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Past Fears

By: [LovelyLene](#)  [PM](#)

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Chapter 1

It was a beautiful day in Colorado Springs, which was quite unusual for the time of year. Winter was approaching, but as the sun brightly shined it was almost like a late summer's day. Many of the citizens of Colorado Springs were outside enjoying the beautiful weather as much as they could. So was Dr. Mike. She sat on a chair in front of her clinic and watched everyone go by. Occasionally someone walked up to her for a chat or for some medical advice. As she was left alone again she closed her eyes and inhaled the scent that the day had brought and she relaxed in her chair. She felt at peace.

"Ma, I'm goin' to school! Later ma!" Brian yelled as he rushed by Dr. Mike. "Oh! Is it school time already then?" she asked, slightly annoyed that her rest had been disturbed. Then she smiled. Lately Brian had been so eager to go to school. Yesterday she had figured out why. There was a new girl at school! She was Brian's age and sat next to him in class. Yesterday the teacher had asked Dr. Mike if something was the matter with him. He paid no attention in class anymore and seemed to be lost in thought almost the whole time. Dr. Mike had confronted Brian with it, but he said nothing was wrong. Then Colleen had just blurted out that there was a new girl at school and Brian had a crush on her. Brian had looked angry at his sister and had run to his room. Later that night he told his mother that it was true. That she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen! Except for Dr. Mike of course, but then again, she wasn't a girl... she was a lady.

"Pay attention in school Brian!" she called after him, "You might learn something..." She said softly and smiled once again. She saw Brian giving her a wave before he turned the corner. Dr. Mike sighed and looked around. She hadn't had any patients for over a week

and was pretty much out of work. In the last few days she had already cleaned the clinic, went over her medical supply and ordered what she needed and went to the reservation twice with Sully to take a look at the Cheyennes. She had also read some medical books to improve her skills and expand her knowledge. With all of these things done she really didn't know how to keep herself busy.

As she sat in her chair on the porch of her clinic, she saw the stagecoach stopping in front of The Mercantile. Everyone was always interested to see who was on it, and today was no different. The vehicle got curious looks from all around. Even Dr. Mike couldn't keep her eyes off of it. Nothing much ever happened in Colorado Springs, so the arrival of the stagecoach always was a big attraction to the townsfolk. Even Dr. Mike couldn't help but feel a little curious about who would be on the stagecoach this time. Would it be someone she knew? Or would it be some stranger? Maybe there were immigrants on it. Oh, that would stir things up in town, she thought. She really hated the way most citizens thought about immigrants. She could already feel the anger building inside of her just thinking about it.

Everyone watched the people getting out of the stagecoach and watched them carefully. As soon as everyone saw that there were no immigrants on it and not someone they knew, they turned around and got back to whatever they were doing.

As Dr. Mike had nothing better to do she studied the people who had just arrived to Colorado Springs. There was a man and a woman, who were obviously a couple. They looked very much in love and Dr. Mike almost felt a stab of jealousy going through her body. Her relationship with Sully was going up and down, and right now she had a feeling that they were experiencing a 'down' in their relationship. Why couldn't things just go right between her and Sully? She loved him and she knew he loved her. But they just didn't seem to be able to make things work. *Well, maybe things will get better again*, she thought.

As she continued watching the other passengers of the stagecoach she noticed a man. It was an elder man in his late fifties and definitely looked like he came from the city. Dr. Mike knew a man from the city when she saw one. After all, she had lived in Boston for the biggest part of her life. The way he walked and the way he dressed, his body language... Definitely a man from the city. She took in his appearance and thought that he was quite good looking for his age. He was tall, lean and muscular. Then he disappeared from her sight...

After lunch Dr. Mike's clinic got a little more busier. Some people came over who apparently had caught a cold, which was no surprise considering the weather they had had the last few weeks. As Dr. Mike stepped outside to let her last patients out, she saw the older man that had arrived with the stagecoach earlier, approaching her.

"Good day Ma'am," he said as he took his hat from his head. "Good afternoon sir," Dr. Mike replied kindly, "Can I help you?"

"Indeed you can Ma'am", the man said, "I heard you are the doctor around here?"

"Yes I am. I'm Dr. Michaela Quinn, but everyone here calls me Dr. Mike." She extended her hand to him and he shook it gently. His grip was firm, but gentle. "I'm John Kerrigan, Miss Quinn. But you may call me John. Mr. Kerrigan makes me feel so old," he said with a smile. Dr. Mike smiled back at him. She looked into his twinkling brown eyes. Now that she was able to look at him closely she saw that the man had a great charisma. He looked like he had a strong personality; determined, independent and self-confident. And because his hair hadn't turned completely grey, he didn't look THAT old. Besides that, he was also charming! *Get a grip, she thought, the man is old enough to be your father!*

"What can I help you with?" she asked him.

"Well, I think I've caught a little cold, just like everyone else around here. With the cold weather and all lately... I suppose there is no way of not catching it." He grinned and Dr. Mike couldn't help but to smile back at him.

"Well, I do have something for you. It's a special kind of tea which should help against the coughing. It works very quickly." She handed him a small box. "Thank you Miss Quinn," he said. " Oh please just call me Dr. Mike! Everybody else does," she said to him. "Well, thank you... Dr. Mike," he said, flashing her a charming smile. Dr. Mike blushed, feeling her cheeks burn.

"Well, I have to go again," he said, "I haven't seen anything of this town yet, so I think I am going to make a little tour. I'm sure we'll see each other again Dr. Mike. It was a pleasure to meet you!"

"It was a pleasure to meet you too, Mr. Kerrigan... Sorry... John," she smiled shyly at him, wondering what on earth was going on with her! John put his hat back on and nodded to her as he left the clinic. Dr. Mike felt her heart pounding wildly in her chest.



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Summary: A stranger visits Colorado Springs. Not everyone is happy to see him...

Wow! Thank you for all the lovely reviews! Sylvie, you're absolutely right. It already annoyed me while writing it, but I just didn't know what other words to use. I hope this chapter is better! And as for 'the pair of steel blue eyes', well, you just have to keep on reading to find out... But beware! I may surprise you...

Chapter 2

John Kerrigan looked around as he walked back into town. *Sweet little town*, he thought. *And sweet little ladies!* He smiled to himself as he thought back to his meeting with Michaela Quinn just a few minutes earlier. She was one of the most beautiful women he had ever seen. *No wonder he decided to live here*, he thought, thinking about the person who was the very reason John decided to visit this town. His thoughts shifted back to Michaela Quinn. A petite young woman, decent and charming. Though, she looked like she didn't belong in a small town like Colorado Springs. The way she talked and the way she moved made him think she was more of a 'city girl'. But then again, she seemed happy where she was.

He looked up and stopped walking when he saw a black man struggling to get three horses back to their stables. He looked like he could use some help. "Hold on there!" he called and started to move towards the man. "Give me one," he said and the black man didn't hesitate to hand him one of the horses that was starting to go wild. "Something spooked them," the man said, "but now I just can't get them back to their stables! Damn horses!" The dark man was obviously annoyed. As they worked together they finally were able to calm the horses down and bring them back to their stables. "Thank you sir!" the black man said. "I don't know what would have happened if you hadn't come along." "Ah, maybe you would have handled it yourself! We'll never know, will we now?" John smiled. "The name is John Kerrigan. I assume you are the blacksmith?" he

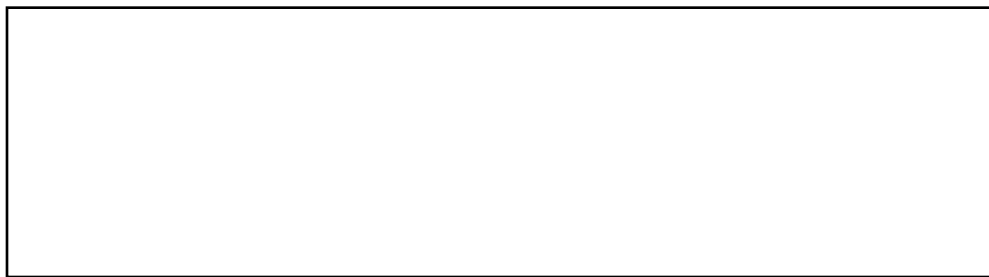
extended his hand to the black man. "Yes I am sir. I'm Robert E.," Robert E. answered as he took the hand of John Kerrigan and shook it firmly.

"Well, since I am here now I might as well ask you whether you lend out one of these horses. Just for a couple of days. There are some things I have to do while I am here, and I have some places to visit as well. I'm too old to walk these distances," he grinned. Robert E. smiled back at him. "Of course you can sir," Robert E. replied and walked to a stable. "Look at this beauty here! She ain't as wild as the others, but she's fast! She'll bring you anywhere!" Robert E. looked proudly at the beautiful brown horse. "She sure is a beauty Robert E.," John said, "So, how much?" he asked.

"A dollar a day sir," Robert E. replied. John reached for his wallet and gave Robert E. a twenty-dollar bill. "I probably won't need her for twenty days, but you can keep the change Robert E.!" John said as he took the horse. "I'll bring her back safe and sound," he grinned. "You know a nice place where I can eat by any chance?" he asked Robert E. "Yeah, I sure do sir! My wife owns a little restaurant. Real good food! It's down that road. Ya can't miss it!" the other man said as he pointed in the direction where the restaurant was located. "Thank you, Robert E.!" John said as he climbed the horse. "You're welcome sir!" Robert E. called after him. Then John Kerrigan rode away.

The restaurant wasn't difficult to find. It was called "Grace's Café". *Well, it looks nice,* John thought as he looked for a table. As he sat down he saw a black woman approaching him. *That must be Grace. I don't think there are many other black women living around here.* "Good afternoon sir," she said, "Can I get you something to drink? Or would you like something to eat?" John looked at her. She seemed real nice. He smiled at her. "Some coffee would be nice Ma'am. And as for food... What do you recommend?" he asked her. "Well..," she started, but she wasn't able to finish her sentence as a man came up from behind her. "Her meatloaf is real good, sir," the man said offering his hand to John. "The name is Jake Slicker. You're not from around here, are you?" John looked at the man carefully as he shook Jake's hand firmly. "John Kerrigan," he said, "and no, I am not from around here. I'm from Denver." He turned to Grace. "Let's try that meatloaf Ma'am." Grace smiled back at the man. "Meatloaf it is," she said and walked away from the table.

"Well Mr. Slicker, do you always know when someone is from this town or not?" John asked as Jake joined John at the table. "I'm the town's mayor, Mr. Kerrigan, so it's my duty to know who lives in this town and who doesn't. It's also my duty to introduce new people to this town. If people feel welcome here, they may come back here once in a



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Chapter 3

John stood in his hotel room and looked out of the window. He heard the church bells and knew the mass was over. He hated going to church. He didn't believe in God and all that. At least not anymore. He stopped believing a long time ago.

He looked over at the church and saw many of the citizens walking outside. He recognized many of them as he had met most of them in the last two days. He smiled, remembering a few of these meetings. Oh, how he had loved his meeting with Michaela Quinn! He would definitely visit her a few more times. He saw her walking out of the church. She looked stunning! She wore a beautiful blue dress with a hat in a matching color. There was no doubt now that she was from the city. And that she was wealthy. Otherwise she wouldn't be able to afford a dress like that. Two children walked beside her. A young blond boy and a beautiful blond girl. They obviously were brother and sister. Were they hers? Could it be that Michaela Quinn was their mother? But who was the father then? There was no man near Michaela. *Well, I'll figure that one out*, he thought.

He watched as most of the townsfolk walked in the direction of Grace's Café. John thought of going there as well, but he wasn't ready yet... He wasn't ready to see him... Him... The man that was responsible for everything... for everything he had been through in the last 20 years... He clenched his fists at the thought of this man. Anger welled up inside of him. And hate, so much hate...

Then he smiled. He had a feeling what the townsfolk would be talking about at Grace's Café. All conversations would be about him. After all, he was the new big attraction in this small town. And he had made a favorable impression to most of the people he had

"Well don't take it into your head Dorothy," Loren called, "You're way too old for him!" The comment got a big laugh from almost everyone. "Loren!" Dorothy exclaimed, but decided to say nothing more. "Well, I like having the man around," Loren said, "he ordered three very expensive suits at my store yesterday!" "Three expensive suits, Loren?" Jake asked, "Well, that should be good for business then!" Loren nodded happily. "Well, this man could be good for everybody's businesses," Jake said. Suddenly everyone was quiet and looked at Jake suspiciously. "As all of us can see the man is very, very wealthy. So I asked him what business he was in. And you know what? He's a banker and an investor. He may be willing to invest in this little town," Jake explained, feeling very proud of himself.

Some people started to cheer and as he looked at their faces he saw excitement and gratitude.

Not everyone shared these feelings however. "Is that so?" Jake heard a gruff voice saying. He turned around and saw that it was Hank. "What do ya mean Hank?" Jake asked. "What I mean is, we don't know anything about this guy... Who says he ain't foolin' us? What makes you so sure that he ain't someone who's here to steal our money or whatever?" Hank looked at Jake, daring him to go into discussion with him. "Oh Hank," Loren said, "Look at the way he dresses! His whole behaviour He's just a nice man from the city that wants to make this town a better place! What's wrong with that?"

"I didn't ask you anything Loren," Hank shot back and continued to look at Jake. "I'm with Loren, Hank," Jake said. "There's no reason why we shouldn't trust this man. We've all met him, and talked to him. He's a good man! Besides, I checked with some people in Denver. He does own a bank there."

Hank sighed and remained quiet.

"I'm with Hank," Sully said suddenly, who hadn't said anything during the whole conversation. "He's right... What do we really know about him? Except that he's a banker... Does anyone know WHY he's really here? You obviously told him so many things about yourselves, but what did he tell you about him? I think we should find out a little bit more about him before we do business with this man. It ain't the first time we've been fooled..." Hank looked over at Sully and nodded his thanks to him. He was grateful that at least one person was supporting him in this. "Well, I think we should do this," Jake said. "Wait a minute! You two haven't met him yet, have you?" Sully and

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Thank you for all the reviews! And shame on me! "The two mAn..." Major spelling mistake... I'll try not to rush things, so that the following chapters will be better than the previous ones.

Chapter 4

Hank stood behind the bar of the saloon and looked at the clock. It was 8.30. He clenched his jaw and tried to ignore the bad feelings he was having. He was nervous, although he would never admit that to anyone. He also felt insecure, which was a feeling he hadn't felt in a long time. He had no idea how he would react if he'd come face to face with John Kerrigan. Would he be able to pretend he had never met him before? Or would he just explode and hit him in the face? He watched as several men entered the saloon and then looked at the clock again: 8.35.

Why in hell is he here? Is he here because of me? Or is it something else? Just a coincidence... Why didn't he just stay in Norway? God... I thought he was out of my life for good... I thought I made sure of that... Let's just hope he won't recognize me or anything... Oh, who the hell am I kidding? Of course he'll recognize me... My face is probably etched on his memory just as much as his face is on mine... There's no way I'd forget his face... his voice... his... What time is it? 8.40... Damn! He'll be here in twenty minutes... The moment of truth... He looked up at the ceiling. I know it's been a long time since I've prayed... Hell, I can't even remember the last time... but eh... I could really use some help with this... He shook his head and wondered what the hell he was doing. He stopped believing in God a long time ago; why would God be listening to him now?

His heart skipped a beat when he saw the doors of the saloon swing open. For a brief

moment he thought John Kerrigan would be walking in, but then saw it was Sully. "Hey Hank," Sully said and walked to the bar. Hank nodded. "Hey Sully..." He watched the clock again: 8.50. His heartbeat sped up and he even felt himself starting to sweat. "Damn it!" he said out loud. "What's wrong?" Sully asked. "Nothing," Hank sighed as he grabbed a bottle of whiskey and poured its contents into several glasses. "So, they ain't here yet?" Sully asked, stating the obvious. "No," Hank replied. "Ya curious to know what he's like?" Sully asked, trying to start a conversation. "Not really..." Hank said, not really in the mood for a chat. "Well, I am a little," Sully continued, "He must be something if he can get a whole town to adore him." Hank looked at Sully. "Sounds to me that he's up to somethin'. He's trying a little too hard to get people to like him... Don't ya think?" Sully sighed and looked around. "Don't know... But we'll find out soon enough," he pointed at the door, "They're here." Hank swallowed and felt his heart racing when he saw Jake walking into the saloon with John Kerrigan. "Fantastic..." he murmured, hoping that it would all be over soon...

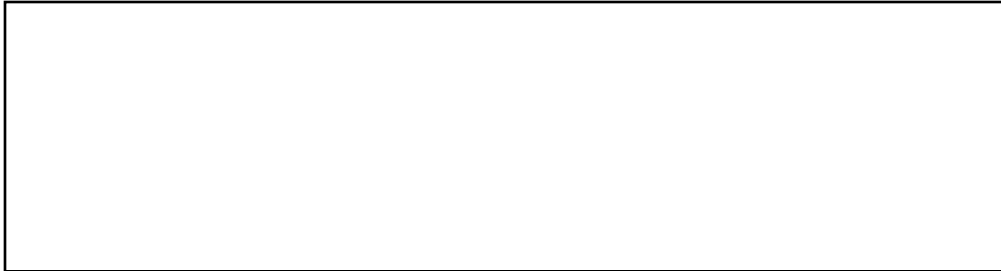
"Gentlemen!" Jake said enthusiastically. "Meet the man you've heard so much about. Mr. John Kerrigan. John, meet Byron Sully" he pointed at Sully and then turned to Hank. "And this is Hank Lawson... he owns this place." John Kerrigan looked at both men. "Well, well, Mr. Sully," he said kindly and offered his hand to him, "I've heard so much about you. Only good things, by the way..." he smiled as Sully nodded and shook the man's hand. "And Mr. Lawson," John said as he offered him his hand as well, "I've heard much about you too." As he said it he smiled. Hank didn't know whether to burst out laughing or to punch the man in the face. *He really doesn't recognize me or he's a damn good actor!* He took John's hand. The handshake was strong. A little too strong... Hank tried to pull his hand away from John's grasp however John continued to squeeze his hand harder and harder. Although his hand was almost being crushed, Hank didn't move a muscle. He looked into John's eyes... *Damn it! He knows...* Then John let go. Sully watched the two men and got a strange feeling while doing that. Something wasn't right here. He just couldn't figure out what.

Sully decided this was the time to interrupt the silence. He turned to John. "I heard you're a banker and an investor?" "Yes, I am," John replied. "So you're a businessman," Sully continued, "What's your interest in this town? Why invest in it?" John smiled at Sully. "Well Mr. Sully, as you may have noticed...this town is growing! And not just in size and population. Colorado Springs is turning into a very prosperous town. It could turn into a successful city like Denver. Investing in a town like this is good for everybody's businesses as well as for mine." Sully eyed the man suspiciously. "So it's about money?" he asked. John chuckled and said: "Everything is about money these

didn't hear the doors again which only meant that whoever entered the saloon was still there. "I said we're..." Hank started as he finally turned around. Then he saw who it was... "Well, well... Hans..." the familiar voice said, "Or do I have to call you Hank now?" "Jonas..." Hank said feeling his heartbeat speed up again. John Kerrigan chuckled and eyed him evilly. "I told you we'd see each other again! And right now... we need to talk..."

TBC

You liked it? Personally I think this chapter is much better than the previous two. I was really on a roll while writing this one! I just couldn't stop writing! It was like the story wrote itself...or something like that... Anyway, it's my personal opinion! Now I'd like to know yours! R&R please!



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Past Fears

By: [LovelyLene](#)  [PM](#)

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Summary: A stranger visits Colorado Springs. Not everyone is happy to see him...

Oh, it's really great to see that you still like my story! And about the relationship between Hank and John... well, maybe this chapter will reveal a little more about that... But remember: Patience is a virtue...

Chapter 5

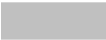
"We need to talk," John said to Hank. He walked towards him and looked him straight in the eyes. He looked self-confident and Hank knew John meant business. Hank stood tall, pretending not to be afraid of him. John knew better however... "What about?" Hank asked with a strong voice, although he had to work real hard to prevent his voice from shaking. "You know damn well what about," John answered as he drove Hank into a corner. Hank swallowed but continued to look at John as tough as he could. "I don't know what yer talkin' about," he said in a gruff voice. "Well, let's refresh your memory then," John said with a smile. He suddenly grabbed Hank by the throat and slammed him into the wall. Hank was surprised, not just by the action, but also by the man's strength. He knew the man used to be strong, about twenty years ago, but he obviously still had it in him.

Hank grabbed John's hands and tried to make them let go of his throat. He didn't succeed however. "You're hard to find you know that?" John squeezed Hank's throat a little which caused Hank to moan in pain and discomfort. He was still struggling to get out of John's grasp, but John didn't let go. Hank just couldn't believe the strength the man had. Meanwhile John continued his speech. "It took me twenty damn years to find you! I almost gave up you know...but then... one day... I visited a school in Denver, an art school by the way..." he smiled as he saw realization dawn on Hank. Hank's eyes grew wide and he tried to yell at John. However, John's grip on his throat was so strong he could hardly make a sound. He could still breath a little though, which was a small

relief. "I met a boy there," John continued, "I forgot his name..." He looked thoughtfully at Hank and then moved closer to him. Hank was now stuck between the wall and John's body. He felt John's breath on his face as the man continued his tale. "Anyway, he was real gifted and I asked him if he could show me a little more of his work. And you know what! He showed me a drawing he once made of his father..." John smiled evilly at Hank. "It was you..." he chuckled, "Now... what was the boy's name again? Oh, I know... Zack..." As he said it his grip tightened on Hank's throat. Hank started to get dizzy and had the feeling that he was going to throw up. *You stay away from my son! You son of a bitch... You stay away!*

Hank felt anger welling up inside of him and suddenly he found the strength to push John away from him. He pushed the man away with such force, which almost caused John to fall to the ground. As the pressure was released from Hank's throat he started to cough. He fell back against the wall and grabbed his throat as another fit of coughing seized him. "You... Stay... Away... from him!" he yelled between coughs. John just smiled at him watching him struggle for air. "Don't you dare... come near him!" After a few more coughs he finally managed to get some air into his lungs. He took a deep breath, his hands still on his throat. "You want me? You got me... But leave him alone..." Hank continued. He tried to stand up straight but he was still unsteady on his feet. His throat still hurt, but the dizziness was gone. He looked at John and saw that the man's smile had faded and was eying him angrily. "Make me..." John said dangerously, then he stalked towards Hank. He grabbed Hank by the collar and pushed him to the ground. "You deserve to suffer the same fate I did! How dare you ask me to leave your son alone! You son of a bitch! The blood of my children is on your hands!" John yelled at Hank, his eyes shooting daggers at him. The man was beyond madness and for a moment Hank thought John was going to kill him. "Those children died because of YOU, Jonas!" Hank yelled back. He got up from the floor and leaned against the wall, sweat dripping from his forehead. "Their blood is on YOUR hands... not on mine..." Hank continued. He suddenly felt tired. He closed his eyes and wondered when John was going to make his move on him. *Please, just get it over with...* He looked over at John who was standing just a few feet away from him. "It should have been you..." John said. His voice was low but full of hate. Hank shook his head and snickered. "Well, ya made a little mistake then, didn't ya?"

John could feel anger boiling up inside of him. He was about to make his move on Hank as he heard footsteps right outside the saloon. He looked over his shoulder then back to Hank. "This ain't over yet," he said, then he turned around and walked outside. He nearly bumped into Sully who was about to enter the saloon. John paid no attention to



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Summary: A stranger visits Colorado Springs. Not everyone is happy to see him...

Again, thank you for all the reviews. I can't believe that I already have so many. And that for my first fic! This chapter is more about Sully and his motives for being so curious to know what's going on between Hank and John. It's a longer chapter than usual, by the way. I had lots and lots of inspiration...

Chapter 6

Michaela Quinn stood in front of the homestead, enjoying the beautiful pinks and yellows of the sunrise. It had been a cold night and it was still a bit chilly outside, however it looked like it was going to be a beautiful day again. She turned around when she heard a noise coming from the barn. She was about to walk towards it to check out what it was when she saw Sully walking out.

"Mornin'," he said, rubbing the sleep from his eyes. Michaela grinned. "Good morning," she said amused, "You slept in the barn last night?" Sully smiled at her, knowing that she was making fun of him. "Yes...," he replied, "I came home late... Didn't wanna wake ya..." He yawned and rubbed his eyes again. Michaela chuckled and asked: "Did you sleep well?" Sully looked at her incredulously. Of course he hadn't slept well last night. He had to sleep in the barn, on the ground, which wasn't very comfortable. Then there was the cold, the stench of dung, and not to mention his brain, which was working overtime to figure out what the thing was with Hank and especially with John Kerrigan. "Hmm...," he said to Michaela, "... a little... a bed is more comfortable though..." Michaela shook her head. She couldn't help but smile. She knew Sully hadn't slept well; it was written all over his face. He'd just never admit it.

"How was your meeting with John?" she asked suddenly, "He's a nice man, isn't he?" Sully looked at her and sighed. "I don't know Michaela... There's something about him..."

Michaela cut him off. "Didn't he tell you anything about his plans? His intentions are good and it's good for the town! Colorado Springs will become more prosperous, which will be good for everyone!" Sully shook his head. "That's the thing Michaela... he didn't tell us anything. He just told us that he wanted to invest in this town, but he didn't tell us anything specific. And his reasons... I don't know... He was just being vague about it..." Michaela eyed him curiously. "Well, didn't you ask him about details then?" she asked. "I was about to, but then Jake interfered... He introduced him to some other people... Hank wasn't too happy about it either..." Sully said as he recalled the events of the previous evening.

"I don't understand that," Michaela said, "Hank's usually the first one to agree with someone's plans... Especially when those plans will bring in extra money..." Sully nodded. "Yeah, I know... That's exactly what I don't figure either..." He was silent for a moment. "What is it?" Michaela asked. Sully sighed, not knowing whether he should tell her or not. "I think something happened last night...in the saloon..." he started. Michaela looked up. "Like what?" Sully sighed again and then decided to tell her what he knew. "I came back after a walk through the woods and as I walked past the saloon I heard people yelling... fighting... I couldn't really make out what they were saying, but I decided to check it out... I was about to enter when John stalked outside. Now that I think off it... I think he was angry... furious even... When I stepped inside I saw Hank leaning against the wall. He looked like he had been in a fight with someone. He told me he was fine, but he looked awful, Michaela... He had bruises on his neck and throat... And I know this will be hard to believe, but... he looked scared..."

Michaela was a little surprised by Sully's story, she didn't show it however. "Did you ask him what happened?" Sully nodded. "I tried, but he really wanted me to leave, so I decided not to ask any more questions." Michaela looked at Sully curiously. "You think John had something to do with it?" she asked. "Maybe..." Sully answered, "He was the only one there, so... who else could it have been?"

Dozens of questions filled Michaela's mind. "But why would John attack Hank?" Sully shrugged. "I don't know... maybe Hank attacked him first..." "And why would Hank do that?" Michaela wondered. "I don't know Michaela... I wish I knew, but I don't..." Sully said slightly annoyed. "Why are you so interested in this anyway?" Michaela asked suddenly. Sully looked at Michaela and then said: "Like I said... There is something about this John... I get a bad feeling whenever I'm around him... He doesn't feel right..." he started to pace. "I have the feeling that he's up to something... He's here for a reason and it's not business... I think he doesn't care about this town at all... That it's

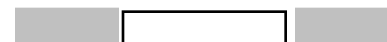
the stairs with a glass of whiskey in his hand. "Michaela told me she stepped by today... she came to check on you... She told me about your... eh... conversation," Sully said, a little unsure. Hank shrugged. "I had noting to say to her... Or to you for that matter... Now leave me alone..." Hank hoped that Sully would take the hint, but Sully didn't let himself being brushed off this time. "No Hank...", he said, "I want to know what's goin' on... and I want to know now."

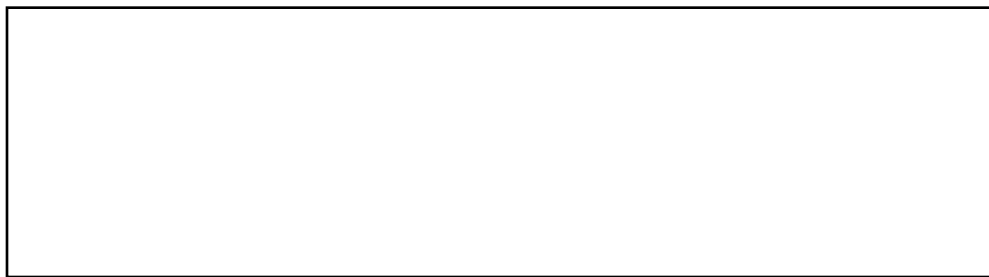
Hank eyed him dangerously. "Don't push it Sully..." Sully, however, paid no attention to the threatening tone Hank spoke with. "What do you know about this man, Hank?" Sully continued, "You know that he's up to no good, don't you? Then why don't you tell someone?" As he spoke, Sully moved closer to Hank. "Sully..." Hank warned, but again it was of no avail. "Hank, this town is falling for his beautiful promises, but he's not going to keep them! Or is he?" Sully looked Hank straight in the eyes. "Why is he really here, Hank? You know why, don't you?" Hank started to get impatient. He really wasn't in the mood for this. "Sully..."

Sully was about to make another comment when it struck him. "It's you, isn't it?" Sully said softly, "You two know each other... He's here because of you?" Finally, the pieces of the puzzle fell into place. Hank sighed defeated and leaned back against the wall. *Damn you Sully...* he thought. He suddenly felt tired. For the last few days he had been keeping up appearances. Pretending he didn't knew John Kerrigan... He had smiled at the man, but inside he had been fuming with anger. He had shaken the man's hand, but he had rather punched him in the face... He was tired of it and suddenly he felt the desperate need to tell someone... Anyone... "Yeah... he knows me..." he started. Sully looked at him. "And you know him..." he replied. They remained silent for a moment before Sully asked gently: "You wanna talk about it? I'll listen ya know..." Hank sighed and walked to the nearest table. He sat down on a chair and gestured to Sully to do the same. He hesitated for a moment before finally telling his story. "John is my stepfather..."

TBC

Tell me what you think please! Chapter 7 will be out soon! I hope... I've been real busy lately (new job and all...) I'll do the best I can to have the chapter out before the end of next week. The chapter you've all been waiting for... Hank's Tale... :)





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Wow, I feel so flattered! Lovely reviews! Thank you! And yes Maritza, you were right all along! Very good guess... :)

Chapter 7

"Your stepfather?" Sully asked a little surprised. He eyed Hank curiously who was looking at him a little nervously. "Yeah... he married my mother a year after my father died... I never liked him... He never liked me either..." Sully could tell that it was difficult for Hank to talk about this. *Something really bad must have happened between these two*, Sully thought. "If he never liked you, then why is he here to visit ya?" Sully asked

Hank. Hank closed his eyes for a moment and then sighed. "To take revenge..." he said softly. "Revenge?" Sully replied, "Why?" Hank looked Sully in the eye. Sully could see that the man was real tired. But he could also see the desperate need in Hank's eyes to tell his story to someone... Anyone... Even if that someone was him. "It's a long story..." Hank said, a little uncertain. "I have time..." Sully said, encouraging him to tell more. Hank had to chuckle at the comment. "I figured ya'd say that..." Sully smiled back at him and waited for Hank to finally tell his story.

"When I was twelve years old my father died. I think Michaela would call it a heart attack... I never had a great relationship with my father, but I did miss him after he was gone... A year later, my mom remarried... She married Jonas... He already had two kids, from a previous marriage; a son and a daughter. I liked having them around... My two older brothers had already left home, so it was just me and my mom after dad died... I didn't have a good relationship with my mother either, so... It was fun to have some kids around that were about my age... Thomas was thirteen... Suzanna was eleven." Hank had to smile as he said her name. "Believe it or not, but I adored her..." He was silent for a moment, thinking of how to continue his tale.

"Anyway... they got to live with us and from that moment things changed... I found out Jonas really wasn't as nice as he looked... That he showed his affection for his kids with his fists... He beat them... He could just jump out of his skin over the silliest things..." Sully could see Hank clenching his fists as he said it. Sully felt anger building up inside of him as well. He just couldn't understand that a father could hurt his own children. He knew he would never do that. He controlled his anger however, not wanting Hank to be disturbed by it. Hank continued. "One day, the three of us had done it again... don't ask me what it was, 'cause I really can't remember... He got so mad..."

"What in hell did you think you were doing? What is it with you brats! Do I really have to watch every move you make? It's about time that I'll teach you three a lesson... Get here!" Jonas grabbed his daughter by the arm and dragged her with him. The two boys followed him silently. "Where are you taking us daddy?" Suzanna asked him innocently. She had never seen her father this angry and it scared her. "Shut up!" he snapped at her, "Did I say you could speak? You only talk when I say so, you understand?" She nodded and looked at her brother nervously. Thomas however lowered his head. He was scared too, but didn't want to show it to his sister.

They walked towards the barn which was situated near the woods, about a hundred yards from the house. Inside the barn John walked towards the trapdoor in the floor and opened it. They all looked down at the hole in the floor and they could see that there was some kind of a room there. A room underground... It looked like it had been part of a cave once. The walls were made of big rocks and it was cold and damp inside. "Get in here!" Jonas ordered the three children as he pointed at the stairs that were leading to the little cavy room underground. The boys did what Jonas asked them and climbed down the stairs. Suzanna followed them slowly. "I'm scared daddy!" she cried but her father showed her no mercy. "Well, let's hope you'll think twice next time you decide to ruin some of my stuff... You're going to stay in here until I get you out!" he yelled and then slammed the trapdoor shut.

"He just left us there..." Hank said quietly. He looked at Sully briefly, then his thoughts wandered back again to the events of that particular day. "He left us in that weird cavy room under the ground..." he continued, "He locked the door above us... We couldn't get out... I thought he would just leave us there for an hour or so, but after three hours he still hadn't shown up. And that wasn't even the worst part..."

"Is it just me or is this place filling up with water?" Thomas asked who felt his shoes and socks getting wet. Hank shook his head. "It's not just you..." he replied, "There is water getting in here... That's the thing with these little caves... there's water everywhere... between the rocks and the walls... And don't forget we're near a river here... This place always fills up with when the river's water level is high..."

"How bad?" Thomas asked a little worried. Hank looked at him. "What'd ya mean?" he asked Thomas. "Well, how much water usually gets in here then?" Hank sighed and thought back to the few times he had been there with his own father. "I once saw it completely filled..." he said, "But that was a long time ago... And my dad used to say that it rarely happens!" He tried to reassure his two friends but he wasn't succeeding. "Well, it happened then!" Thomas answered loudly. He saw his sister jump at the harsh tone of his voice and he immediately regretted the way his words had come out. "I'm scared..." Suzanna said quietly. Thomas looked at Hank and then at his little sister. "Me too..." he said softly.

An hour went by as water kept flowing into the little room. The three children screamed over and over for Jonas to get them out, but it was of no avail. Within a few hours the water had risen to their chins, except for Hank, who was a bit taller. But the worst part was that the water was freezing.

"I-I can't swim," Suzanna said. She shivered from the cold and looked at her brother fearfully.

"W-Why isn't h-he coming? Why doesn't h-he let us out?" She started to panic. "Don't worry sis, I'll protect you... We'll get out of this, I promise!" her older brother tried to assure her. "Yeah, me too," Hank said. He swam to her and raised her a little bit. "We just have to hang in there, okay? We can do it!" he encouraged her. The water however was cold, and it just kept rising. After a while Thomas started to shiver as well and gulped as he realized the water was almost up to his nose. He had to tread water to keep himself afloat. Hank was still holding Suzanna, but he felt himself getting weaker. He could still stand however.

"I..I..I c-c-can't h-h-hold on m-much longer, H-h-hank," Thomas said. Signs of hypothermia were setting in. "I'm s-s-s-so t-t-tired..." Hank held on to Suzanna, who didn't say much either. Her lips were turning blue and her eyes were closed. "N-no!" he yelled, looking at the small figure in his arms and at Thomas who was struggling to keep his head above water. "Y-you have to h-h-hold on! Y-you have to! Suzanna!" he shook the small, still body in his arms. He looked at Thomas desperately, who was just staring back at him, helplessly. Hank thought he saw tears falling from Thomas' eyes, but then again... it could also be water. Then he saw Thomas give up the fight as the boy let himself sink under the water. Instinctively Hank let go of Suzanna and dived after his friend; his brother. He grabbed him by the collar and brought him back up.

"Please T-Thomas! Come on! W-Wake up!" he screamed as he held the boy's face above the surface. He patted his face, but there was no reaction. Then he turned around and saw that there was no sign of Suzanna... she had sunk to the bottom... Again Hank dived to the bottom where he searched frantically until his fingers found cloth. He grabbed her body and dragged them both back up to the surface, only to find Thomas' body gone. He looked at Suzanna's face and started to panic. For the first time he realized that it was too late for them. They were dead... His brother and sister were dead... He tightened his grip on Suzanna and started to cry. His body shook heavily from the sobs, not to mention the cold. For the first time in his life he felt totally helpless... and really, really scared...

Sully stared at Hank in horror. He couldn't believe what he just heard. He couldn't believe a father could do this to his own children. "I'm so sorry Hank..." was all he could say and leaned back in his chair, being at a loss for words. Hank smiled grimly and swallowed. "Yeah... me too..." he said and sighed. "They practically died in my arms and there was nothing I could do to save them..." He sounded sad. Sully could tell that Hank was feeling guilty over this, which, of course, was absolutely ridiculous. "It wasn't your fault Hank," he tried to assure him. Hank looked up at Sully and looked him straight in the eyes. "Don't ya think I know that!" he called out angrily. "Of course it wasn't my fault! But that's not what he thinks..."

"How did you get out?" Sully asked. Hank sighed deeply before saying: "Ten minutes later he opened the trapdoor... If he had come a few minutes later I had probably died too... I'll never forget the look on his face when he opened the trapdoor. It was the only time I saw some humanity in his eyes... He was shocked... and sad, I think... He didn't say a word to me... He just grabbed me by the arm and pulled me out. I don't remember much after that, 'cause I passed out... When I woke up I was in a nice warm bed... my mother sitting next to me..."

"But John blames you for their deaths?" Sully asked, referring to Hank's earlier comment. "Yeah..." Hank said quietly, "He's furious that I survived and they didn't... According to him it should have been the other way around... And he takes every opportunity to tell me that... to rub it into my face... Ironically, I always thought it should have been him..." They were silent for a moment.

"What happened after that?" Sully asked suddenly. Hank hesitated. He wasn't sure he wanted Sully to know what happened after Suzanna and Thomas died. What happened to him... He closed his eyes for a moment and then decided to finish his tale. "Well..." he started, "I became his main target... met the back of his hand many times... Among other things..." He looked at Sully nervously. He was afraid of what the man would think of him. That he would think that he was weak or that he just got what he deserved. However, as he looked into Sully's eyes he saw warmth, understanding and respect. "I'm sorry..." Sully said softly. "Don't be..." Hank answered, "You'd better be sorry for him... cause if he gets near me again, or gets near my son, I swear I'll hurt him more than he has ever hurt me..." he clenched his jaw, and then sighed. "I don't know why I'm tellin' ya all this..."

"You obviously had to let it out..." Sully said with a smile. "Just don't ya dare tell

anyone!" Hank warned him and gave him a tough look. "You know that I won't..." Sully said, "I'm true to my word." Hank relaxed in his chair. "Yeah... I know," he said, sounding a bit tired. What was he thinking? Of course Sully wouldn't tell anyone; good Samatarian that he is...

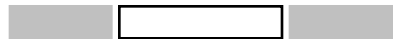
"I may have to tell Michaela..." Sully said suddenly. Hank nearly jumped out of his skin as he heard him say it. "Well, ya know what she's like..." Sully tried to explain, "She'll find out anyway..." Hank eyed Sully dangerously. "She better shut up about it!" he warned. Sully had to chuckle. "That's her job Hank... she will..." he assured him. Hank shook his head. "I've never seen her shut up about anything..." he said annoyed, "That's the thing... she just keeps on rambling... and blurting things out..." Sully had to laugh at the comment, but he also felt the need to defend his woman. "She's a good woman you know... she means well..." Hank sighed once more. "Yeah... I know... And don't ya dare tell anyone I said that! I have an image to keep up..." Again Sully couldn't help but smile. The man was a mystery and full of surprises. But he did realize one thing: Hank wasn't as bad as he seemed to be... Underneath the rough exterior, there was a really nice and caring man, who had been through a lot in his life.

"Don't worry... I won't..." Sully answered, "But I do think that ya have to tell Jake about John... You don't have to tell him all the things that you've just told me, but he needs to know that the man is bad news... And that he has no interest in this town whatsoever." Hank wasn't convinced. "Maybe..." he said and shrugged his shoulders. "No Hank!" Sully said loudly and got up from his chair. "The people of this town are falling for promises that aren't going to be fulfilled. It's your duty as a good citizen to tell Jake this..." He was quiet for a moment, hoping that his words would make sense to Hank. "Go against your nature for once..." Sully teased. Hank looked at Sully incredulously. Was Sully making fun of him? Then he realized Sully was right.

"Fine..." Hank sighed. Then grinned back at Sully. "Thanks for listening," he said softly. "You're welcome," Sully said with a smile and sat down on his chair again. *Who would have thought that? I'm bonding with Hank Lawson...* Sully thought as he leaned back in his chair... He just couldn't help but smile at the thought...

TBC

Okay... It took a while, I know, but I've been really really busy! And I didn't want to rush it. I wanted to make the best of this chapter! So PLEASE, hit the review button and tell me what you think of it! Please? (Writer is down on her knees, putting on her sweatest smile...)



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Past Fears

By: [LovelyLene](#)  [PM](#)

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Summary: A stranger visits Colorado Springs. Not everyone is happy to see him...

I'm sorry it took so long, but I've been so busy lately! I just didn't have the time to update. I hope you're still willing to read this story. Oh, and again thank you for all the reviews!

Chapter 8

Hank stood in front of the saloon and looked over at the barbershop. He thought about the conversation he had with Sully the night before. The conversation about John Kerrigan... Sully had told him that he should tell Jake about this man. Hank, however, didn't really want to tell anyone else about John Kerrigan. It was nobody else's business! But deep down inside he knew he was wrong about that. It was everybody's business. Many of the citizens were about to spend a lot of money on luxury things and expanding their businesses, just because one man had told them that welfare and wealth would soon be within their reach. Hank sighed. He knew it was up to him to prevent the townspeople from making a very big mistake.

Hank walked over to the barbershop where Jake should be. He knocked on the door before he entered. He didn't wait for someone to answer and walked inside. He expected to find Jake on the other side of the door, instead it was John Kerrigan he found sitting in a chair. "What the hell are you doing here?" Hank hissed. John was about to answer when Jake walked in with some documents in his hands. "Hank!" Jake said surprised. "What is HE doing here?" Hank asked angrily and pointed at John. "We were about to sign some agreements concerning the investments John is going to make in Colorado Springs," Jake answered as he put the documents on the table. Hank looked at John who was smiling gently. Hank felt his skin crawling and looked back at Jake. "Is that so?" Hank said in a gruff voice. He was having a hard time controlling his emotions. Oh, how he would love to kick the man in the face, but for once he realized

that it wouldn't do any good. It wouldn't help anyone.

"I need to talk to ya," Hank said, trying to sound casual. Jake nodded. "Okay, we'll be done in about 15 minutes, so if you want to wait outside..." Jake suggested. Hank, however, had other plans. "No, I need to talk to ya NOW!" He hoped he didn't sound too desperate, but he had to talk to Jake before these documents were signed. "Okay..." Jake said hesitantly, "Then talk..." He looked at Hank suspiciously. It was obvious to him that the man had something on his mind, he just didn't understand why it couldn't wait for just a few minutes. "Privately..." Hank said and eyed John dangerously. John stood up and walked towards the door, taking the hint. "It's all right Jake, I can wait," he said and smiled, "I'm sure Mr. Lawson has something important to discuss with you. I'll come by later today to sign these documents." Jake nodded. He was about to answer, but John had already left the barbershop.

Jake sighed and pointed at a chair. "You want to sit down?" Hank shook his head. "No, it won't take long..." Hank stared at the ground. He didn't know how to tell Jake what he had to say. He also didn't know WHAT to tell Jake. He surely didn't want to tell Jake the exact same story he had told Sully the day before. It had been hard enough just to tell Sully. There was no way he would tell Jake the whole story! It wasn't his business. "Eh... it's about John..." he started, unsure of how to continue. "What about him?" Jake asked. He could see that Hank was nervous and he wondered why. Hank was never nervous! "Ya shouldn't let him sign those papers," Hank continued. He looked at Jake a little uncertain. "Why's that?" Jake asked. A part of him didn't want to know what was coming, however, there was also a part of him which was very curious to find out what Hank had to say.

"He's bad news, Jake," Hank said, sounding more secure. "What makes you think that?" Jake asked suspiciously. "I... I just know, okay..." Hank sighed. He was determined not to tell Jake anything about his past with John. There was no way he would display his greatest weakness in front of Jake. "Look Hank, you have to give me something specific otherwise I have no reason to believe you," Jake said and shook his head. "The man has been nothing but nice to everyone here in town! He even wants to invest in it, which will be good for all of us! How can that be wrong?" Jake eyed Hank questioningly. "Of course it ain't wrong..." Hank sighed deeply and leaned against the wall. "It's just... I just think you should check him out before you're going to do business with him... Especially when the interest of every citizen in town is at stake." Jake's eyes were shooting daggers at Hank at the last comment. Hank knew he'd just hit the man where it hurts. "Are you saying that I don't care about this town? That I'm doing my job

truth about him, especially if Jake was going to check him out. He looked at the saloon one more time. *You WILL suffer for what you did... You WILL suffer the same fate I have!* He chuckled. *I think I'll make a little trip back to Denver...I think I can manage to find my way back to that art school... Have a chat with a certain young boy...* He smiled evilly as he turned around and disappeared from everyone's sight...

TBC




Okay, this chapter is a little shorter than the previous two. But I still hope you all like it! Please let me know!

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Summary: A stranger visits Colorado Springs. Not everyone is happy to see him...

Alright... Here it is... the last chapter of this story. Feels a little sad... But I hope you'll enjoy it!

Chapter 9

It was a chilly morning when Jake decided to go to Horace's telegraph office. Yesterday, as he had promised Hank, he had sent some telegrams and posted some letters to some influential people all over the country, to gather information about John Kerrigan. He'd even sent some letters to the Norwegian government. However, the reason he was going to the telegraph office right now was not because he hoped that information was already sent back to him. It was too soon for that. No, the reason why he was going to the telegraph office, was because he hadn't seen the gentleman in question, John Kerrigan, since yesterday morning.

John had promised he would be back later that day to sign some documents concerning the investments he would make in Colorado Springs. Jake had waited for him all day, but the man never showed up. First he had thought that it wasn't like John; that he would have a very good reason for not showing up. But then he thought back to the conversation he had that day with Hank. Could Hank have been right? Could it be that John Kerrigan couldn't be trusted. He had thought about it all night. This morning he had decided to go to Horace. Maybe John had left a message for him there.

"Morning Horace," Jake called as he stopped in front of the window. "Morning Jake!" Horace said and smiled. "What can I do for you?" Jake looked at him a little incredulously. "Well, I was wondering whether you have any messages for me... This is a telegraph office right? What else would I be here for?" Jake sounded slightly irritated and Horace decided to skip the chit chat. "Uh... one moment..." he said as he searched

sighed. "Because I'm afraid I know who sent Hank a message...and if I'm right..." Sully didn't bother to finish his sentence. Michaela already understood what he meant. Sully was already on his way to the telegraph office and Michaela decided to follow his example. "You think it's from John, right?" Sully didn't answer which confirmed her suspicions. "Oh no..." was all she could say. Sully had told her Hank's tale a few days ago and she remembered being dumbfounded by it. She couldn't believe a man could be capable of such cruelty. She also couldn't believe she had trusted this man. Now she was nervous about what was in the letter and what John was up to. She also feared for Hank.

They arrived at the telegraph office and saw Hank standing a couple of feet away from it with a letter in his hand. His face was as white as a sheet. Sully slowly walked towards him. "Hank?" he spoke softly. "Hank? What does it say?" Hank was quiet for a moment. "I...I'm not sure...Can't read that well..." he said softly, his voice almost a whisper. Sully took the letter from his hands and read it.

Hello Hans,

You've done it again! You've messed up my plans AGAIN! You will not get away with it... not this time. You'd better keep looking over your shoulder Hans! You will never know whether you're safe or not... You AND your boy...

We WILL meet again...

Jonas Kerrigan

Sully looked at Hank after he finished reading. Michaela took the letter from Sully's hands and read it as well. She looked at both men, not knowing what to say. Suddenly Hank turned around and walked away. "Hank!" Sully called after him. "Hank! Where are you going?" Sully followed him and so did Michaela. "Denver..." Hank said. Sully caught up with him and grabbed him by the shoulder. "You're not going alone," Sully stated. "This ain't your business Sully!" Hank warned as he pushed Sully away. "You made it my business Hank! You made it my business the night you told me!" Hank cursed inwardly but didn't say anything. "Look," Sully continued, "I know we will always have our differences, but I do consider you a friend. And you know what Hank? Friends help each other." Sully looked at Hank and saw his words sinking in.

Hank looked back at Sully. "I have to do this on my own, Sully...the man is dangerous... I can't let anything happen to anyone else..." Hank said softly. "Like what happened to



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