

THE THREE GOOD DEEDS OF SILAS PERCY

Written by

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INT. LAWSON HOME - GRANDPA'S BEDROOM - DAY

GRANDPA LAWSON, 87, wears short sleeve pajamas, has a cross tattoo on his upper arm, and lies on his bed. He labors to breathe as his eyes search the room.

MATT LAWSON, 15, pale and thin, wears faded jeans and a worn T-shirt. He stands next to Grandpa's bed. He blinks back tears and grips a paper.

A Golden Retriever, SY, lies under the bed. His head rests on his paws.

GRANDPA

Come closer, Matt. I can't see you.

Matt leans in and peers into his grandfather's face.

MATT

Here, Grandpa. I have something.

GRANDPA

What's that?

MATT

My last report. I'm in remission.
Doc says I'm doing great.

Matt holds up the report. Grandpa sighs and smiles.

GRANDPA

Thank God. It was my last -- Never mind. I gotta tell you something.

Grandpa lifts his shaky hand and wags a finger at Matt.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I want you to have Sy. He's a good dog, and he needs a responsible owner. Will you do that for me?

Sy lifts his head. His ears perk up.

MATT

Sure, Grandpa. He's a great dog.
But you're going to --

GRANDPA

Naw, don't pretend. You never liked it when we pretended about the cancer. Let's keep it simple.

Matt nods. He darts a quick look around the room, bends down, and peeks under the bed. He nods at Sy and straightens up.

MATT

He's here under the bed.

GRANDPA

Yeah, he's always near. But, Matt, listen; he's not what you might think --

JENNY LAWSON, 40, dresses in old slacks, a faded cotton blouse with her hair tied up in a scarf, steps into the room. She smiles at Grandpa and puts her hand on Matt's shoulder.

JENNY

Hey, Buddy, Grandpa needs his rest. It's time for your medicine, and I've got a snack ready.

Matt nods at Grandpa. His mom puts her arm around his shoulder and gently turns him toward the door.

Grandpa calls out after them.

GRANDPA

Remember Sy, Matt. He's special.

Matt nods, blinks back tears, and taps his thigh.

MATT

Come on, ol' boy!

Sy squiggles out from under the bed, jumps up on the bed, and puts his paws on Grandpa's legs. He whines.

GRANDPA

You heard me, Sy. Go with Matt now.

Jenny shakes her head. She frowns and nudges Matt.

JENNY

Get him.

Matt pulls Sy away. The three go out the door. Grandpa waves weakly. Tears fill his eyes.

GRANDPA

Bye, Silas.

EXT. SUBURBAN PARK - DAY

Matt takes Sy for a walk along a park trail. They come upon TEENS, playing ball.

Sy looks at Matt and then at the kids. Sy whines and starts forward, but Matt holds him back.

MATT
Not for me, boy.

BREE, 15, a pretty girl with long hair, wearing jeans and a flower shirt, glances at Matt and breaks away from the game. She jogs toward Matt and Sy.

BREE
Hey, Matt.

MATT
Hey.

BREE
Want to toss a ball around?

Matt shrugs.

MATT
If I got tackled, Mom'd kill me. I
bruise easily... leads to problems.
You know...

BREE
Yeah, sorry. I forgot.

Bree kneels down and pets Sy. She scratches him behind the ears. Sy rolls over on his back. Matt rolls his eyes.

MATT
Have you no pride?

BREE
He loves it. All dogs do.

Bree darts a glance at Matt. Matt watches a BOY, 15, as he runs and catches a fly ball.

BREE (CONT'D)
You coming back to school?

A GIRL, 15, runs up to the boy and catches him around the waist. They laugh so hard they fall to the ground in giggles.

Matt swallows.

MATT
Uh, maybe.

Matt looks down at Bree stroking Sy. Matt tilts his head. Bree's long hair falls over the dog's soft belly.

MATT (CONT'D)

He's mine now. Sort of. Anyway, I'm taking care of him.

Bree stands.

BREE

Isn't he your grandpa's?

MATT

Yeah, well, things change.

GIRL

Hey, Bree! You coming?

Bree waves at the girl.

BREE

I gotta go... Hope to see you back at school.

MATT

Me too. I mean, see you... at school.

Bree returns to the game. Sy sits up and huffs. Matt turns away. Sy drags on the leash as he looks back.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY - A WEEK LATER

GRANDMA LAWSON, 75, wears a black dress and dabs at her red-rimmed, tear-filled eyes as she stares down at an open grave.

A casket stands at the side.

Jenny stares with a blank, stoic expression next to DAVID LAWSON, 45, who wears a dark suit and frowns. A CROWD of family and friends circle the grave site.

Matt stands apart. His eyes fixate on the casket. A PRIEST, 30, makes the sign of the cross over the casket.

INT. LAWSON HOME - MATT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matt lies in bed. His eyes shine in the dim light. He snuffles and dissolves into tears. He presses his hands over his mouth and muffles his sobs.

Sy trots to the bed, jumps up, and puts his paws on the edge. He whines.

Matt curls up in a rocking ball of agony.

Sy jumps on the bed. A strong male voice, SILAS, 35, comes out of nowhere.

SILAS (V.O.)
Don't cry, boy. It never helps.
Trust me; I know.

Matt freezes. His head jerks up and his wide, frightened eyes search the room.

MATT
What the --

SILAS (V.O.)
I'm right here.

Matt scrambles out of bed. He shoves the dog out of the way and flings the bed covers back. He stares at the empty bed. His gaze scours the dim room.

He dashes for the light and switches it on.

All is still and quiet. Matt rakes his fingers through his rumpled hair.

MATT
Psycho.

SILAS (V.O.)
Naw. Don't go there, boy. Not yet.

Matt twirls around and falls on his back. Sy trots over to him and puts his paws on his chest. He stares down at Matt.

Their gaze locks.

SILAS (V.O.)
It's just me. The name's Silas.

Matt shrieks as he scrambles to his feet. He trips over a book and scurries into a corner, trembling. His eyes grow huge as he stares at Sy.

Jenny and David burst into the room and rush to Matt. Jenny grabs his arm. David looks him over. They both talk at once.

JENNY
What happened?

DAVID
You fall?

Matt shakes his head. Over his father's shoulder, he peers at Sy sitting on his haunches. Matt rises to his feet. His wide eyes fix on the dog.

MATT

Yeah. I slipped.

DAVID

What are you doing up in the middle of the night? You ought to be sleeping. Just cause the doc said --

JENNY

Drop it, David. He just slipped. No need for an inquisition.

David glares at his wife as he backs up a step. He darts a glance at Matt.

DAVID

You're okay?

Matt nods. His gaze shifts from his dad to his mom.

JENNY

You want something? I'll get you a snack...

David huffs and shakes his head. He grips the door handle and stands on the threshold.

DAVID

Snacks can't fix everything.

David leaves. Jenny frowns. Sy whines. Matt glares at him. Jenny runs her fingers through Matt's hair with a sigh.

JENNY

You sure you're okay?

MATT

Yeah, fine. Just a little tired.

JENNY

Okay, but get some rest. You want to be in good shape for school in the fall, right?

Matt nods. Jenny pats his shoulder and steps out the door. Matt follows and clicks the door behind her.

He turns to the dog and leans in. Their eyes lock. Matt whispers in a husky voice.

MATT
Dogs don't talk.

SILAS (V.O.)
Says you. And I'm not really a dog.

MATT
No kidding!

Crows CAW in the distance. Their flapping wings grow louder. Sy rushes to the window and looks back at Matt. He barks and then speaks in an urgent hush.

SILAS (V.O.)
Shut the window! Quick!

Matt slips over and slides the window shut with a scowl.

MATT
What? You're afraid of birds?

SILAS
They're not birds. They're the enemy!

Matt shakes his head. His mom calls from the other room.

JENNY (V.O.)
Matt? You okay?

Matt glares at Sy. Sy jumps up on the bed and harrumphs as he sits down. Matt calls back.

MATT
Yeah. I'm... fine.

Silas stares into Matt's eyes and growls in an undertone.

SILAS
We'll talk later. But understand this, the enemy is at the window, and your life is in my paws.