

This chapter has a theme! Guess what it is! And yeah, I'm sorry about the long wait this time, but writer's block sucks. Plus, I'm like, busy getting ready to move, so I've been preoccupied. I do know what I'm doing with the story though. And this chapter was more transitory than anything. I really like this chapter though, so don't snuff mah filler.

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaand the usual disclaimer stuff applies.

Also, I don't own Silent Hill or anything, I just obsess about it. Konami owns it. And the movie belongs to Silent Hill DCP. Inc.-Davis Films, although this book will have little, if anything, to do with the first movie.

Silent Hill – Vows of the Broken

By Eric Wythe

Chp. 13

I tried the door... the handle would turn but the door wouldn't budge. I looked at my map; drew a squiggle over the door. Right... So... on to the next door! I looked at the door next to the one I was at. Trying it, the handle wouldn't give. So I guess it's locked. I drew a line over it.

I sighed. This is going to be a long day. I squared my shoulders and went off to the next door.

There was a knock at the door, disturbing my sleep. I groaned and fell out of bed, clad in only my boxers-briefs. I rubbed my eyes and scratched my ass as I dragged myself to the door. The knock got louder and more frantic the closer I got to the door.

"I'm coming already!" I shouted.

I wasn't very happy about being woken up, so I practically ripped the door of the hinges. The hallway was empty. I looked down each side, nothing, no signs of any life at all. I closed the door behind me and the draft blew a piece of paper out from under my legs. It lightly floated back onto the floor.

I stared at it for a second... it can wait until after I pee. And maybe after a cup of coffee too.

It was still kind of dark outside, so I flipped the light switch. But the light didn't turn on. I flipped it on and off a couple more times. I sighed, housekeeping gets paid to clean up worse, it won't ruin the place if I miss the bowl for a second.

A few minutes later I was sitting at the table near the kitchenette eating a granola-bar. No electricity means no coffee, unfortunately. The sun was coming up, a dull orange light, deluded from the fog; poured into the hotel room through the French doors leading to the balcony. The glow was relaxing, but I was still off because Daryl wasn't here. I

always feel weird whenever I wake up and Daryl isn't in my arms. What's weird is though, is that I usually wake up when he moves out from me, or I wake up before him. I didn't this time. And he's gone.

I looked around the room and sighed.

It was one of those freak weather days in town. It was well over eighty degrees in town, and here, that's a scorcher. And because of the fog, it was very humid. If it weren't so humid, we'd be out having a picnic at Rosewater Park or something, but since it was, Daryl and I opted to stay inside.

We were piled onto the couch in Daryl's living room, watching a movie in a sweating heap. I was sitting up with my arms stretched out over the backrest; Daryl was strewn across the cushions with his head on my bare stomach. I ditched my shirt not too long ago, way too hot. The movie was kind of boring, but Daryl and I were very comfortable, eventually I changed my position so my back was tucked into the corner where to armrest meets to the back, Daryl scooted up and snuggled up to my chest. I wrapped my arms around him as my eyes slowly closed and I nodded off.

Sometime later, I woke up, I don't know by what, but I was very, very close to nodding off again. My eyes were still closed, and it was considerably colder. I tightened my hold on Daryl and nuzzled my head into his hair. It smelled like coconut. I scootched up a little more underneath him and cuddled closer. I held on tight, and kissed the top of his head, I wanted him as close as possible.

As I began to nod off again, I felt eyes on me. I popped open one eye and saw that the TV was off. I looked around and saw a petite woman sitting in a chair in front of the couch, watching us. She had long curly red hair with a distinguished streak of gray hair on one side of her bangs. Her eyes were like Daryl's but without the green ring around the pupil. Her skin was pale and she had a few freckles scattered over her rosey cheeks, traits she and Daryl also shared. Her face was contented but it took her a second to see that I was awake, when she did she held up a finger to her lips. She got up and motioned me to do the same.

I slowly maneuvered myself out from under Daryl. I grabbed the blanket draped over the couch and tucked Daryl into it. He grabbed the blanket and moved around a little, getting comfortable. He was so beautiful; his hair was just long enough to cover his forehead and part of his eyes. I brushed it away and gave him a small kiss on the forehead. I cupped his face in my hand and stared at him for a while longer. It's rare for me to see him this way. He's usually so animated and silly, seeing him in peace and content is so far my favorite way of seeing him.

I turned around and the woman was leaning against the doorway watching me. I scratched the back of my head and grabbed my shirt off the coffee table next to the couch. The woman gave me a warm smile and motioned with her head to follow her. This

was the first time I'd been in Daryl's house, so most of this was new to me, but all the houses here were built the same so I knew she was taking me to the kitchen. I was jealous of how lived in the house looked compared to mine.

When we got into the kitchen it had a homey 1950's look to it. The walls were painted a warm shade of blue, the cabinets and appliances were a bright, clean white, with a small circled turquoise table in the middle with matching vinyl chairs. In any other house they would look tacky, but in the light colored room, it worked. She walked in and turned to me as I was putting on my shirt.

She asked me quietly "Would you like some tea?"

"Uh, sure" I responded softly.

She poured water into a kettle and placed it onto the stovetop. She turned the dial and motioned me to sit down.

"So" she began in the same quiet tone. "Name?"

"Huh?"

"You're name honey"

"Oh, sorry, John Harris. But, uh, you can call me Johnny. Everyone else does."

She gave a warm smile at that. "When I came home and saw Daryl bundling up with some guy I've never seen before I was about to flip a bitch... but when I saw how you were holding him, and the look on his face... I just..." She looked at her hands, her fingernails were painted vermillion. "I couldn't bring myself to ruin it. I've never seen him like that before, not since he was a baby. And the way you were holding him..."

"I guess I'm a little protective of him."

She gave me a curious look, I sighed.

"... I have a hard time explaining to people how I feel..."

"Ah, so you're a man of action when it comes to love."

"Huh?"

"Well, from the way you were holding him, one would think you're in love with him."

"I don't know if what I feel for him is love."

"Really. When you look at my son, what do you feel?"

I lowered my head and stared at the table. I pushed myself up from the table and made my way back to entryway to the living-room. I stared at Daryl's sleeping form. He looked so precious. His soft features gave away his true nature.

"To tell you the truth, I've never felt like this about anyone before. I look at him and I just want to take him in my arms, protect him, and take care of him. I don't know how else to put it except... I just want to make sure he's all right."

She patted my shoulder, I looked back at her and she nodded. "The look on your face tells me more than words could. I understand what you mean. I feel the same way, but I can't do it forever. He wouldn't want me too. Hell he doesn't want me to do it now." She looked away from me. "You could though. You may not be ready to admit it yet, but I've seen love before. And you have it for him."

In the distance the whistle of the kettle sounded, Daryl's mom looked back at me, and we headed back into the kitchen. She poured out tea, and we sat down again.

"The tea is delicious." I said quietly.

"Thank you." She cocked her head to the side and gave me an odd look. "You don't talk much, do you?"

"I've exceeded my word quota already from the past half-hour."

She gave a slight chuckle. "Well, at least you have the right sense of humor for him."

"He's rubbed off on me a bit." I took a sip from my tea. "I think talk is cheap. I'd rather let Daryl do the talking. He's better at it than me anyway. He's got an acid tongue, that one."

She raised her hand slightly. "I'll take credit for that."

"I never got your name you know."

"Oh sorry honey, I'm Mary, but you can just call me mom."

I smiled "Okay."

"Christ, look at that smile, anyone ever tell you you're gorgeous?"

I scratched the back of my head. "Just Daryl. And almost every girl I've ever met."

She laughed. "Just don't get a complex honey."

"I'm too busy making sure your son doesn't get in trouble."

“My baby? Get in trouble?” She said incredulously.

“Ma’am, if you know the tongue he has...”

“Yeah-yeah, I know.” She looked away, and then turned to me again with a soft look. “Look out for my baby John. He’s all I have.”

“I’ll take care of him Mary. He’d never admit it, but he feels alone. I won’t let him anymore.”

Mary set down her tea and stared into the cup. “Those are big words John. I’ll make sure you regret it if you fail to back them up.”

“I wouldn’t expect any less from Daryl’s mother.”

“Uh-oh, you guys are talking, this can’t be good.” A groggy voice sounded from behind me. I turned around to see a very half-asleep Daryl.

“So when were you going to tell me about him young man?” Mary scolded.

“After we’ve been dating longer than a week.” He smirked.

“It’s been a week and a half babe.” I said.

“Since we met!” He corrected.

“Fine-fine, we’ve been dating only a week, now C’mere.” I pushed my chair out from under the table and patted my leg. Daryl came over and straddled me. I scratched the back of my head. “Uh-I meant for you to just sit on my leg.”

Daryl stuck his head up as if to ponder. “I like this better.” He wrapped his arms around my neck and rested his head on my shoulder. Mary gave me an amused look and I felt just a little embarrassed.

“So do you approve Ma?” Daryl asked from my shoulder.

She gave another warm smile. “Yeah, I do. Hang on to him honey.”

“What does it look like I’m doing?” He responded sleepily. He latched onto me a bit tighter and nuzzled up to my neck. After a few seconds his breathing steadied.

“Daryl?” No response. “He fell back asleep.” I laughed quietly. She smiled back at me. “Okay babe, let’s get you into an actual bed” I whispered.

“Are you staying?” She asked.

“Yeah.”

“Without permission? Not exactly worried about the in-laws are you?”

“I told you, I won’t let him be alone.”

She sighed. “You staying for dinner?”

“I’m taking him out later.”

She nodded. “All right, sleep well.”

I hooked my arms under Daryl’s legs and stood up. I patted his back and kissed his cheek. He let a low groan and snuggled tighter to me. I looked over at Mary she had a contemplative look on her.

“What is it?”

“I’m... just glad... that he found you. You’re right for him. I can tell. But I’m also sad. I don’t think he needs me anymore now.”

“Ah, he’s always going to need you Mary.”

“I hope so. I don’t think I can let go.”

I smiled at her. “I’d be disappointed if you did.”

She smiled back. “You get him to bed now.” She shoed her hand at me and I gave a small chuckle.

I ascended the stairs and found my way to Daryl’s bedroom. I was expecting to get here in a different situation but sleep is important. I slowly placed him on one side of the bed, I crawled over him and spooned myself outside him. I held him close. He fit so perfectly in me. I could stay like this forever. We may as well have. I fell right back to sleep and when we woke up it was already late in the evening. It also took us a while to get out of bed. I think I understand what Mary meant.

I let out a contented sigh, I didn’t want to let go of him either.

I let out a frustrated sigh. After trying all the doors I could get too, and with the exception of a couple closets, all the doors were either locked or broken. So instead of just giving up and leaving like any normal person would, I remembered I hadn’t visited John’s locker yet. Problem is when I got here, the locker-combo I found wouldn’t work.

So at the moment I was kneeling in front of the knob, and just kept trying random numbers.

And a lot of good that's doing.

I sighed again and stood up from my kneeling position. I kicked the locker as hard as I could then turned around. I crossed my arms and pouted. I faced the locker again and tugged on the handle hard.

Of course, my kick loosened the lock and I fell on my ass opening the door.

A few of the items inside the locker spilled out onto the ground, among them were a few pictures, of us. This is exactly what John's locker looked like ten years ago. What is up with this place?

There was a chain hanging from the hook on the shelf on the top of the locker. I stood up and grabbed from inside. The chain had a key attached to it, and... a locket. It was a circular shaped silver pendant about the size of a quarter that opened up. I split it open and found a drop of shiny black liquid. I lightly dipped in my finger and held it up to me. When the liquid was less in volume it was red...

"Oh, gross!" I shouted. I wiped my finger on a loose piece of paper lying around. I snapped closed the locket. Fucking creep. What'd he expect? Johnny would go running to him when you gave him proof of your womanhood? Oh yeah, totally romantic.

I examined the key, it had the numbers "236" on them. I brought up my map and fingered through until I found the room number. Uh, I think that was the Spanish room? I took a different second language, so I don't remember. I pocketed the key with the locket and went on my way.

I peered inside the little window along the frame. Yeah, I was right, it was Spanish class. I fished out the key and put it into the door-handle. It slid in with the satisfying grind of metal. I twisted in the key and pushed into the door.

This room was different from the others. It was musty and stuffed with dust. It was full of clutter, as if the place had been evacuated in a panic. And yet, it was still loud with inconspicuous splashes of red and green all over, even a few sombreros hanging about.

The classroom didn't contain anything of real interest, but I noticed the window was open. I stuck my head and found a closed off alley in-between two buildings, I peered downwards and saw another open window that lead to the room next door. I looked at my map, the old chemistry lab that was locked up. I folded up my map, adjusted my bag strap and hopped out of the window.

I landed on my hands and knees; the cement was slightly wet from the light drizzle that began. The narrow alleyway was caught boxed in between two different buildings. Blockades were set up on either end, the path dipped down into a large storm-drain on the ground. Down a ways was another open window that I didn't notice.

I don't know what it was, but something about this place felt a little off. Like, more than it did when I got here. The hairs on the back of my neck were on end and my fingers were twitching. I kept a close hand to my gun holster.

Not two steps forward did my phone start going nuts again.

I drew my gun and swiveled around keeping my ears open. A twig snapped. A flash of something came right at me; I was knocked onto my back before I could even lift my gun up. It was the dog. The ones from my dreams, it was fucking real! Why is it fucking real?!

The dog was on top of me trying to smother me, its ribs trying to claw itself onto my face. I maneuvered my foot under its abdomen and launched the dog off me. It rolled the ground a decent distance as I scrambled to my feet and grabbed my gun that somehow didn't managed to roll forty feet away like every other fucking cliché.

I disorientated it; the dog was still getting up and hadn't moved from its spot, which was good because my hands were shaking like they were poorly screwed onto my wrists. I think it was trying to listen for me. I didn't move a muscle. I didn't even fucking breathe. I lifted my gun. Only one shot before it realizes where I am. I very, *very*, slowly cocked back the hammer; the click was very soft, the dog perked up a bit but stayed put.

Fuck, I wish my hands would stop shaking. I aimed as carefully as I could at the dog's chest.

I carefully pulled at the trigger.

The loud bang made me wince and left a slight ring in my ear. I opened one eye, the dog was on the floor, but it was squirming and making the weird churning sounds that made my stomach do feel like something similar to the sound.

I walked over to it. It seemed almost pathetic when it wasn't trying to crush my face. I drew back my leg and gave it a swift kick in the dog's exposed heart. It let out a final cry and stopped moving.

I audibly let out my breath. And drew in a big long one, I may as well have been at the doctors. I could feel the fucking stethoscope on my back.

Wait.

Wasn't there something I was supposed to be doing?

Oh yeah! The windows. I could see into them from here. One of them led to an empty room. The other led into the chem lab. I climbed through the window, the room looked recently vacated in certain spots, but others didn't. It looked like something had crawled all over the place. Furniture was knocked over and dust was unsettled and working over my allergies.

On top of the desk in the front of the classroom was a torn up piece of paper. It was part of that letter! I quickly dug through my bag to get the first part of the letter. I lined it all up so I could read what I could.

John,

I've held it in too long. I have to tell you this before you waste anymore of yourself on him. Ever since I first met you, I've been trying to impress you, make you notice me. Lead you in the right direction. Get you to know the right people. You have to be in with the in to survive in this town.

At first, I thought you were just a cool guy, and that I wanted to do those things because of it. But as I began to see you draw to him, I felt something... grow in me. Something that I only felt when I was around you, it was an incredible high. I wanted to be near you all the time and I counted the minutes until my next chance.

But then it stopped. He was always there, so I couldn't be. I... hated that... He kept me away from you. After a while whenever I saw you... with him... that feeling I used to have would be swallowed by something else... I became infuriated...I would strike out against those closest to me. Why would you choose someone who obviously wasn't worthy of your affections?

So t-

It cut off there. Okay... so not only is this dude creepy, but he's bipolar? Someone get this dude some pills, seriously. I put the notes in my bag and turned towards the door.

Out of nowhere a siren sounded. The room darkened. I stumbled back and hit a desk, papers fell off but in mid-air they seemed to disintegrate. The sirens wailed and the sounds of iron bending rang in the background, paint peeled off walls revealing a rusted tin siding. The tiles on the ground collapsed into the floor, falling through grating into a bottomless pit of dark. Furniture degraded before my eyes and turned into piles of rusted scraps with barely any resemblance of what they used to be.

I kept kind of edging backwards and eventually tripped on something and landed on my ass. The sirens stopped and I began to hear heavy rain outside banging on the metal structures. I pushed myself up and was suddenly staring at the silhouette of my head. I turned around and saw a bright light blinding me. I put my hand in front of my face.

A flashlight. Huh.

It was a clip-light. I could hook it onto my belt. After adjusting it appropriately, I turned around and surveyed the room. It was like my dreams, but...not. I wasn't completely disoriented. I suddenly jumped at the loud metal clanging coming from some disembodied area.

Yeah.

I sighed.

Totally not disoriented.

Well? Weeelll? What is it! C'mon, it's not that hard.

Send me your guess at eric.wythe@gmail.com or you can just email me anyway. I love getting emails from you guys. I'm usually really bored at work, so just send me an email, I'd be more than happy to strike up a conversation.

Feedback is a huge reason why any author puts up stories in the first place.