

SONG GIRL

The Prelude

He sees...

A hospital room. It looks like every hospital room he's ever seen or in which he's ever been. Although when he stops to think about it, he admits that number isn't very many. This room strikes him as relatively new, at least recently painted, and surprisingly bright thanks to a large window that lets in the sun from another glorious Colorado Springs day. He thinks the room smells like a hospital room should smell, antiseptic, cleaner than clean. There's a table attached to the hospital bed that can swing in and out of the way for the use of the patient, the nurse, or the doctor depending on the needs of each. The only other piece of furniture in the roughly 9' by 11' room is the chair in which he finds his butt at the moment. There's a flat screen TV mounted to the wall and a half a dozen, by his count, machines, appliances and pieces of equipment monitoring vital signs and, he has to assume, keeping her alive.

She's in the bed. Flat on her back. Eyes closed. He thinks she looks so peaceful on the outside. He hopes all the technology, on which she is currently dependent, tells the same story about what is happening on the inside. He is certain he's seen her eyes flicker on more than one occasion. He commits it to memory each time and tells the doctor.

"She's comatose," was all the doc offers in response.

He has been there for the better part of 24 hours.

She sees...

A bed. It's her bed but which one? The bed she slept in at the Haynes's house? No not that bed. It's her childhood bed, the one in which she slept before she had to leave that house. It's comfortable, comforting. It's her old bed but it's not her old room. At least she's pretty sure it isn't. This room is bathed in soft white light. The images from inside the room are unclear. Is that a chair? Is there a person in the chair? Before she can give the thought more attention there is a knock on the door.

"Come in," she says. Or did she. Was that her voice?

The door opens and she can see people, at least what appear to be people. They're all shapes and sizes. Men, women, and children, lined up outside her door. Each one waiting to see her. In they come. One by one. They touch her hand, her face, her hair. They appear concerned but they are happy to see her. She thinks they look familiar but she doesn't think it's because she knows them. Then she realizes she doesn't *know* them but she recognizes them all. They're famous. They're singers and songwriters. She's seen them on TV, in music videos, on stages in concerts. She's seen their faces on CDs, record album covers, cassette tapes. His, hers, her friends', her parents'. For some reason she can't understand why? Her heart hurts when she thinks of her mom and dad. The familiar strangers keep coming. Each and every one leans in and

whispers something in her ear. She closes her eyes and opens her ears and hears words, they're the titles of songs they've written or sung.

She opens her eyes and another person is by her side. Is that Steven Tyler? The guy behind him looks like Springsteen, then comes Lady Gaga, Paul McCartney with John Lennon. *Isn't he dead?* She thinks. *Am I dead?* She wonders. But then there's Jason Aldean, Whitney Houston, Judy Garland, Paul Simon, Sir Elton John and on and on the line stretches. Out the door and down the hall.



Song Girl by Keith Hirshland

End of sample.

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