



# **EDEN'S CHILDREN**



By David Smith

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I hope you like it and look forward to my next one. You will decide if there will be a next one. Thanks!

A young man is sitting in the corner of a padded room in a straightjacket, peering out over his arms that are lying across his knees. He stares distantly at the door across the room as if he is expecting someone to walk through it at any moment. His face glistens with sweat; his hair wet, draped and clinging to the sides. His mouth is partially open, breathing like someone resting after a strenuous workout.

Suddenly, the sound of keys jingling on the other side can be heard as someone turns the lock to open the door. A clunking sound echoes throughout the room as the key turns the gears unlocking the door.

The young man sits motionless focused on the door, with no emotion, anticipating its opening. The door handle moves, then it slowly begins to open, revealing a shadow of someone on the other side opening the door. An orderly, a man in his thirties with short brown hair, enters dressed in a white uniform, dangling the keys from his fingers. He is followed by a man who looks like a doctor carrying a clipboard with salt-and-pepper hair and looks to be in his fifties.

The young man's demeanor remains the same as the two men make their way into the room, shutting the door behind them. The doctor gives the young man a visual examination from afar, as he pulls a pen from his breast pocket, looking at him curiously. "So, how are we doing today, Sid?" Again, the young man's position and stare remain intact without a word spoken. "Not speaking today?" the doctor asks, surprised.

"He's probably just a little tired from all the screaming he done earlier," the orderly suggests.

The doctor looks at the orderly and then back at the young man. "Is that true, Sid?"

The young man's eyes go from a fixated stare to looking in the eyes of the prying doctor. "Whatta you care?" he asks, disgusted.

The doctor kneels down with a concerned look on his face looking back at the bitter young man. "I care very much about you, Sid," the man confesses.

The young man turns his head away from the doctor in an act of disbelief and doubt. "Liar," Sid mumbles.

"What's that?" the doctor asks, unsure of what the young man said.

Sid looks back at the doctor angrily. “You don’t believe a word I say, so there’s no way you can understand me. You don’t understand anything.”

The doctor sighs and returns to a standing position. “All right, Sid. You say God talks to you and tells you things. If that is true, then why would he allow you to walk out into traffic and almost be killed? I mean, you can’t very well tell us what he has to say if you’re dead, now, can you?”

Still staring at the doctor, Sid’s eyes start to squint. “I wasn’t in any danger,” he growls.

“Why? Because you think he would have saved you?”

“No, because I can take care of myself,” Sid explains.

“And what a great job you’re doing,” the orderly scoffs. “I mean, look around, Sid. This ain’t exactly heaven.”

The doctor looks over at the orderly and frowns, not seeing his comment as helping the situation. The orderly apologizes. “Sorry, I just meant he can’t do God’s bidding from in here.”

“God’s bidding?” Sid says, confused. “You think I’m supposed to do God’s bidding? I never said anything like that.”

“Well, aren’t you? Isn’t that why he speaks to you?”

“No. I’m not here to do God’s bidding or even explain any plans he may have for you morons. Like I told you before, I’m here to find others like me.”

“Well then, you’re in the right place,” the orderly assures him.

“I’m not crazy, you asshole!” Sid shouts.

The doctor steps between the two with his arms up in front of him, facing the young man as a calming gesture. “Let’s calm down,” the doctor says soothingly. “No one thinks you’re crazy.”

Sid looks up at the ceiling, ignoring the two men, and begins crying out for help. “TELL ME WHAT TO DO! PLEASE, YOU’VE GOT TO HELP ME!”

The doctor and orderly move in to secure the young man as he begins to kick at them while they approach. “NO! LEAVE ME ALONE! GET AWAY FROM ME!”

As the two men grab him, Sid hears a voice call out to him. “Sid, just relax. I’m here with you. Just concentrate on my voice and block out

everything else. Do you understand?”

“Yes, I understand,” Sid says softly.

“Good. Just do as I tell you. You have to show them that you’re not crazy.”

“What? How can I do that? I’m in a straightjacket.”

“Not with your body, Sid, but with your mind. I need you to focus. You can do this.”

“Do what?” Sid asks.

“You need to start thinking about the walls around you. You need to visualize that they are not there and that you cannot be held by them. Concentrate, Sid. I know you can do this.”

Sid closes his eyes and begins to picture what the voice has instructed. He begins by blocking out everything around him, like the doctor, the orderly, and especially the tight-fitting straight jacket. He begins to picture the walls fading in his mind, allowing him to see into other rooms and even the hallway outside his room. He can see people walking down the hall and even looking back at him. Sid starts to feel excited about his accomplishment and a real chance at freedom.

He stands up from the corner of the room, seeing he is alone and jacket-free. The room is peaceful and quiet as he makes his way slowly across the room in the direction of the hall where people are walking by and even smiling at him. This brings a smile to his face as he reaches out to make contact with them. But as he gets closer, they start to fade away, and a darkness takes their place and moves in his direction. Then, as fast as everything had appeared, it was gone.

Sid opens his eyes to the reality of the doctor and orderly standing over him, with the doctor holding a syringe. “Are you okay, Sid?” Disappointed that his dream is over, he nods his head to let the doctor know he’s fine. “Sid, I need you to stand up. We need to get you out of here.”

Sid starts to wonder what the doctor injected him with after hearing the words “we need to get you out of here.” Sid looks confused by the doctor’s comment and starts looking around to see if he’s still in a dream or if something else was going on. As he scans the room, he sees the walls are splintered with huge cracks from floor to ceiling, making the room appear

as if it were about to collapse. Shocked, surprised, and drugged, he wonders if any of this is real.

“What happened?” he mutters.

“There must have been an earthquake or something,” the orderly suggests. The two men lift the helpless young man up from the floor and escort him to the door. As Sid is moved across the room, he continues looking around at the massive damage in amazement. They lead him out into the hall where there is a nurse waiting for them.

“What happened in there?” she asks, peeking into the room and looking over the unusual scene.

“It must have been an earthquake or something,” the doctor replies. “How is the rest of the hospital?”

The nurse turns away from the wrecked room back to the two men. “The only activity was coming from this room, Doctor. The rest of the hospital is fine.”

The doctor and orderly look at one another, confused as if that can't be. “You must be mistaken,” the doctor assures her. “There's no way there was that much damage and nothing else was affected.”

The doctor and orderly start examining the hallway and walls, searching for anything to explain what they just went through. They search the adjoining rooms to Sid's and are shocked when they see the walls are in pristine condition. The nurse stays with Sid as the two men continue their investigation, desperate to unveil the cause for what they witnessed. After finding nothing, the two men return to Sid and the nurse.

“Doc, I can't find any damage anywhere. How is that possible?”

“I don't know,” the doctor replies, dumbfounded.

“I do,” Sid says with a drugged smile. “God told me this was going to happen.”

Frustrated with lack of answers to this mystery and not wanting to hear Sid's delusional take on what happened, the doctor asks the orderly to take him to another room. The orderly escorts Sid away from the doctor and the nurse, letting him know what he thinks about Sid's theory. “God must really hate you.” Sid just looks up at him with glazed eyes like he has no idea where he's at or what was said.

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