

Red Ribbon

By Gareth Cooper

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INT. SEWER - DAY

It's dark. The sewer is empty of life - there are massive piles of rubbish heaped all around. This is clearly no longer a functioning sewer, more of a dumping ground.

CHEQ, steps into shot. He's young and is wearing a random assortment of dirty, torn clothing. He's also covered in grime.

He starts rifling through a pile of rubbish. He picks up a tin, sniffs it, puts it in his pocket. He does this with a few other items, discarding some, pocketing others.

He spots something that makes him pause. He stares at it, not sure what to think. Then, he carefully picks up the item (it's important we don't see what it is yet) and places it in a pocket inside his jacket, close to his heart.

SFX: Horrific, animalistic noises. Grunting, screeching etc. They should not sound human.

CHEQ looks up, afraid. He jumps of the rubbish pile and runs down the sewer to a rusted ladder, which he quickly scales.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESOLATE LANDSCAPE - DAY

CHEQ climbs out of a manhole and replaces the cover. He's less panicked now that he's outside.

CUT TO:

Montage of shots of CHEQ walking through this desolate landscape (clearly post-apocalyptic, incredibly bright light) - it could be empty city streets, a desert, destroyed buildings - the choice is yours.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHEQ'S DEN - DAY

CHEQ is sitting on a hunk of scrap metal in his makeshift den, outside. He sorts through the few items he has recovered. He takes the tin out of his pocket and starts scraping the remains out with his fingers and eating it.

CUT TO:

GIRL peaking round the corner of some piece of scrap. She's young, timid - also absolutely filthy, covered in dirt and grime. CHEQ notices her, smiles and pats the place next to him. GIRL remains where she is.

CHEQ
You hungry?

He holds out the tin. She looks at it for a second, then hurriedly grabs it, sits on the opposite end of the makeshift seat and starts eating. CHEQ watches for a while.

CHEQ
I found something. I...think you should have it.

CHEQ reaches inside his jacket pocket. He takes out a single piece of bright red ribbon. GIRL stares at it, transfixed.

CHEQ
It's for your hair. It'll keep it out of your face.

GIRL is still staring at the ribbon. CHEQ stands up and slowly makes his way over to her. He steps behind her and starts to tie the ribbon into her hair.

CHEQ
It's Valentine's Day. At least, I think it is. Around the middle of February, anyway. People used to give gifts, back when. Before. I thought you might like it.

He finishes tying the knot. He then sits back down. GIRL reaches up and carefully touches her hair, where the knot now is. CHEQ takes out another scrap of food and munches on it. They sit in silence for a while.

CUT TO:

CHEQ eats his food, staring out at the desolate landscape, eyes squinting against the brightness. Suddenly, GIRL appears by his side. She leans over and gives him a brief kiss on the cheek. Then she runs off.

CHEQ seems a little startled, reaching his hand up to touch where she kissed. He then carries on eating, looking out into the world.

END.