

Legend: Veronica Strader Cara Strader Meghan Kelser-Strader Tamika Strader Sparkplug
(Ryan Gaudet)

📺 Talking Heads - Psycho Killer (Official Audio)

Strader Cottage

St. Joseph's Ontario, Canada

June 18th, 2024

He stood above the sleeping daughter of Meghan Smyth, that's who the thought dead Strader Matriarch would always be to him. Twenty-five-years after meeting her, he now looks at the most dangerous Strader there is.

Veronica Strader-Cain. But no one said he was always a smart man. He did just spend twenty-four-years in a maximum security mental hospital, and it took longer than he expected. He talked his way out and with minimal restrictions to his movement, but it took twenty-four years.

He wasn't about to look in on his daughter so young because he knew it was gonna be a long time to show he was "healthy" and capable of living a productive life for the better of society. He is a master manipulator, after all. He needed the right person on the outside, which ended up being the cleaning boy who would have benefited from the help you could get at the hospital, but he got his hands on him. Now Jack Underwood was in "love" with Cara and believed him when he said he could be with his daughter.

Oh, so sorry, how rude... the 'he' in question?

That would be - - -

"Sparkplug."

"Please, that's so early 2000 wrestling stupidity. Ryan is just fine with me."

"The angry part of me is yelling for me to put you on the ground and possibly snap your neck."

"I wouldn't expect anything less from the eldest of Meghan Smyth's children."

"But the smart part of me is telling me you have something set up for a quick escape so you can keep up this... rouse." She motions with her hands toward the man who was still looking along the walls but had finally settled on an open window on the humid night. "So, tell me. What makes you think breaking into my cottage, into my bedroom is, or was, a good idea? Besides the fact you waited for my husband to head home. So brave on your part."

"Who knew running a ranch and raising cattle was so much hard work?"

"Come on. That's common knowledge. Tell me what you came here to tell me and get the hell out. I have an early flight."

Ryan finally turns around, his hair short and slicked back and features that reminded Veronica of Dracula. High cheekbones, pointed animated eyebrows and a grin that was nothing but disturbing. She stayed deadpan, not giving him any sort of weird satisfaction. A breeze comes through the window at the perfect time to make his long matte black leather trench coat wave at his shins with his hand firmly in the pockets.

"Why did I come here? Because you, Ronnie Baby, are the smartest one of them all. Sure, your mom and aunt are apparently excellent businesswomen, wonderful 'mamabears' as my sweet Cara says, but sometimes that Strader rage has a way of, how do you say... clouding their vision from the shitstorm about to open up on them? Yeah, we'll go with that."

"How eloquent."

"Never claimed I was an orator. Wait! Maybe that's why I could never get the shot Scott was holding me back from! Well, is my face red, or what?"

He sits at the edge of the bed as Veronica gives him a disgusted look. He leans in and says quietly...

"Could've saved a whole lot of heartache! Could have stopped the stealing of time with my child..."

"Puh-lease. Don't pretend you care about Cara, you son of - - -"

Veronica coughs as Ryan moves with lightning speed, holding her by the throat.

"You can say whatever you want about me, but no one tells me how I feel about that. Understand? Just grunt. I get it, you are a stubborn bitch."

If fire could shoot from Veronica's nostrils, they would both be engulfed in a fiery cocoon coffin. Her sneer almost appears to be burning into her skin. Ryan winks and taps her on the head with a smile before standing up, letting her catch her breath.

"Now that the nasty nonsense is out of the way, I am here simply to give you a warning. I know your schedule. I know the schedule of everyone in your family. I know all the Estate guards by name and none really know me. I know when your husband gets up to tend to the cattle. I know when your precious little CM Punk opens her little curious eyes in the morning. If you, your sisters, uncles, aunts, and even your own mom decide to mess around with my efforts to get to know my daughter... I will take everything you love."

Gaudet holds up his hand to stop Veronica from responding. He had done his homework.

"Shhh, shh. I know you are gonna gut me and all that lovely stuff," Ryan said, walking back towards her. He sits right down and Veronica is visibly shaking from anger but showing amazing restraint. "But I can give your mom back something she never knew that was possible to bring back. That's all I am saying for now."

He stands back and twirls to the centre of the room near the foot of her bed. He looks towards the very angry Veronica Strader.

"I hope next time is as pleasant as this was, Veronica... but a small part of me, that darkness? Well... it really wants to see what your insides look like," Ryan said, leaning forward with a disturbing, serious look. He claps and starts to laugh. "Should've seen your face!"

With a flick of his wrist he throws a smoke pellet at the forehead of Veronica and, by the time she can create some clarity around her, he is gone.

"Oh, that piece of shit."

Veronica was on her feet quickly as she grabs the Desert Eagle her Uncle John, the international king of his 1%er motorcycle club, had given her not long back. She knew Ryan knew it was planted there.

"Can't take away his fuckin' confidence in himself. But it's most likely arrogance. I'll find an exploit."

Veronica takes ten minutes to clear the cottage of any more surprises. She was thankful it was quiet and that the bastard had made his entrance and exit via her bedroom window.

"What a manipulative son of a bitch!"

She lights a cigarette. Looking out the window, Ryan's words run through her head.

"I can give your mom something back... what is he talking about? I gotta talk to Auntie Tee and Uncz."

Catholic Central High School
London, Ontario Canada
June 19th,2024

The one and only Cara Strader, dressed lightly in this heat wave, running through South Western Ontario with sandals, blue daisy dukes and a white crop top, stares at her old high school.

“Things were so much easier, bruh...”

“I wouldn’t know, I only remember flashes from inside Vee’s psyche.”

“I forget sometimes. Imma feelin’ lost, Ron-Ron.”

Veronica puts her arm around her and gets her to start walking towards the downtown cobblestone area.

“I get that, Care. Come on, let’s grab a beer before I need to fly out to Miami tonight.”

“Scot’s Corner?”

Veronica nods and the two start their walk downtown to the long-standing pub, the Scot’s Corner.

“It’s amazing how much the city has changed but still manages to feel the same as it did years ago.”

“Things change, bruh. You think it’s possible my dad changed?”

Before Veronica answers, she remembers what Gaudet had told her the night before.

“I feel that’s something you’ll have to figure out for yourself, and mom.”

Cara nods and follows it up with a shrug.

“Ya, you ‘prolly right on that. I can’t believe he got out a month early, ya know?”

“Canadian or American judicial system, doesn’t matter, all made up of old white money.”

Cara laughs.

“How’s the shoulder feeling?”

“Like a beer and a spliff will help. Tender AS FUCK and this sling is chafin’ my boob like a mofo, bruh.”

“You are truly an orator with your words, Care.”

“I know.”

Strader Jet

Somewhere over the East Coast, USA

June 19th, 2024

~ START TRANSMISSION ~

Veronica sits in a black leather lounge chair on the right side of the black Strader Jet, with her ring boots in her lap, a cloth and polish. She smiles for us as she “wax on, wax off” her boots, making them shine.

“As a daughter, a sister, a wife and, most importantly, a mother, you don’t have the time that you used to, to get shit done. Something as simple as polishing my ring gear I have to use time like this, flying from A to B to get it done. So I am very grateful that the Strader side are not just wrestlers but also business people which allow me, among other members of my family, to fly privately.”

“When I first started my career in December 2021, I travelled by business class (which is nice) with the other wrestlers and random ass people. Once things were settled with me and the family, I got to benefit from a few perks. My free time is spent with my hubby and my little one.”

“Why am I talking about this? Well, like I said yesterday, every match I have a lot of similarities with my opponents, mostly from being second, third, etcetera generation, but there are differences. A private jet to rest before and after matches. A training facility on the Estate where I train with my family and the students of the wrestling school my Aunties run (Tamika and Vanessa).”

“So you see, as similar as I may seem to a few coworkers, I am also in a class of my own. I don’t have the distractions that others in this industry have.”

Veronica does a quick little wipe on her right boot and puts them down beside her seat. She stands up and walks over to the minibar, pouring herself three fingers of Patron Gold Tequila in a whiskey rocks glass. After a sip and a satisfying sigh of pleasure from the nectar of the Mexican gods, her smile begins its transformation into the infamous family trademark sneer.

“Some might say it puts them in a class all of their own with everything I have at disposal, and they would be right. The key difference being is that I earned my way here.”

“And I did it in short order. Everywhere I have been, I have dominated. And like I said before, while SCW hasn’t gone the way I hoped, I know I can turn that around.”

"Which is unfortunate for the Lil'Devil Boy of North Carolina. Striker won't have a clue what hit him."

Veronica looks out the plane window at the night sky. Complete blackness.

"While you try to distance yourself to be 'your own man,' I know I am my own person inside the decorated halls on both sides of my family. Unlike you, I embrace the fact I am the unholy spawn of the Raven and the Cowgirl. I am The Scorpion."

"I am the Baba Jaga."

Veronica sits back down, glass of tequila in hand, taking another sip.

"So come Breakdown, when you and I come face-to-face Striker, you will be the first to bear witness to the inevitable. Just remember these four simple words, Devil Boy, and they are certainly fitting in this situation."

"God forgives."

"I don't."

~END TRANSMISSION~

Veronica's Condo

Miami, Florida

June 19th, 2024

"Yeah, he was in my room, mom."

Veronica paces in her condo that she hadn't been to in over a year, but the maid service had kept it nice. She holds her iPhone 15 Pro doing FaceTime with her mom.

"And he said he could give me something back I didn't know I could have back?"

"I don't trust him, but I don't know. I don't think he's lying."

"He never says something without having thought about it... it just concerns me when I can't figure out what he means."

"Anything is possible. Like look at our lives since the end of 2021. Everything we thought was fiction was real. I can hop dimensions. You were legally dead and went to the other side. My grandfather's soul is attached to mine. I went to the other dimension to have my baby full term, but only a few months here. Whatever it is, we know it's going to be out of the box of reality."

Meghan closes her icy blue eyes and nods. Veronica hears her auntie in the background.

"Megz, you busy? Oh, hey Ronnie! How was the flight?"

Tamika bullies her way into the frame, laying her chin on Meghan's shoulder. Veronica smiles as

"Good. Settled in for the night. You need mom?"

Tamika faces Meghan and plants a big kiss, followed by a raspberry on her cheek, which gets no-sold.

"I always need her! Our school's first graduates are on the job hunt!"

"Cool, I'll let you two go, then. Mom, call me tomorrow, ok?"

"Of course. Love you, sweetheart. Kick some ass tomorrow and I'll make sure your aunt gets there in time."

"If you aren't fifteen-minutes early, you are fifteen-minutes late!"

"Right... love ya both. Goodnight."

Veronica ends the call, sitting down on her leather couch. After a moment in thought, she can't help but wonder...

"I wonder what Cara is up to?"