava answered, "I'm a little bit scared."

Her mother replied, "That's OK. I am too ... just a little." Ava and Jennifer smiled at one another and continued to wait.



The guard inside the visiting room looked at Ava and her mother and then smiled. While she waited, Ava looked out of the window. She saw some birds out in the yard along with numerous benches. Ava said, "Look Mommy! It's just like our yard with all the birds. Right, Mommy?"



A few minutes later, Ava and her mother went into another room. A man sat in the corner. Jennifer noticed that he was looking at his hands. His mind seemed to be somewhere else. To Jennifer, he looked just as nervous as she and Ava did. After all, he wasn't just Ava's Pappy, he was also Jennifer's Dad. It had been years since the last time they had seen one another, although Ava didn't know that.



As Jennifer looked at Ava, she told her, "Sweetheart, over there in the corner is your Pappy." Jennifer thought he looked old and tired. But he was still her Dad. Ava took one look at her Pappy, walked right up, hopped onto the chair in front of him, and said, "I'm Ava Monroe and you're my Pappy."

As he looked at his granddaughter for the first time, there were tears in his eyes. He said, "You look just like your mother."

Ava started to laugh, and then smiled. She said, "Everybody tells me that."



Then Jennifer walked over and sat down beside Ava, across from her Dad. Ava said, "Mommy, this is my Pappy."

Her mother replied, "Yes, he is."

Then Ava's Pappy said to Jennifer, "It's been a long time since we've talked."

She replied, "I've been pretty busy, working at the prison. But I wanted Ava to meet her Pappy."

"Yes," he said, "It's really nice to finally meet my granddaughter."

Then Ava spoke up, "Pappy, you live in such a big house! And did you know, I love you Pappy."



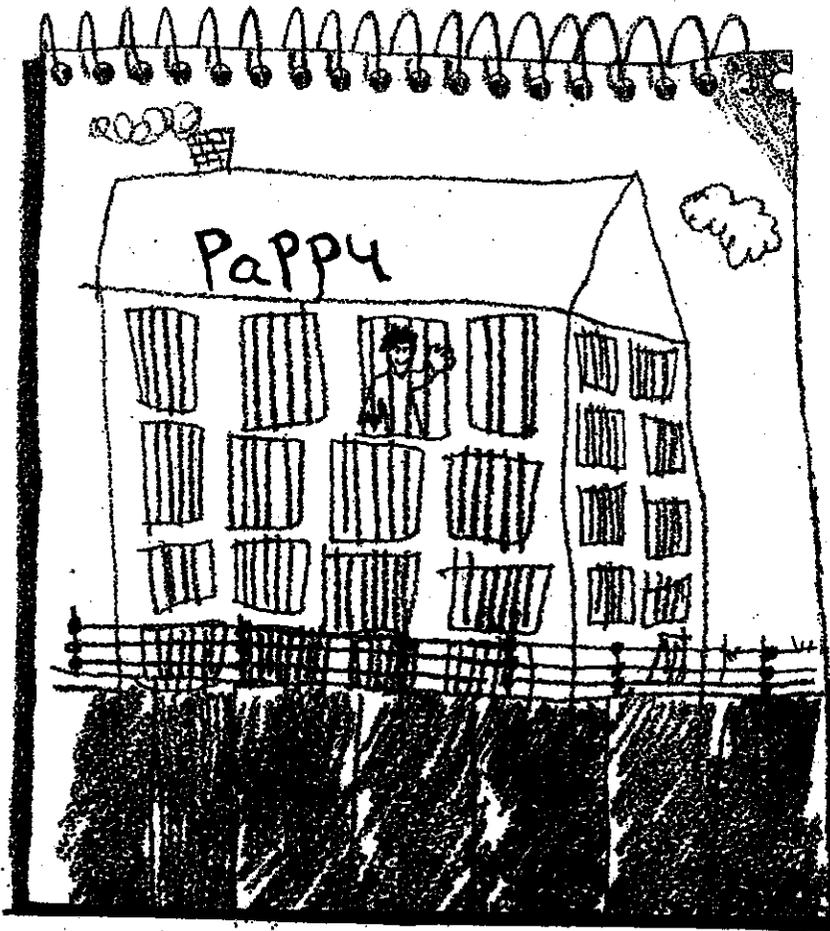
Later in the afternoon Ava said, "Pappy, Mommy said we can visit you again."

Her Pappy said, "I'd like that very much."

Ava was so happy to finally meet her Pappy she talked and talked. Afterwards, he got up and took Ava into his arms, giving her a big hug. Ava hung on to her Pappy, saying, "I love you Pappy."

Jennifer stood up and watched. Then she walked over to hug them both. John was finding it hard to speak. Choking back his emotions, he said to Ava, "I couldn't wait to meet you, sweetheart. I love you both very much."

Ava's eyes lit up. She said, "You're my Pappy."



On the way home, Ava told her mother, "I'm going to draw Pappy a picture to make him happy. He can hang it up in his house."

She used the crayons and paper that she had brought along for the trip. Ava then said, "I'm going to draw Pappy looking out of his window waiting for me to visit him again, because we're Pappy's family, right Mommy?" Then she said, "I love you Mommy for being with me and my Pappy."

Her mother said, "I love you, too. And your Pappy."

The End





About the Author

John Lewis Gerholt, Sr. was born in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania on July 12, 1970. He grew up in the Kistler/Mount Union area and graduated from Mount Union Area High School. Being very mechanically inclined at a young age, he ran his own salvage yard and fixed cars before entering high school.

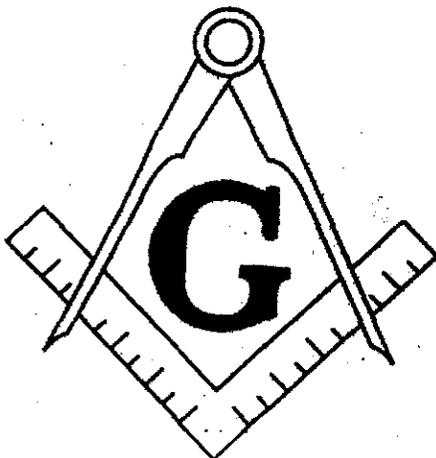
After graduation, he was a race car driver and worked construction. He continued to drive race cars though out the years and prior to becoming incarcerated was the owner and operator of Gerholt's Garage, which was also the home of K.R. Racing Inc. He is the father of six children and the grandfather of one. He is also a member of the freemasons out of the Baltimore, Maryland area as well as the Sergeant at Arms for the American Legion Post 107 in Mount Union, Pennsylvania.

During his 46 months of incarceration at the Bedford County Correctional Facility, he donated his work pay to various organizations in memory of his wife, Karen. Such organizations included: The Bedford County Food Bank, Kara's Closet of Bedford County, Bedford County's Special Olympics, "Stiches" of Love Quilters (Bedford County), and the Huntingdon County Humane Society. At SCI-Graterford, he makes donations when possible to the Holy Name Society, the Support for Kids with Incarcerated Parents (S.K.I.P.) program, and the Veterans' annual donation drive for winter clothing for the homeless veterans in the local areas.

John has written four books thus far. With his first book in 2014, being his autobiography called, Surviving Life. Also in 2014, he started a children's series called, The Gerholt Kids. Then 2015, He completed the second book to that series. In 2016, he completed his fourth book called, Pappy Lives in the Big House. It was inspired and written for his granddaughter, Ava Monroe whom he holds dear to his heart. He has become a Roman Catholic while at SCI-Graterford and has been named 2014 Man of the Year. He is also fortunate enough to work in the Chapel.

You may contact him in writing at:

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All proceeds from this book as well as any generous contributions will go directly to my children. Copy the form below.

Thank you

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