

The Only Life I've known...

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This whole chapter was inspired by some real-life events. It's chapters 31-37 of Sonic X: Regeneration. Hope you all enjoy it, please comment!

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Chapter 1 - The Only Life I've known...

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1 - The Only Life I've known...

NOTE: The next few chapters will contain some very real feelings on my part. I've been forced to give up playing hockey, which I have done for fourteen of my eighteen years. I've been backstabbed, betrayed, and treated like dirt. Or, in the words of Toby Keith:

"I've been bent and bruised and broken, and flat busted once or twice. I brought most of it upon myself (Not true), but I'll never compromise. My pride's too hard to swallow, so I've chewed a lot of it! Mild manner and soft-hearted, hard-headed as you get!"

All things I can handle. Then it got personal, and it led to a forced retirement. It's a sad day when people you trust betray you. But you know, what doesn't kill us makes us stronger.

And I want to thank the FAC gang (You know who you are^^) for supporting me during this troubled time!

Tell me a lie...

*Known you all my life,
At least that's how it seems,
Never known another way,
Of livin' out my dream*

*Now I know you're leavin' me,
And I'll never understand,
'Fore I let you walk away,
I have one last demand,*

*Tell me a lie,
And say you won't go.
Look in my eyes,
And hold me, even though,
I realize, you had to walk away,
No more yesterday.*

*You always were my angel,
Flying high above,
Always lookin' out for me,
Things you'll never love,
Now our dreams are fading,
Like age old photographs,
Hurts too much at look now,
Reminds us of our past,*

*Tell me a lie,
And say you won't go.
Look in my eyes,
And hold me, even though,
I realize, you had to walk away,
No more yesterday,*

*Maybe we could stay together,
Maybe it would last forever,
Maybe if you just...tell me a lie,
Maybe then, we'll never say...
Goodbye...*

On that note, let's get it started!

A doctor Linda knew checked Ekyt out. "Son...You have a choice to make. If you keep doing this "vigilante" bit, you risk your health." The doctor got up, but stopped. "Thank you for helping my daughter...those thieves nabbed her purse, and then they paid me back by becoming patients, thanks to you."

Linda looked over at Ekyt. "The only life I've known." Ekyt smiled sorrowfully. "Not the first time this sort of thing has happened. At least I've been told to my face." Ekyt gulped back a deep sigh. Linda buried her face in his chest for a few moments. "I'll live...I just need to figure this out..."

Klein (ShyWanderer43) and Amy had no idea of all this. Amy was all fan-girl-ish (A new word added to the FAC dictionary!), and Klein was...still shy. Not for lack of effort. The fact was he was old-fashioned, and that impressed Amy. She just had to get his to talk.

Tiffany (Shadowthe_Hedgehog), Kurt, and Shadow knew the problem. In a strange display, Shadow seemed...upset. "I should have been there...this would never have happened." Tiffany calmed him down, but then Kurt caught fire. "You know, it isn't right. Things are really screwed up now. Now what? I know him, and he's gonna go crazy if he does nothing! Damnit! I'll kick their sorry asses myself! Those five are gonna pay.

Meanwhile, John, Brian, Brendan, Jeffrey, and David chuckled. "That's that. No way he'll come back from that! We did everything but kill the poor guy!" Their employer, Mari-Su, joined in the laughter. "Great work guys. It's a shame you didn't finish him...Oh well, I'll just handle it myself!"

Ekyt walked around, but it was painful to do. To Linda, it was painful to watch. The proud young man who risked it all had just seen society spit in his face. There was no mistaking that the look on his face wasn't just from physical pain. The mental pain was torturing him. Even at night, Linda didn't leave his side. He stared at nothing, making decisions about his life...his new life.

The first to go was the trench coat. The red shirt. The red and white shoes. The black pants. Everything. His original mask was gone. Ekyt wasn't sure he wanted another mask. He had another one, just in case. It was a solid black mask. It was thick, and meant to protect. White shirt, blue wind pants, black shoes. He looked at his staff, deciding he didn't have the heart to get rid of it. He buried it in a closet.

Kurt walked around aimlessly, finally seeing what he was looking for. He didn't *what* he was looking for until he saw it. A gym and martial arts dojo. It was abandoned, and needed work, but it was perfect for Ekyt. Flash (Flashthehedgehog) wandered up. "Hey Kurt. What are you up to?" "Oh, Flash, good to see you. Ekyt's kind of spazzing, and I'm trying to get him back down to earth here." Flash tipped his hat forward and rolled it down his arm, flicking it back up on his head. "Huh. I heard about the fight. Nasty bit of bloodshed." "Yeah. But this time it was mostly Ekyt's."

A week went by. Ekyt looked...insane, to those who didn't know him. He jogged every day. Maybe he couldn't be a vigilante anymore, but he could get revenge on those guys. One morning Shadow caught up to him. "This is partially my fault." "No it's not. You can't be everywhere. And I should have handled those guys easy. The fact is, they'll pay."

Ekyt kept training. In a matter of weeks, he looked like his old self. But he didn't *feel* like his old self. No one would have guessed he was the same person. He was colder...distant...only Linda could read his thoughts. And the single thought, the one that had kept him sane all those weeks was the word that was the mantra to him right now:

Revenge.

Sonic saw Eggman in his hovercraft. "Okay, lord lard! That emerald is mine!" "You little blue pest! Forget it!" They raced for the emerald. Sonic had the advantage, when Eggman stopped. Sonic ran through the emerald. "A hologram you foolish hedgehog!" "Hologram this!" Tails shouted, firing the Vulcan cannon from the Xtornado. "Aghh! You furry freak! We'll meet again!" Tails jumped off his ship, to find Sonic clutching an emerald. "Good call buddy." "I thought it was fake!" "THAT one was. The one I found when I hit the dirt isn't! C'mon, let's go spread the news! We've got three emeralds!"

It turned into a Rocky story. Ekyt trained. He went from hated to feared AND hated. The gym was perfect. It had a boxing ring in it, sets of weights that hadn't been touched in years, an office, and then the dojo, some weapons left behind from the previous owners. Not that it mattered. One day, a human boy ran into the gym. "Somebody, help!" Ekyt walked out. He never ran unless he was training. "Mister, mister!" "Take a deep breath kid. What's the matter?" "My mom is in trouble! Some goons are trying to take her purse and the car!" Ekyt told the kid to call the police, pointing to a phone. Against doctor's orders, he was going to be involved.

Theodore and Ron grabbed the woman. "Is this it? We risked jail time for forty bucks." Ekyt ghosted up behind them, staring menacingly. "No." They turned around. "You risked hospital time for forty bucks. Now get out of here." They politely declined...okay, okay, One swiped at Ekyt. Ekyt took offense and grabbed him, using his knees and elbows to keep him at bay. The second man hit Ekyt across the face, helped his friend up, and stood over Ekyt. "So, this is what has become of ol "bullet eyes." If this is the best Station Square can do to protect it's citizens, then we've got a crime wave coming. This wench can keep her purse. We've just humiliated you! That's worth the forty bucks anyway. See you around...champ! Or, should I say, chump." Ekyt got up slowly. He helped the woman up and walked away.

On that day, Ekyt's shoulders dropped. "I'm not cut out for this...What's the point of me trying to fight?"

When he got back to the gym, sporting the cut under his eye, Kurt, Shadow, and Linda were waiting for him. "Let me talk to him alone for a minute guys."

Linda led him into the office in the back. It was nicely furnished, a cherry-wood desk, couch, matching coffee table, a stereo. Linda had done the decorating. She sat him down in his office chair. "I lost...two those two clowns...damnit! Why am I here! What is my purpose! What do I sound like Shadow?! I know my past, I shouldn't've have all these damned questions in the first place. I'm not a normal kid, I accept that, but, damnit, I'm not special at all either?!" Linda waited for him to stop. "I know you needed that. But there's something else you need..." Ekyt stopped her. "Look, I've, ah." "Later. Right now, you need one of these." She hugged him. He forgot his stoicism and hugged back. "This is the only life I've known. It's too late to go back." Linda sat down on the couch. "Normally, I'd try to stop you. But you know, judgment isn't a good thing. I quit the police force yesterday." "Why? I thought you loved it?" "They gave me an ultimatum: Get rid of you, or quit. I quit. Look, what you need to understand is, even though I just met you, I think you're the one. Time will tell, but right now, you're the man I need."

Ekyt let a tear fall from his eye. "I-I'm not worthy of that moniker. If I was a man, I could have stopped all this from happening. And I'm definitely not worth your affection. What I'm worth...is something I don't know." Linda put a supportive hand on his shoulder. "You're frustrated. If you put the weight of the world on your shoulders, you're gonna get crushed, no matter how strong you are. You've got to get your confidence back." She looked at Ekyt, with his new clothes. "And we're going to start with something easy." She lifted his mask, running her hand down his cheek. The five o'clock shadow on his jaw, the high cheekbones, and his lips...she had to do it. "We're gonna get you back in the fight." She made the move to kiss him, only to find him leaning forward, ready to kiss her back for the first time. "That's a step in the right direction. Now let's get back to work tiger."

Ekyt didn't train for a few days. He sat and stared, or tossed a red ball he found against the wall, catching it effortlessly. He saw himself, beaten down by those two criminals, a fight she should have won blindfolded. He saw the tombstones in the graveyard, reminders of people he had failed. He saw their crying families. "If only we'd had help..." He stopped tossing the ball and looked across the street, absent from the rest of the world. Linda put a hand on his shoulder.

Shadow, Kurt, and Tiffany were waiting. "I'm glad you two got a room." Kurt said, a wise-guy grin on his face. Tiffany kissed him, making him blush, much like Ekyt was now. "Now that I've silenced the peanut gallery, it's time we get you back in fighting shape. Kurt, Shadow, ready?" "Ready." Kurt answered. Shadow nodded.

Ekyt looked at them sadly. Shadow finally had enough. "Leave him to me." Shadow dragged Ekyt off. "Put these on so you can keep up." Shadow threw a pair of blue and red hovershoes at Ekyt. He strapped them on. As they ran at full speed, Shadow finally told Ekyt exactly what he thought. "Look, I'm only going to say this once. Get your @\$@ up out of this hole you've dug yourself in to. If you're quitting, then maybe I should revise my opinion about humans again. If you don't think you can handle a handful of idiots that gave you a hard time, then go home." At first, Shadow thought Ekyt was mad. But Ekyt meant something else. "You're right. I'm through feeling sorry for myself. Doctor's orders or not, I'm ending this stupid feud. Thanks for waking me up Shadow."

Ekyt trained, but he still didn't have the spark of old. And something was up with Linda. She was

suddenly innocent, then sassy, then shy. It was like she was having mood swings. Probably all the stress, but Ekyt wanted to be sure. It wouldn't be a good idea to go into battle with something heavy on his mind like that.

Linda sat in the darkened room. She remembered another memory.

Flashback

"And do you, Mari-Su, take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband?" "I do." She answered, smiling. "And do you, Patrick, take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?" "I-.." BLAM! A shotgun blast rang through the church. Phil Renborn laughed maniacally, looking down at the man he just killed. "Echidna's and humans don't belong together!" He slapped her. As Mari-Su broke down crying, five-year-old Linda watched helplessly.

End Flashback

Linda's breath caught in a sob. "So that's why she hates him...But...I..." Ekyt walked in. Linda dove at him, knocking him onto the bed. She held onto him in a desperate embrace. "Promise me you'll never leave me." "What?" "PROMISE ME!" She clung to him, crying. "I Promise Linda. What's the matter?" Linda explained to him what happened. She clung to Ekyt the entire time. "You're my only family." She had said it before, and she said it again. It looked like she meant it.

"I can't put up with this guilt anymore." Ekyt was talking to himself. "I've got put an end to this...no matter what the personal cost...I'm not going to let everyone who has befriended me, and myself, down. Those guys thought they sent me packing to hell. I'm coming back."

The trench coat and mask. The streets emptied as "he" walked down them. The bullets were back in Ekyt's eyes. Klein and Amy stepped aside, while Klein whispered "Good Luck." Tiffany and Kurt just nodded, knowing how solemn this was. Sonic and Tails, holding the chaos emerald they had just found, had heard the news. "Good luck man." Sonic said, pumping a fist. Woman and children ran to get out of the way. This fight had the potential to ruin Station Square by itself.

John, Brian, Brendan, Jeffrey, David, Theodore, and Ron walked from the opposite direction.

"You know, I thought humiliating you the first time would've gotten this out of your system." Brian laughed. "You sent me to hell. But I brought you back a present." Ekyt punched him in the mouth, then backed up, letting his friend tend to him.

Mari-Su climbed upstairs silently. Unknowingly, her shotgun's gleam caught the eye of her daughter. Linda climbed up silently behind her.

While the villains tried to pull themselves together, Ekyt got a surprise visit. "Dad!" Paula, his daughter from the future, now fifteen years old, whichever timeline she had come from, was leaning against a streetlight. "Paula! Nice outfit." She was dressed like her mother, but with a red vest instead of a black one, a black shirt instead of a white one, and red and black boots, unlike Linda's black ones. "Thanks. But save the gushy stuff for Mom, okay? Listen, you can win this. In the future, I just watched you kick the crap outta these guys again! Well, it might've been their kids. But still, you've got this in the bag!"

Ekyt hugged his daughter fondly. "Thanks. Just like your mother, you have impeccable timing." Paula laughed. "Yeah, yeah, I know. Now, I'm just gonna chill up here and watch you kick some @\$\$!"

Ekyt turned back. "Are you going to attack?" He said it so calmly that at first no one could respond. "Get him! Get him!" Ekyt whipped out his staff (He had missed doing that) and struck the first one to come close enough. In one motion, he had used his staff as momentum, kicking another man. The staff rolled away. That was fine. One man kicked at Ekyt. Ekyt caught his foot under his arm, and then threw the man's leg over his head, flipping him entirely. A backfist caught the man coming from behind, a kick the one to the right. The left man landed a strike on Ekyt's cheek. Unfazed, Ekyt grabbed his head, keeping control of the man, while hitting another with an elbow. With everyone else temporarily dispatched, Ekyt rammed his upthrust knee into the goon's kidney, and then another into his forehead, before throwing him into a garbage can. He whipped around to the others, the hover shoes emitting sparks as he sped toward them. "This is a little gift from the personal hell you sent me too!" He threw his full weight into the four clustered together.

The other three tried to surround Ekyt. "You're surrounded." "Really?" Ekyt punched at one, who ducked, giving him the chance to hit him with a kick. "Now I'm not. Problem solved."

Mari-Su was angry at how things were going. "Get him! Now!" she hissed into her walkie-talkie. "Gotcha." Two voices answered. Meanwhile, she took aim with her shotgun...

Chris Thorndyke and Cream rushed out of the alley. "Long time no see." Chris yelled. Ekyt responded by throwing a garbage can lid at him. He ducked, and the lid hit Cream. It was almost funny, until a monstrous purple cat jumped at Ekyt. Ekyt shuffled backward, and then extended his leg upward. "Big, you've definitely exposed yourself as a retard!" (If anyone takes offense to this, please let me know, and I will remove it. -NG) With Big and Cream dispatched, Ekyt turned menacingly toward Chris. Chris punched at Ekyt. Ekyt, unfazed, grabbed Chris by his shirt and lifted him up. "You had no reason to hate me. But I've got no problem giving you one if you're going to keep attacking me, you little backbiter." Ekyt threw Chris into the two thugs left. All of them lay unconscious and bleeding.

"Damnit! Incompetent pieces of crap! She started to pull the trigger on the shotgun. Linda dove on her, and the two wrestled for control of the gun. (Another moment that stemmed from your comment Flash! XD) "I'm your mother!" "You're no mother of mine! I'm not letting you kill the only family I have left..." Mari-Su pulled the trigger. The bullet sped toward the lamppost that Paula was sitting on. She didn't see it coming...

Shadow did. "Tiff, I need your emerald!" He grabbed Kurt. "CHAOS CONTROL!" The bullet stopped inches from Paula's face. Ekyt looked up to see Shadow grab the bullet and snap it in half. The pieces hit the ground. While everything was still frozen, Shadow looked over at him. "I wish I could have done that for you..." "No worries." Time started again.

Linda and Mari-Su grappled, the gun laying in the corner, forgotten. They rolled toward the window.

"Oh my God!" Ekyt ran to the building. He wasn't fast enough to run up it. Linda fell. He had to get their in time... Mari-Su fell too.

Tiffany caught Mari-Su while Flash used his electricity to produce electric bindings. That was one problem taken care of...

Ekyt sped up as Linda fell back-first toward the ground. He stretched his arms out, and Linda fell into them. The crowd which had gathered to watch cheered. Linda looked up. Just like in that dream she had (A couple issues back, the one where Ekyt was carrying her while dodging bullets), Ekyt was carrying her while moving incredibly fast. "Are you okay?" Ekyt asked. She held on tighter. "Just fine." She said, burying her head into one of the folds of his coat.

Once he got back, the crowd cheered as the criminals were rounded up to go to jail. Ekyt skidded to a stop, putting Linda down gently. Paula joined them. After hugging her mother, she said to Ekyt. "I'm glad you two didn't make out as a celebration. That's something no kid should ever have to see his parents do." Ekyt sputtered a reply, but Paula cut him off. "Relax Dad. I know you're not like that. It's a joke." Linda gave her a look. "And tell me, did you see something like this before?" "Ahhhhh, gotta go! Love ya!" Paula winked and disappeared.

Ekyt approached the small group that had stuck around. "Thanks. I couldn't have done it without you." "Yeah, okay. Time to eat. His treat!" Sonic pointed at Ekyt. They crowded off, leaving Ekyt and Linda alone.

"Linda I...thought about what you said...I think you're the gir- damnit, I'm no good at this! But, um, this is for you." Ekyt handed her a box. She opened it, to find a gold and silver chain, with a green, glowing cross. "It's a chaos gemstone cross! I've always wanted one of these! Thank you!" She grabbed him into an embrace, giving him a kiss. (This is one of those "Awwwww!" moments, lol). "Now what Sport?" Linda asked him. Ekyt looked up at the stars before answering.

"Back to the only life I've known..."