

Innocence Regained

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Innocence Regained

by [fallows](#)

Summary

Roy meets up with Innocence after the events back at the Source.

Notes

I liked the cut scene I got at the end of the game, with Roy going to meet up with Innocence and give him the journal, but I wanted to see the reunion, so I wrote it. Slash style. Un-beta'd so all mistakes are mine.

Chapter 1: Merry Meetings

The ground smeared red under his boot and sunlight glared through the cracks in the ceiling. Roy lifted his hand to shade his eyes, searching the platform for a slight figure. Innocence wasn't there and Roy wasn't expecting him, kid didn't even know he was coming but hope springs eternal or some shit like that. With no bags to grab he set off through the depot, avoiding the eyes of guards and keeping to the shadows; he may not be a renegade anymore but no use in flaunting his arrival.

Stepping through the door, Roy looked out onto the Village proper, eyes adjusting to the diffuse sunlight. It was a city much like all the other dusty holes he'd seen before; some plants here and there trying to live, people moving around or lying down like dead things, red painting everything in sepia. Streets curled through four districts and meandered off into the rock or sand, buildings crowding around them. He had to find Innocence, or at least get some info on where to start looking for him. Best place to start was the bar.

Moving through the streets and memorizing them was second nature now. He kept to the shadows, though he doubted any soldiers would be around here. This place was at the edge of the Guild's reach, the only soldiers here were those too old to fight or too stupid to follow orders; the dregs, as it were. Patrols were few and seldom enforced, but away from the fighting there was little crime anyway. People were too tired to fight each other; they were busy fighting to survive. The water here was precious little, but Roy'd heard rumors of a deep cave with a wet floor floating around. If that were so, he and the kid might need to pack up soon if the Guild came knocking, but maybe the General would be occupied rebuilding his kingdom and wouldn't come 'round.

Either way, life here was hard and Roy felt uneasy thinking of the kid trying to make it alone. If anyone like the fat guy was around, he'd kill 'em for sure this time. With no prison guards around to keep order Roy would stake his claim loud and clear, keep the scum away. But only if Innocence didn't kick him out first. Hopefully the words in the diary would make him understand. If he needed time Roy'd give it to him, though he wouldn't be far away. Now that everything was over, he was damned if he let the kid out of his sight again.

The midday sun spread its rays across the sizzling metal roof, making the air shimmer and bend. People would stay indoors until later, beat the worst of the heat. Roy had the streets

mostly to himself though the occasional body could be seen in the shadows. After hours on the train walking felt good and until he could get to the bar the sun wasn't a problem. But he took note of who watched him, he didn't know the players in this town and he'd need every bit of information he could get if he and Innocence were to survive.

After some twists and turns he found a sign proclaiming a worn out building as the "Watering Trough." Stepping down onto its first level Roy took a second to let his eyes focus in the dimmer light. There were two levels, separated by a staircase on the far right which led down onto lower floor with the bar and tables. The floor was dusty and made of perforated metal, allowing a distorted view to below. Didn't look very busy but the chairs would fill after the work day was over. Boots thumping over the rivets Roy set for the bar, bartenders always knew something, even if they don't want to tell it. Except for a huddled group of junkies in the corner there was no one else around but Roy kept an eye on them anyway, maybe not the best thinkers when drugged up but a junky with a knife was still an issue.

The bartender was polishing a dirty mug as Roy approached, he looked like most men of a certain age did on Mars; tanned, gritty and hard. Though the Mohawk was a nice touch. The eyeballing he did as Roy approached was reassuring, any bartender who didn't scope you out had hidden muscle or was a plant in a trap, but this guy looked legit.

"Can I help you?" he asked. The bored tone belied the clench of his arms, looked like Roy's outfit was still getting some notice even with all the sand caked on it from travelling.

"Yeah, I'm looking for some information on a kid who came here a few months ago." Best not to give a name first off, he didn't know if Innocence had joined the Resistance in this place. Though if he had Roy was gonna lock him up, they'd almost gotten him killed last time and that was not going to happen again.

The bartender was staring at his face, maybe sizing him up or just caught on his eyes. With mutations around his eyes weren't that special but they merited a second look by some. He'd had them called exotic before and in the Source the Technomancers seemed to think they were a sign of power. Whatever, they were his eyes; they worked and that's all he cared about. Innocence had grey eyes, like metal before it rusted.

"I see a lot of people 'round here bub, not like I keep track of who comes and goes." The guy was trying to brush him off, that meant one of two things: he knew where Innocence was or

he though Roy might be shaking him down for a manhunt. Innocence was pretty memorable, even in this uncaring place. Like the fat bastard had said, he had a pretty face.

“I don’t think so; I think you see everyone who comes through here. I’m looking for my friend, skinny guy with a red neckerchief.” It was a delicate balance but if he played it right the guy would judge him as harmless enough not to lie to. If he didn’t, Roy wasn’t above bribery. Or fists.

“Red neckerchief, eh? Rings a bell. Might have been someone here fitting that description but I’m not sure. I could say more if the price was right. Say 30.” Bribery it was then. The barkeep’s eyes looked at Roy shrewdly. If 30 serums were all he thought he could get out of Roy that was fine, the other 270 he had hid in his boot were meant for other things but he’d pay it all to find the kid.

“Here. Now tell me.” The serum glowed a bit in the dark of the bar as Roy laid it on the counter, throwing his face into quick relief. The barkeeper took it before it had barely settled, hiding it away beneath layers of grimy leather.

“The one you’re looking for lives down in the Marketplace, owns a little shop. It’s got a blue awning, hard to miss.” Business finished he went back to cleaning the filthy mug, but an eye was trained on Roy’s hand. The tip was probably good, and if not Roy had no problem coming back and “addressing” his grievances.

“Thanks.” Turning to go, Roy noticed the group of junkies had lost a member. Interesting. Good thing he kept the glove.

The air cleared as he left and the light was a welcome relief after the hazy depths of the bar. The Marketplace, huh? According to the map he’d lifted off a station attendant that section was to his left, past some buildings. Setting off Roy took note of direction; it was easy to get lost in these places, streets could change daily.

It was a short walk to the Marketplace, with a quick climb over a divider. This city was smaller than others, not many doors needed to separate areas. The Marketplace was set in a rough circle with a slab of rock in the middle, stalls ringing the stone and low buildings faced them, set into the hard red rock. The awnings of the stalls were all various shades of gray with a few colors trying to show through but there was not blue. Roy walked around the

circle, dodging a sleeping dog. He was starting to doubt the barkeeper when he noticed a blue stretch of fabric shadowing the entrance to one of the shops. Looks like the kid had done pretty well for himself after all.

Approaching the door Roy heard someone talking inside, but the voice was too low to be the kid's, and it didn't sound happy. Roy shoved the door open and stepped inside, hand resting on his weapon.

It was darker in the shop, but there was still enough light to see clearly by. Shelves lined the walls filled with various parts and items, a few barrels of raw material here and there. A small counter was wedged between a shelf and a wall, with a door behind it. Two people stood in front of it, blocking Roy's view of whoever was behind the counter, but he had a good idea as to their identity.

"Give us the alloys or we'll take 'em from your shop when you're dead! Got it, bitch?" The taller of the two had his fists braced on the counter and was yelling into the owner's face, still shadowed since the other thug was blocking the light. But Roy knew that profile, the snub nose and thin jaw. Innocence. His hand tightened on the grip of his hammer. How did the kid attract all the jerks? Well, beyond the obvious. Stepping forward, Roy leaned casually on one of the shelves.

"Is there a problem here?" Looking at ease always put people on the wrong foot, gave you the advantage when the layout of the fight was unknown. Roy didn't care about the thugs but they yelled at the kid, so they were on his shit list. The taller one turned first, the brains of the two since he froze upon seeing Roy's cool stare. The other guy wasn't quite as fast, and when he looked at Roy, his chest puffing up made it obvious he didn't see the threat. Idiot. But it was Innocence's quiet "Roy?" that got their attention.

"This yer boyfriend, bitch? Coming to save yer skinny ass?" The dumb one spit, Roy decided he'd take him down first.

Innocence's eyes were wide with shock but he focused on Roy quick enough, taking in his disheveled sprawl. If there were any angry words coming Roy hoped the kid would can it until the thugs left. One problem at a time.

“I think the bigger question here is: did you just threaten my friend?” Roy kept his voice low, let the idiots work themselves up, it made it easier to hit them. The taller one was getting a little shifty and looking at the door. Good. He was realizing Roy was not to be messed with. His buddy was not on the same level.

“I don’t think there’s a question at all, fucker. Fuck off or we’ll mess you up real good.” How eloquent. These two would be easy to take care of and do the double duty of sending a message that Innocence was not to be bothered with. It’d been a few days since Roy had let loose, he wouldn’t mind making the message obvious. Roy let his hammer swing from his hand and catch the light. Why waste breath on a threat when visuals worked just fine?

The smart thug lunged for the door, the sudden movement causing the other one to leap at Roy. Stupid idea, in a space as small as the shop but he wouldn’t be moving for long. Catching the smart thug on the back of the knee Roy pivoted and sunk his hammer into the dumb thug’s stomach. The tall one went down cursing on the threshold; Roy shifted his weight and kicked him in the ribs. Cheap shot but it kept the guy down. He turned back to the other one; the thug was curled up, hands cradling his ribs. Roy grinned, time to make a statement. Hefting his hammer he raised it high for a last blow Roy aimed and-

“Roy, don’t!” Innocence was clutching the countertop and staring at him, eyes wide. Roy looked at him blankly and then dropped his hammer; he kicked the smart thug again and kneeled down next to his ear.

“I’m not gonna kill you ‘cause that kid over there thinks I’m a decent guy but you hear me: if I ever see you or any of your friends around here again I will stop you. Got it?” The gurgles coming from the man sounded roughly like he was agreeing, so Roy grabbed his jacket and levered him out the door, shoving the other thug out on top of him. Roy pulled the door closed and turned to look at Innocence. Not the meeting he was hoping for but at least the kid was in one piece.

Innocence had moved to the front of the counter, his posture tense and gray eyes staring at Roy like he was a mirage. Something lost. It felt good; he was missed. Roy grinned.

“Hey kid.”

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