

# **A Day Too Short**

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Submitted: June 9, 2009

Updated: June 9, 2009

*Chris came home for a vacation and has been thrown a Welcome Home party which gets him thinking about what he's been doing. Will he change his mind about joining the B.S.A.A.? Will you even find out?*

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## 0 - A Day Too Short

Chris sat at a table, smiling politely at everyone since they had gone to the trouble of throwing him a party. He glanced around at everyone, his sister Claire, her hair was a little done up, but with only a few clips. He then looked Jill over, she had been home for a few months and her welcome home party had just been a small get together at a bar with Claire and Rebecca; he had frowned at the thought, but ignored it since it already happened.[br]

Next he glanced at Leon who was sitting boredly with an annoyed face, probably unhappy at Claire's choice of music. Chris smiled, amused at how he had changed after the many years of knowing him.[br]

He scanned the room again, "where's Rebecca anyway?" he asked, interrupting Claire and Jill's conversation.[br]

"Oh, she'll be here soon. By the way, she's bringing a guest," Claire grinned.[br]

Chris raised an eyebrow, confused at why she was so happy about Rebecca bringing a "guest." He shrugged however, figuring he would find out soon enough.[br]

Soon enough, the door bell rang, Claire immediately got up to go answer it. "That must be them!" she said excitedly.[br]

Chris sat there and glanced at Leon, "do you know who the 'guest' is?" he whispered.[br]

Leon shook his head, "no, but as long as they don't trash up my house and are not rude. I really don't care," he said with a very unamused tone.[br]

Chris rolled his eyes, "well try not to judge them then. You know how you can get."[br]

"Like you don't either," Jill told him, her arms crossed and her hip to one side.[br]

Claire came back in, ushering a petit brunette girl and a tall man with black hair that was styled back with gel. The most prominent about him though was the Tattoo which took up most of his right arm, it said *Mother Love* in fancy writing that he could barely read.[br]

"Chris . . . why do you have your head tilted that way?" Claire asked wonderingly.[br]

Chris looked straight again, "no reason," he answered quietly, feeling slight embarrassment.[br]

The man chuckled, "I bet you were reading my tattoo, huh?" His eyes held amusement.[br]

“Billy, it’s not nice to laugh at people!” Rebecca scolded him quietly, elbowing him in the stomach.[br]

Billy kept chuckling, “I was laughing at him, sheesh, a lot of people do the same thing. Or they stay far away from me.”[br]

She rolled her eyes and sighed, “sorry, Chris,” she apologized for Billy. She then walked over to Chris and pat his shoulder awkwardly. “Welcome home, though you’re going to leave again, aren’t you?” Her smile looked a bit sad.[br]

“Well, not for a while, the B.S.A.A. doesn’t need me for a while. They told me I should relax,” he leaned back in his chair, tipping it onto its back legs.[br]

“Chris,” Leon warned in a harsh tone, making Chris jumped and tip the chair back all the way; he hit his head on the floor.[br]

“Chris! Are you okay!?” Rebecca asked, now in medic mode. She tried to help him up. Billy was in the background laughing along with Jill.[br]

Claire shook her head and walked over to try and help him. “That’s why you shouldn’t do that,” she deadpanned.[br]

Chris grinned sheepishly at the two as he was helped off the chair and into a sitting position.[br]

“Turn around,” Rebecca ordered. He obeyed and held still as she checked the back of his head.[br]

“Just a bump,” she said matter-of-factly, standing up and going back to Billy’s side.[br]

Chris stood up on his own, setting the chair back in place. He sat back down just to get a glare from Leon.[br]

“Sorry . . .” Chris muttered.[br]

“Whatever,” Leon got up and went to the kitchen.[br]

Claire chuckled, “he’ll get over it. It’s just a chair.”[br]

“Yeah . . . anyway . . . I guess we should get acquainted,” he glanced at Billy, “I’m Chris Redfield,” he stood up again and walked over to him; he offered his hand.[br]

“Billy Coen,” he took his hand and shook it confidently.[br]

Chris nodded, “what’s your relationship with Rebecca might I ask?” he pulled his hand away.[br]

He smiled wide, “I’m her boyfriend.” Beside him was a blushing Rebecca who was looking at the floor with a shy smile.[br]

Chris frowned at this *Rebecca finally got a boyfriend . . . ? What’s next? Claire dating some guy I don’t*

*know? Even Leon dating a woman seems strange . . . I guess I just always thought it'd stay the same . . . boy was I wrong.* He sighed and shook his head, "I hope you two aren't doing anything you shouldn't do until you're married."  
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Rebecca's head snapped up, a slightly frightened look on her face. Billy turned his head to the side and covered his mouth, his eyes still looking amused.  
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Chris sighed and held his head, shaking it and walked to the table, sitting back down. *It's not your place to judge . . . it's not your place.* He reminded himself *at least it's not Claire.* Then *I'd have a say.*  
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"Claire, could you give me a hand?" Leon's voice was heard from the kitchen. He was the best cook there from Chris' knowledge.  
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"I'm coming. I'm coming!" Claire walked into the kitchen. Jill then walked over to Billy and Rebecca, the three started conversing quietly again.  
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Chris watched them, barely hearing what they were saying besides some giggles from the girls. *This is only to be expected; I've been gone even longer than Jill. I'm not in touch with any of them anymore.* He was brought out of his thoughts from the yelling that was coming from the kitchen. Everyone was now looking in that direction silently.  
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"Don't touch that! You're going to bur-"  
[br]

"OW! DAMMIT!"  
[br]

"Claire, that's why I told you to not touch that! Use these!"  
[br]

There was a crashing sound soon after.  
[br]  
[br]

A very grouchy Leon came out of the kitchen, food covering his pants as he left for some other part of his house. Chris then got up and went into the kitchen to see what had happened. Behind him he could hear the others whispering in their conversation again, probably not wanting to get in Leon's way.  
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"Claire? You okay?" he asked, seeing her pick up pieces of glass around the food, "need help?" he knelt down beside her.  
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"Nah, thanks anyway, it was my fault . . . most of it is already cleaned up anyway . . ."  
[br]

"In a rush?" he asked, picking up pieces anyway.  
[br]

"Not-well, yeah, I just wanted to get the food out to you since you are a garbage disposal, so I figured you'd be hungry," she pushed her bangs behind her ear.  
[br]

He smiled, "thanks . . . you don't have to worry about me though . . ." *I'm glad I'm home . . . I know they all care about me. I guess I didn't appreciate the time I had with them before . . .* he felt saddened to think about everything that he was missing, all the holidays and even his sisters birthdays.  
[br]

“Chris?”[br]

He was startled out of his thoughts, “yeah, Claire?”[br]

“Move, I need to clean up the food you’re standing on,” she had a mop in her hand.[br]

“Oh,” he chuckled at himself, “sorry,” he stood up, moving out of the way.[br]

Leon then came back in, his hair was wet and was wearing a whole new outfit; he walked over to the stove and picked up plate with chicken on it, ignoring Claire and Chris as he walked out to put it in the dining room.[br]

He came back again to grab some more dishes.[br]

“Did you take a shower?” Chris asked him, amused and curious as to his habits.[br]

“Yeah,” he said uninterestedly at the question, “was that so wrong of me?”[br]

Chris started to laugh and shake his head, “nah, it’s just kinda weird . . . though it is you.”[br]

“I’m not weird,” he muttered, “you are.” He walked back out of the room.[br]

Chris glanced at Claire who seemed to be satisfied with the floor now, no food was visibly seen on it. He watched as she put Leon’s mop away and walk back into the dining room, only just glancing back at him. He followed, dodging Leon on his way out.[br]

Everyone was conversing at the dining table, Billy having already started eating though Rebecca was scolding him. Chris shook his head at this, finding himself smiling for some reason even though it shouldn’t be funny. He sat down at one end of the table and inched his way into Jill and Claire’s conversation since it was a subject he knew.[br]

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Soon, everyone had eaten and Leon had brought out the cake that Claire had bought before the evening had begun. The cake was decorated with white icing and all colors of sprinkles with the words “Welcome Home” written on top in green icing; Claire had done that herself.[br]

“Thanks guys . . .” Chris said quietly while Leon cut it up into equal slices.[br]

“We’re happy to do this for you, Chris,” Rebecca grinned, holding Billy’s hand, “you’re our friend, you know that.”[br]

Claire hugged Chris from behind, “you’re my big, lovable, goofy brother, and I love you. I’m happy that you’re home and I wanted to do something for you.”[br]

Chris smiled, “I love you too, Claire. . . .” He glanced around the table at their smiling faces . . . well . . .

those who could smile. Leon wasn't looking very amused as he passed out plates with cake on them.[br]

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There was more conversation around the table as they finished up Chris' homecoming cake. Chris thinking about the years he had missed out with Claire by trying to make the world a better place. Wesker was dead because of him—[br]

—his phone rang which made him frown, everyone else's conversation dying down instantly, they were looking at him.[br]

He pulled it out, looking at the caller id, feeling disappointment run through him. "The B.S.A.A.," he said dumbfounded, not sure why they were calling him when he had some free time off. "Excuse me . . ." he told his friends, walking off into the kitchen and flipped the phone open.[br]

"Hello?" he answered calmly, listening to what the commander that called him had to say. Devastation rose within him at every word.[br]

"I just got back home though . . . I can't lea—" he was interrupted by the voice on the other phone.[br]

"Yes . . . I'm sorry sir . . . I'll be there . . ." he hung up, staring at his phone for a moment before walking back into the dining room.[br]

"Chris? Is something wrong?" Claire asked worriedly, quickly walking to him and touching his shoulder gently.[br]

"I have to leave," he said flatly, "they need me for another mission . . . said I was one of their best men . . ." he was trying not to show how sad he felt.[br]

"What?" Claire's soft features holding shock, her eyes held sadness.[br]

"When?" Leon asked, standing, looking Chris over carefully.[br]

"I'm being picked up in a few hours . . . they really need me for the next mission, say they got a lead on some activity in the mountains. I'm sorry," he looked down, fidgeting with his shirt.[br]

"I'll go with you," Jill piped up, walking over to him and putting a hand on his shoulder.[br]

He pulled away and gazed at her intently, "you need a break more than me. Stay here, Jill," he tried to smile reassuringly at her. "You deserve a long break, and I'll be fine. Besides, I want to go. Okay?"[br]

Jill let out an exasperated sigh, "you need a break too . . . come back soon, all right? Or I'll come after you myself," she threatened with a small pout, not completely serious from her tone.[br]

He chuckled, "all right, all right," he pat her shoulder, "I know." He then walked to the door, "Claire, c'mon, let's go home for now. I need to pack."[br]

She nodded, waving at the others before following him out to the car.[br]  
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Chris had driven back home in silence besides the radio's quiet chatter about the weather and what was happening in the world.[br]

Chris unlocked the apartment door, stepping inside and went to his room, gathering the things he'd strewn about over the past couple days and adding new things to make up for the dirty clothes.[br]

He heard quiet footsteps behind him. "Claire, I promise I'll come back soon," he said, not looking up from his baggage.[br]

"I know you will," she said softly, "just be careful. I don't want you getting hurt, got it? I'm sure Everyone's worried about you. You try so hard—"[br]

"Everybody else does too," he countered, "Leon has barely anytime off, and neither do you. I want to make this earth safe, and I know I can't do everything, but I have to try something at least, right?" he sighed, "I just can't help it, and it's my choice anyway."[br]

"Well, when will you have time for you?" Claire's voice had an edge to it, "you're almost forty and you haven't even been on a date since your teens."[br]

"Don't bring that into this, Claire. I've been on plenty of dates—"[br]

"You don't have a girlfriend," she stated matter-of-factly.[br]

"That's not the point. I'd rather you have a life than work with the Terra Save. I'd rather you have a boyfriend rather than that as well," he shuddered at the thought, "so we're even."[br]

He heard her sigh loudly and walk out of his room with heavy steps. A minute later he heard her slam her bedroom door. *Dammit . . . well, she can't stay mad forever.* He sighed inwardly as he zipped his suit case and duffel bag closed. He then stood up, shouldering his bag and headed into the living room to relax for about an hour or so; he was being picked up there.[br]  
[br]

About thirty minutes later, he heard the soft click of Claire's door, the volume on the T.V. not up that loud at all.[br]

She appeared in the door frame that led into the living room. He noticed her staring at him, apology written all over her face.[br]

"Hey," he greeted her, "do you feel better now?"[br]

She glanced away, walking over to him and sitting beside him with a pout, crossing her arms in defiance.[br]

"Not really, huh?" he smiled slightly, putting his hand on her shoulder. "I'm sorry," he sighed.[br]

She sighed in response, “don’t be, I started it,” she leaned against his shoulder, “you’re all I have and I don’t want you to go. You *promised* you wouldn’t leave me again, but you do time and again.”[br]

“I’m not actually leaving you though,” he frowned, trying to think of what else to say, “I don’t break my promises.”[br]

“I don’t either, you taught me that . . . but you do tend to . . .” she shook her head, “I just worry about you. . . .”[br]

“I know, and I worry about you too,” Chris told her before his phone rang. He pulled it out of his pocket, checking it. “Looks like they’re here early,” he stated before answering it, “Hello?” he paused, listening. “Yeah, I’ll be out,” he hung up and shoved his phone back into his pocket before standing up and heading toward the door.[br]

Claire stood up with him, following him to the door. “Chris, I . . . have a safe trip and don’t do anything risky,” she hugged him quickly.[br]

He hugged back, “all right,” he pulled away after a moment, giving her a small smile, “see ya sis . . .” he said quietly, shouldering his duffel bag like earlier and grabbing his suit case after opening the door, heading out.[br]

He glanced back after a minute, still seeing her figure at the door, he waved once more, her waving back.[br]

[br]

*The sooner I can stop the T-virus, the sooner I can come home,* he thought, walking outside toward the vehicle he knew belonged to the B.S.A.A.