

KILL THE MONSTER

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

FLASHFORWARD

Large, small-town house. NIGHT CRIER (21) stomps toward the basement door; feet from it.

She's an aggressive, dangerous predator with green monster eyes. She looks like a woman. Physically fit, long hair, country clothes, dirty hiking boots.

She shows her sharp teeth.

KELSA BANKS (30) sprints in with a pump action shotgun. She's a fierce, resourceful woman who never asks for help or accepts it. Physically fit, long hair, right-handed.

Kelsa wears safety glasses with her **fight uniform**: *short sleeve shirt; watch; cargo pants with many leg pockets; hiking boots.*

Kelsa's Glock 19 handgun is in a hip holster.

Night Crier turns to her. Kelsa runs at her.

Green, sticky slime drips from Night Crier's mouth.

Kelsa brakes a few feet from her, then aims.

Night Crier spits slime. It covers Kelsa's safety glasses. Kelsa throws them off. She takes another pair out a leg pocket and puts it on.

Kelsa aims at her face. Night Crier's eyes widen in fear. She guards her face with her forearms. Kelsa fires. She's an expert shooter.

BASEMENT

In wheelchair, DAKOTA LOPEZ (28) jumps, startled by the shot. She drops a Horror chapter book and grabs a pump action shotgun off her lap.

She's humorous and lively. Tiny, physically fit (upper body), country accent.

Her wheelchair has cushions and two pouches (one on each side). A Glock 19 sticks out the right pouch.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier guards her face with bloody forearms. Kelsa pumps her shotgun and shoots them. Night Crier screams.

Kelsa pumps and shoots her forearms. Night Crier screams. Her forearms bleed profusely.

Kelsa takes a shotgun shell out a leg pocket and loads.

Night Crier charges at her and snatches her gun, surprising her. Night Crier throws it to the far end.

Kelsa reaches for her Glock 19. Night Crier sees and grabs her hair.

BASEMENT

Dakota sits at the bottom of the steps, spooked. She stares at the closed door, gripping her shotgun.

DAKOTA

(to self)

You should've got help, Kelsa.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier slams Kelsa to the wall by her hair.

Kelsa draws her Glock 19. Night Crier snatches it and hits her belly with a powerful punch.

Kelsa grabs her belly and falls. She fights for air and coughs. Night Crier throws her gun to the far end. Night Crier doesn't have a country accent.

NIGHT CRIER

After you, I'll eat the other woman.

Night Crier opens her mouth to bite and marches toward her.

BLACK SCREEN

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Battlefield, NC

Summer. The house is far from neighbors, buildings, and help. Surrounded by woods. A long path leads to the house.

A porch with a wheelchair ramp wraps around the house. Porch lights are along the porch.

A dirty, new wheelchair van is in the yard. A disabled parking permit hangs in the van.

INT. HOUSE - THROUGHOUT HOUSE - DAY

Everything is clean and organized. Framed photos of Kelsa and Dakota are throughout the house. They were taken here.

MAIN BEDROOM

6:00 AM on an alarm clock. Kelsa makes her bed.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa sweeps.

UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Kelsa cleans, wearing gloves. She shakes air freshener. It's empty. She observes it, thinking. She talks proper and without a country accent.

KELSA

I'll make my own air freshener.

KITCHEN

Lots of cooking equipment. Fire extinguisher on the wall. Kelsa boils orange peels and cinnamon on the stove. She smells the air and smiles.

OFFICE

Bedroom office. Kelsa dials a number on her smartphone at her desktop computer.

KELSA

Hello, Mr. Wolf. This is Kelsa Banks; an investor here in Battlefield. I spoke with you yesterday about investing in your business.

She listens, then looks at a planner. "*Four meetings*" is written on today's date.

KELSA (CONT'D)

I will meet with you today. Thank you.

She hangs up. She opens a document on her computer titled "*Kelsa's Catering: Business Plan.*" In the "*Recipes*" section, she types "*Kelsa's Fried Green Tomatoes.*"

LIVING ROOM

Dakota sleeps in bed; blanket on. A Horror chapter book is in her hand.

The room is a bedroom: *Horror movie posters; Horror movie props; Mexican flag; big TV; dresser; computer desk.*

A desktop computer, computer speakers, printer, and writing supplies are on the desk. Her wheelchair is by the door.

A wood crate full of old printed papers is on a bench (at foot of bed).

Kelsa enters with NAYLENE JOHNSON (55); a curious, helpful home health nurse. Heavy country accent.

Kelsa shakes the bed gently. Dakota wakes up grumpy.

DAKOTA

Get outta my bedroom.

KELSA

Your nurse is here, Dakota.

NAYLENE

(Spanish for "hello")

Hola.

DAKOTA

(Spanish for "goodbye")

Adiós, Naylene.

KELSA

Time to get the day started.

Dakota closes her eyes and hides under the blanket. Kelsa pulls it off.

DAKOTA

Naylene, call Sheriff Walker! Tell him I want Kelsa arrested!

NAYLENE

What crime did she do?

DAKOTA
Disturbing the sleep.

Naylene giggles. Kelsa laughs.

GYM

Gym in a bedroom. A freestanding punching bag is in the middle. A Katana sword (in a hip scabbard) is on a sword stand. An 8-foot long spear leans on the wall by the sword.

Kelsa does leg stretches barefoot, wearing kickboxing gloves.

DINING ROOM

Dakota and Naylene put on makeup at the table, having a girls day. A grabber leans on Dakota's wheelchair.

DAKOTA
Thanks for working extra till
Maybelle gets back.

NAYLENE
You're welcome. If it was up to
Kelsa, she'd get rid of me and
Maybelle.

DAKOTA
Definitely...
(excited)
Guess what?! I'm fixing to write my
next book!

NAYLENE
What's it about?

DAKOTA
It's about a dangerous neat freak
who hunts down dirty, nasty people.

NAYLENE
Oh, that sounds scary.

DAKOTA
It's gonna sell for big money and
I'll finally be famous! Oh, I need
to text my agent! He might've sold
my short story!

Dakota takes a smartphone out her left pouch and texts. Her phone has a Horror cover.

NAYLENE

Speaking of neat freak, are you basing your Horror villain on Kelsa?

Dakota grins and nods repeatedly. Naylene giggles.

DAKOTA

After I write my book and get famous, I'ma focus on getting a man. I'm too pretty to be alone. Plus I'm twenty-eight.

NAYLENE

Do you wanna get married and have kids?

DAKOTA

Yup. Yup.

Dakota knocks makeup on the floor. She tries to pick it up with her grabber but can't.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Can you get this for me?

Naylene grabs the makeup and hands it to her. Dakota notices a new, long cut on Naylene's hand.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You got a new cut on your hand.

NAYLENE

Oh, you noticed? Well, of course you noticed. I cut myself this morning. It was a knife.

DAKOTA

That's a long cut. You sure that knife wasn't a sword?

Naylene giggles. Kelsa enters, checking an email on her smartphone. She holds a purse, laptop bag, and sneakers. She wears a business suit and heels.

KELSA

Naylene, I'll be back before four thirty. You're gorgeous, Dakota.

DAKOTA

I know.

Dakota notices Kelsa's sneakers.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Uh oh. The sneakers. How much you gotta do today?

KELSA

I have five meetings. I have to buy groceries, buy new tires for the van, and run some other errands.

NAYLENE

You got lots to do. Let me help with something.

KELSA

No.

NAYLENE

Ok.

DAKOTA

Come on, Kelsa. You got a lot to do. Let her help.

KELSA

(firm)

I said no.

Seeing it's a losing battle, Dakota and Naylene go back to putting on makeup. Kelsa checks the email. She starts to leave --

DAKOTA

(excited)

Oh, Kelsa, I'm about to write my next book!

KELSA

What is it about?

DAKOTA

A dangerous neat freak. She hunts down dirty, nasty people.

KELSA

Is she based on me?

Dakota laughs loudly. Naylene giggles.

KELSA (CONT'D)

She can't be based on me. I'm not dangerous.

DAKOTA

Yeah, right!

Dakota points her fingers like a handgun, then shoots.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
And your legs too!

Kelsa does a quick, strong right side kick.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Tired, Kelsa struggles to carry everything: *a lot of groceries; shopping bags; purse; laptop bag; heels*. She wears her sneakers.

Dakota opens the front door and screen door in her wheelchair. A threshold ramp is in the doorway.

KELSA
What are you doing?

DAKOTA
Opening the doors.

KELSA
Lock the front door. I'll unlock it myself.

DAKOTA
But I already opened it.

KELSA
It's fine. Lock the door. I'll unlock it.

DAKOTA
(stunned)
Really?

KELSA
Yes.

DAKOTA
Kelsa, the door is already open.

KELSA
I don't care. Lock it.

Dakota stares at her, dumbfounded. Dakota shuts the doors.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
It's lock!

Kelsa puts down everything and unlocks the front door.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Kelsa washes the dirty wheelchair van, wearing an apron and gloves. Her Glock 19 is in the holster. She wears a headlamp (light on).

KELSA

(to van; angry)

You will not get this dirty again.

She hears a dog bark in the woods. She grabs her gun and stares at them. She only hears crickets. She washes the van.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through, glaring with her monster eyes. She wears country clothes and dirty hiking boots.

She sees the back of Kelsa's house in the distance. She gets closer and stakes it out.

INT. HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa takes a hot shower. She cuts it off. Her back is covered with small, old scars; from violent beatings.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota sits in her wheelchair at her computer. She types "*NEAT FREAK - Book Outline (Horror)*" as a title. She bounces, thrilled.

FRONT PORCH

Night Crier marches to the living room window. She sees Dakota and grins, showing her sharp teeth.

Night Crier sees Kelsa enter the room, drying her hair with a towel. Night Crier's grin gets bigger.

Night Crier starts to ring the doorbell -- she hears a pickup truck. Its engine and pipes roar.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa and Dakota hear the truck. They look at the window Night Crier was at.

EXT. HOUSE - SIDE OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Night Crier hides at the corner, peeping at the front yard.

FRONT YARD

The truck parks by the wheelchair van. The truck is 4-wheel drive, new, and clean. Two men (30s) sit in the cargo bed. They wear country clothes and old country caps.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa peeps out the window and sees the truck.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

ARCH BRIGGS (30) rushes out the driver side of his truck, exhausted.

He's very kind and helpful. Physically fit, very handsome, heavy country accent. He wears country clothes and a Glock 19 in a hip holster.

FRONT PORCH

Arch rushes to the front door with flyers and knocks.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Kelsa approaches the front door with her Glock 19. The doorbell rings. She looks through the peephole at Arch.

KELSA
(to self; excited)
Arch.
(to living room)
It's Arch, Dakota!

DAKOTA (O.S.)
Tell him how you feel!

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa opens the doors and hurries out with her gun, excited.

KELSA
Hello, Arch!

ARCH
You look lovely, Kelsa.

She blushes; clearly liking him. She looks at her gun.

KELSA
I'm sorry about the gun.

ARCH
I understand. You never know who's coming to your door. Sorry about the noise. I finally bought a new truck for hunting.

She looks at his truck.

KELSA
It's clean. I like it.

SIDE OF HOUSE

From the corner, Night Crier watches the two men in the truck. One looks in her direction. She ducks back and hides against the house.

FRONT PORCH

Arch hands Kelsa a flyer.

ARCH
That's for a big cookout I'm having. It's to feed hungry residents and guests.

KELSA
That's nice of you.

ARCH
Just tryna help. The cookout will be in the parking lot of my store. If you know anyone who's hungry, send them over.

KELSA
Ok. Do you want to come inside? I'm about to cook dinner. I can cook something special for you.

ARCH
I'm not one to refuse a meal -- especially from great cooks.

She blushes.

ARCH (CONT'D)

But I gotta finish passing out these flyers, drop off my buddies, and get some sleep.

KELSA

Ok. You can visit anytime and I'll cook for you.

FRONT YARD

Arch gets in his truck. Kelsa watches from outside it. The two men wave at her.

KELSA

Hello, Buck. Hello, Gunner.

Arch cranks on the truck. The engine roars.

SIDE OF HOUSE

Hiding against the house, Night Crier hears the truck.

FRONT YARD

Kelsa watches Arch leave. She smiles, then goes to the front porch. Night Crier peeps at her from the corner of the house.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa pours a cup of agua fresca (fruit drink) from a container at the table. Dakota reads the flyer in her wheelchair.

DAKOTA

Aww, Arch is sweet. Did you tell him how you feel?

KELSA

No.

DAKOTA

Why not? You need a boyfriend, you're crazy about him, he's single, and he's Arch.

KELSA
I'm giving him time to get over
Linda.

DAKOTA
And you think five months isn't
enough?

KELSA
Maybe it is.

DAKOTA
Just don't wait too long to tell
him. Someone might swoop in and
take him.

Kelsa looks at her, worried.

EXT. HOUSE - SIDE OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Night Crier glares at the long path from the corner of the
house, making sure the truck doesn't return. She marches
toward the front porch.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

KELSA
Try this. It's my version of an
agua fresca.

Dakota drinks the cup of agua fresca.

DAKOTA
(delighted)
You made a container for you,
right?!

KELSA
I take it that you like it. Good.
It's on my catering menu.

DAKOTA
How's your business plan coming
anyway?

KELSA
I finished it today.

DAKOTA
(ecstatic)
It's about time! Congrats!

KELSA
 (emotional)
 I'm actually about to own a
 business.

Dakota claps loudly.

KELSA (CONT'D)
 Stop before I cry.

Night Crier stands outside the window, watching her prey.
 Dakota pushes to the door.

DAKOTA
 I'm gonna pick out a Horror movie
 for after dinner.
 (smiles; scared)
 A really scary one.

KELSA
 I don't understand you.

DAKOTA
 What do you mean?

KELSA
 You're fearful, but you love
 Horror.

DAKOTA
 Blame my dad and his Horror movie
 nights.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier rings the doorbell.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Looking in the fridge, Kelsa hears the doorbell.

LIVING ROOM

Turning on her TV, Dakota hears the doorbell.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa opens the front door. She has her Glock 19. Night Crier
 stands at the steps, **crying loudly in her hands so Kelsa
 doesn't see her face.**

KELSA

Hello.

Night Crier cries.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Who hurt you?

Night Crier cries. Kelsa walks onto the porch.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Come inside.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa walks Night Crier in, concerned. Night Crier cries loudly in her hands.

NIGHT CRIER

I'm sorry for being loud. I hope I don't wake anyone. The kids or your family.

KELSA

I only live with my friend. She isn't asleep.

NIGHT CRIER

Ok.

Kelsa puts her gun on the counter.

KELSA

I'll pour you some water, then you can tell me what happened.

Kelsa gets a cup from a cabinet. With one hand, Night Crier hides Kelsa's gun behind cooking equipment on the counter.

Dakota pushes in, worried. Night Crier hides her face with both hands, crying loudly.

DAKOTA

Who's that crying?

Night Crier peeps at Dakota. Kelsa opens the fridge.

KELSA

She didn't tell me her name. I think she's hurt.

Dakota looks at Night Crier. Night Crier is peeping at her and crying loudly.

Dakota notices Night Crier's monster eye and gasps, scared.

DAKOTA

Green monster eyes. Looks like a woman. You're a Night Crier.

Night Crier stops crying abruptly, surprised.

NIGHT CRIER

You know of me?

Kelsa looks at Night Crier.

DAKOTA

She's a monster, Kelsa! You gotta shoot her! Now!

Worried, Night Crier removes her hands from her face and looks at Kelsa. Kelsa sees her eyes and teeth.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Now, Kelsa!

Night Crier looks at Dakota. Kelsa looks at the container of agua fresca on the table.

KELSA

Go to the living room, Dakota.

Dakota turns her wheelchair around, panicked. Night Crier watches her push to the hall.

As Night Crier is distracted, Kelsa grabs the agua fresca and throws it at her face. Night Crier wipes her eyes, blinded.

Kelsa looks on the counter for her gun. She sees it behind the cooking equipment.

As Night Crier wipes her eyes, she gets shot in her face. She screams.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota watches the door, terrified.

KITCHEN

The bullet hole on Night Crier's face bleeds. She glares at Kelsa. Kelsa shoots her face twice. Night Crier screams.

Night Crier runs at her. Kelsa shoots her face three times. Night Crier screams and brakes.

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. She spits at Kelsa. It covers her eyes. Kelsa screams.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota hears Kelsa's scream.

DAKOTA

Kelsa!

KITCHEN

Kelsa fires randomly, blinded by slime. Night Crier ducks. Bullets hit a wall. One hits Night Crier's face. She screams. She looks at a window. She runs to it.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Night Crier lands. Glass and window pieces cover the porch. She runs away.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Panicking, Kelsa drops her gun and tries to get the slime off her eyes, but it's sticky. As she moves around, she kicks her gun across the floor.

Dakota pushes in cautiously. She notices the slime.

DAKOTA

She spit slime on you!

Kelsa gets on her knees and searches for her gun.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You need to get that slime off!
It's gonna make you blind!

KELSA

I need to find my gun. She might
come back.

DAKOTA

How many times did you shoot her?

KELSA

I shot her face six times. Maybe
more.

Dakota relaxes.

DAKOTA

Six shots to the face is a lot. It probably won't heal till morning, so she won't be back till tomorrow night.

KELSA

Why?

DAKOTA

She doesn't go out during the day. She can't stand sunlight.

Kelsa finds her gun. She stands up, trying not to fall over.

KELSA

How do you know all of that?

DAKOTA

I'll explain, but please wash off that slime. Hurry.

Kelsa walks toward upper cabinets, feeling the counter.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You can't get it off with just anything. You need --

KELSA

I know how to get slime off.

Kelsa searches cabinets of ingredients. She grabs white vinegar. She smells it, then turns her head, disgusted.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa enters angry, drying her face with a towel. The slime is gone. She has her Glock 19. Dakota sits in her wheelchair, worried.

DAKOTA

Can you see ok?

KELSA

I see fine.

Dakota cries, scared.

DAKOTA

She won't stop coming for us.

KELSA

How are you sure?

DAKOTA

She doesn't stop till she kills and eats her prey. We're gonna die!

KELSA

How do you know about her?

DAKOTA

I read about her in a Horror short story.

Dakota searches the old printed papers in the wood crate (on bench at foot of bed).

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

The guy who wrote it said it was true, but I figured he was crazy or joking.

Dakota takes papers to her. Dakota turns them so Kelsa can see the cover page.

"*Night Criers*" is the title. "*Written by Duncan Grimm*" is under the title.

KELSA

I'm going to kill her, but I don't need to know the story.

DAKOTA

If you're gonna kill her, you do need to know it.

Dakota shakes the papers for Kelsa to take. Kelsa doesn't. Dakota lowers them.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Well, get someone to help you. Call the sheriff.

KELSA

I'm going to kill her.

Kelsa turns to leave.

DAKOTA

She can take a lotta damage. Use bullets, fire --

Kelsa turns to her, angered. Dakota stays quiet.

INT. HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Kelsa types "*Night 2*" on her computer. She types "*Shotgun and handguns.*" Her smartphone rings ("*Best Friend*" on screen).

DAKOTA (PHONE)
 (worried; Spanish for "good morning")
 Buenos días, Kelsa.

KELSA
 Good morning. You're up early, and you don't sound grumpy. Naylene will be surprised.

DAKOTA (PHONE)
 Too worried to be grumpy. Did you change your mind about the story?

KELSA
 I'm not reading it.

DAKOTA (PHONE)
 You really should.

KELSA
 Goodbye, Dakota.

DAKOTA (PHONE)
 Wait! How you so sure you can kill Night Crier anyway?

KELSA
 I'm resourceful.
 (jokes)
 And I'm dangerous, remember?

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Kelsa takes a shopping bag and her purse out the wheelchair van. Her Glock 19 is in the holster.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A trash bag covers the broken window; secured with tape.

Kelsa brings in the shopping bag and her purse. She sees Dakota's old printed papers on the table. "*Night Criers*" is on the cover page. She puts them in a recycle bin.

Her smartphone in her purse rings.

KELSA
Hello, this is Kelsa Banks.

ARCH (PHONE)
Hey, Kelsa. This is Arch. How are you?

Her entire face lights up.

KELSA
I'm doing fine.

ARCH (PHONE)
I got your number from Scarlet who owns the paint store. I hope it's ok to call.

KELSA
Yes, it's fine. Your call is a pleasant surprise. Why are you calling?

ARCH (PHONE)
The cook for the cookout got sick. Can you do it? I would, but I'll be hosting the cookout.

KELSA
Yes, I would love to.

ARCH (PHONE)
Great! Everyone's gonna love your food!

She blushes.

KELSA
(nervous)
Um, Arch, are you...

ARCH (PHONE)
Am I what?

KELSA
Are you over Linda?

ARCH (PHONE)
Linda? I haven't heard her name in a while. I haven't seen her either.

KELSA
Do you still have feelings for her?

ARCH (PHONE)

No.

KELSA

(relieved)

Oh ok. I wasn't sure.

ARCH (PHONE)

I'm over her. I'm actually looking for a new girlfriend. But I don't wanna have a girlfriend just to have one. I wanna get married and have kids.

She celebrates quietly.

ARCH (PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello? Kelsa?

KELSA

I'm here. Can you hold for a minute?

ARCH (PHONE)

Sure.

She pours 8 cheap safety glasses out the bag on the table, then organizes them neatly.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota (wheelchair) and Naylene watch a Horror movie, scared.

Kelsa enters with a mouthwatering cake and her purse, excited. She's stunning. She wears a dress (covers her entire back) and heels.

A holstered ankle gun is on the inside of Kelsa's left ankle.

DAKOTA

(Spanish for "very hot")

Muy caliente! Call the fire department!

NAYLENE

You're pretty as a peach, Kelsa.

DAKOTA

Where you headed looking like that?

NAYLENE

(eager)

Yeah, where?

KELSA

To see Arch at work. I'm taking him a cake.

DAKOTA

There's no way you're just taking him food. Not looking like that.

KELSA

I'm going to spend time with him.

DAKOTA

Whyyyyy?

NAYLENE

Yeah, why?

KELSA

So he will develop feelings for me.

DAKOTA

Andddd?

NAYLENE

And?

KELSA

We will become a couple.

Dakota claps loudly, and Naylene claps.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Oh, stop celebrating. We're not together yet.

DAKOTA

Y'all will be!

KELSA

Naylene, I'll be back before you leave.

DAKOTA

(afraid)

Kelsa, are you ready for tonight?

KELSA

Yes.

DAKOTA

Don't do it alone.

Kelsa frowns, annoyed, then leaves.

INT. MILITARY SURPLUS STORE - DAY

Weapons; military supplies; survival gear; hunting clothes; etc. The store is organized, but it needs to be organized better. No customers. An employee (20s) stocks items.

Arch puts packaged food in a bag at the counter. His Glock 19 is in the holster. Piles of packaged foods and bags are on the counter. Rifles are on the wall behind the counter.

Kelsa enters with the cake and her purse blissfully.

ARCH

Hey, Kelsa. What are you doing here? Shopping?

She looks around at the merchandise.

KELSA

I need more shotgun shells, but I'm here for something else. I brought you this.

He sees the cake.

ARCH

You made that for me?! It looks delicious!

KELSA

(blushes)

Where should I put it?

He makes room on the counter. She sees the food and bags.

KELSA (CONT'D)

What is that for?

ARCH

I make bags for residents and guests. Food, hygiene supplies, clothes, and so on. Today is food.

KELSA

You're the kindest man.

ARCH

I'm sure there are kinder men than me. I got a lotta bags to make. Wanna help?

She nods, then bags food. He smiles. **They talk as they bag:**

KELSA

When did you start making bags for people?

ARCH

I just started. People really appreciate the help. Some people ask for more than one bag. Some people don't take bags.

KELSA

Why is that?

ARCH

Some people are too proud. Some people think if they accept my help, it means they're weak. I say, if you need help, ask. If you need help, accept it.

She stops bagging and watches him, pondering what he said.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I'm gonna start making medical supply bags. You think Dakota needs one?

KELSA

She has everything that she needs, but I'll tell her about the bag. If she ends up needing it, she'll let you know. Loudly.

He laughs, making her laugh.

ARCH

(sad)

Why is Dakota paralyzed? I didn't want to offend her by asking.

KELSA

She was in a car wreck. I pulled her out. She didn't have anywhere to go, so she asked to move in with me.

ARCH

She didn't have family to live with?

KELSA

Before the wreck, she moved out. Her family did something to her. That's all I will say about it.

She looks around at the merchandise.

KELSA (CONT'D)
You reorganized your store.

ARCH
Yeah, but it needs to be organized better.

KELSA
(thrilled)
I'll help you organize it!

ARCH
No offense, Kelsa, but this store doesn't need to be that organized.

She laughs, then he laughs.

ARCH (CONT'D)
Yes, I'd love your help.

He looks around at the store.

ARCH (CONT'D)
(worried)
My parents worked hard to open this store and run it. My goal is to run it best I can. I fear I'll do something one day and lose it.

KELSA
You won't lose this business. You are one of the best owners that I know.

ARCH
Thanks. What do you fear? Everyone has fears.

KELSA
I fear heights.
(disgusted)
I also fear spiders.

ARCH
(laughs)
I fear snakes, but spiders? Really?

KELSA
(smiles)
Stop laughing. That is a legit fear.

ARCH
Ok. Sorry for laughing.

KELSA
What other goals do you have?

ARCH
Continue helping people -- which I
can do the rest of my life -- and
uh...
(thinks)
I don't know what other goals I
have.

KELSA
Find a girlfriend, get married, and
have children.

He looks at her, confused.

KELSA (CONT'D)
You told me on the phone.

ARCH
Oh, yeah. I did. What's your goals?

KELSA
Own a business, find a boyfriend,
get married, and have children.

ARCH
We're both tryna start a
relationship, and we both wanna get
married and have kids. We got
things in common.

KELSA
Once I start my business, we will
both own a business.

ARCH
True. What type of business are you
gonna open?

KELSA
A big catering business named
"Kelsa's Catering."

ARCH
I can't think of a more perfect
business for you.

KELSA

(blushes)

Owning a business has been my dream since childhood.

ARCH

My childhood dream was to be a competitive shooter. I trained hard for years, but I gave up my dream and took over this store.

He takes an AR-15 rifle off the wall. It's not loaded.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I still train.

He aims; an expert. She stares, attracted. He puts the gun on the wall.

KELSA

(nervous)

I like you. In the romantic way.

ARCH

(surprised)

You do?

KELSA

Yes. I've liked you since we met. You're very kind, you're brave, and you're extremely handsome.

ARCH

I get those things from my parents.

She laughs.

KELSA

Maybe in time, you will like me as well.

He thinks, then smiles.

ARCH

That's possible.

She smiles big, delighted. They bag food. She peeps at him and smiles.

INT. HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

On the bed neatly: *Two pump action shotguns; two Glock 19s; handgun ammo clips.* Kelsa takes a box of shotgun shells out a military store bag, then adds it to the bed.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota types on her computer in her wheelchair.

KELSA (O.S.)
How do I look, Dakota?

Dakota turns to the door. Kelsa wears her **fight uniform:** *short sleeve shirt; watch; cargo pants with many leg pockets; hiking boots.*

Kelsa's Glock 19 is in the holster. She holds a shotgun and a second Glock 19.

DAKOTA
You look like a superhero! The type
that has guns but no superpowers.
All you need now is a sidekick.

Kelsa ignores her and puts the shotgun and second Glock 19 on the bed neatly.

KELSA
These are for you. They're just to
make you feel safer.

Kelsa looks at Dakota's computer.

KELSA (CONT'D)
Save your work. I'm taking you into
the basement.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

The basement door has a doorknob lock and padlock (unlocked).

BASEMENT

Panic room: *Two neat beds; closed totes; a neat pile of packaged foods and water.* A wall runs along the steps. Someone could hide behind the wall.

Dakota sits in her wheelchair, scared. Kelsa hands her the shotgun. Kelsa puts the Glock 19 in Dakota's right pouch so it sticks out.

Kelsa takes shotgun shells and handgun ammo clips out her leg pockets, then puts them in Dakota's left pouch.

DAKOTA

Love you, bestie. Don't die.

KELSA

I love you too, and I won't die.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa locks the basement door's knob and padlock with keys. They're on a ring with the front door key and backdoor key. She puts the keyring in her upper pants pocket.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through fierce. She wears her dirty hiking boots and different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are gone.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa glares at the trash bag on the broken window. She wears safety glasses with her fight uniform. She grips a shotgun.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier marches up the steps. She snatches open the screen door, then pounds once on the front door.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

The entire front door rattles.

KITCHEN

Kelsa cuts her eyes at the kitchen door. She checks her watch: 9:00 PM.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier pounds on the front door repeatedly.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

The front door rattles violently. Kelsa runs in with her shotgun. She aims at the door.

The pounding continues, then stops abruptly. The door goes silent.

Kelsa hears the screen door slam shut. She approaches the front door, aiming.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The front door creaks open. Kelsa looks through the screen door at the empty porch, aiming. She steps out.

PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW)

Night Crier climbs through the broken window. The trash bag is ripped. Kelsa comes around the porch, aiming. Night Crier is gone.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Night Crier runs to the door.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Kelsa cautions toward the broken window. She aims at the dark yard, checking for Night Crier.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Night Crier slams the front door shut.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Kelsa spins around, hearing the front door.

FRONT PORCH

Kelsa runs to the front door and tries the knob. It's locked.

INT. HOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Night Crier runs up. She brakes.

NIGHT CRIER
Wheelchair.

She runs down.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa digs in her upper pants pocket, panicking. Her keyring jiggles.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Night Crier runs in and looks around for Dakota.

BASEMENT

Dakota takes a Horror chapter book out her left pouch and reads. Her shotgun lies on her lap. Her Glock 19 sticks out her right pouch.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa shoves the key in the front door.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through, searching for Dakota.

BASEMENT

Dakota turns a page in the book; unaware a monster is searching for her.

FOYER

Kelsa busts in, shoving the keyring in her upper pants pocket. She aims her shotgun.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

The basement door is secured with both locks. Night Crier stomps through.

KITCHEN

Kelsa runs in and aims. Night Crier isn't here. Kelsa sees the ripped trash bag on the broken window.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier stomps toward the basement door; feet from it. She shows her sharp teeth.

Night Crier pasts the basement. Kelsa sprints in with her shotgun. Night Crier turns to her. Kelsa runs at her.

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth.

Kelsa brakes a few feet from her, then aims.

Night Crier spits slime. It covers Kelsa's safety glasses. Kelsa throws them off. She takes another pair out a leg pocket and puts it on.

Kelsa aims at her face. Night Crier's eyes widen in fear. She guards her face with her forearms. Kelsa fires.

BASEMENT

Dakota jumps, startled by the shot. She drops the Horror chapter book and grabs her shotgun off her lap.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier guards her face with bloody forearms. Kelsa pumps her shotgun and shoots them. Night Crier screams.

Kelsa pumps and shoots her forearms. Night Crier screams. Her forearms bleed profusely.

Kelsa takes a shotgun shell out a leg pocket and loads.

Night Crier charges at her and snatches her gun, surprising her. Night Crier throws it to the far end.

Kelsa reaches for her Glock 19. Night Crier sees and grabs her hair.

BASEMENT

Dakota sits at the bottom of the steps, spooked. She stares at the closed door, gripping her shotgun.

DAKOTA
 (to self)
 You should've got help, Kelsa.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier slams Kelsa to the wall by her hair.

Kelsa draws her Glock 19. Night Crier snatches it and hits her belly with a powerful punch.

Kelsa grabs her belly and falls. She fights for air and coughs. Night Crier throws her gun to the far end.

 NIGHT CRIER
 After you, I'll eat the other
 woman.

Night Crier opens her mouth to bite and marches toward her.

Kelsa takes the ankle gun off her left ankle and aims. Night Crier grabs it. Kelsa shoots her hand. Night Crier screams and lets go.

Kelsa shoots her face four times. Night Crier screams, then sprints away; enhanced speed.

Kelsa chases with her ankle gun, holding her belly in pain.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL (DIFFERENT AREA)

Night Crier sprints. Kelsa chases, holding her belly; far down the hall.

FOYER

The front door and screen door are open. Night Crier sprints out. After a few seconds, Kelsa runs in, holding her belly. She aims at the front door.

BASEMENT

The door opens. Afraid, Dakota aims her shotgun at it. She's an expert shooter.

 KELSA (O.S.)
 It's me, Dakota.

Dakota lowers her gun and sighs, relieved.

Kelsa enters; not in pain. Her hair is a mess. She holds an ice pack (in washcloth) on her belly. A bruise is on it. Dakota notices the bruise.

DAKOTA

Are you ok?! What happened to your belly?!

KELSA

She punched it. I'm fine. I took medicine.

DAKOTA

Did you kill her?

KELSA

(angry)

No.

DAKOTA

She's gonna use more abilities; like the story says. You can't keep fighting her alone.

KELSA

I'm going to kill her myself.

DAKOTA

(angry)

You need to ask for help! Forget how you were raised!

Kelsa stays quiet, surprised by her comment. Tears build in Dakota's eyes.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

I don't wanna die. I like living, and I got things I wanna do. You too.

KELSA

We won't die. Night Crier will.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota lies in bed angry. Her smartphone is on the bed. Kelsa puts a bed tray on her lap. A homemade snack, sweet tea, and a TV remote are on it.

KELSA

I'm sure a Horror movie is on.

Dakota doesn't respond.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Good night.

Dakota doesn't reply. Kelsa leaves. Dakota watches her. Dakota waits a few seconds, then grabs her phone.

DAKOTA

(to self)

I'll ask people to help you since you won't.

She dials 911.

VOICE (PHONE)

Battlefield Sheriff Department.

MAIN BEDROOM'S BATHROOM

Kelsa puts her hair in a bun. She pulls it hard, then shakes her head no. She cuts her hair short. She washes it in a hot shower. Her back scars show.

INT. HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Kelsa types "*Night 3*" on her computer. She types "*Shotgun; handguns; sword; spear; stun grenades; cups.*"

GYM

Kelsa practices with her Katana sword, slicing quick and hard. She practices with her long spear, thrusting it quick and hard. She's an expert with both weapons.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa puts her long spear in a corner.

KITCHEN

A trash bag covers the broken window; secured with tape. A blanket covers a large area of the floor under the window. Printed papers cover the blanket. They read: "*Don't step!*"

DINING ROOM

Dakota types on her laptop in her wheelchair. Horror stickers cover the laptop.

Kelsa enters with fluffy biscuits and her purse, excited. She's gorgeous. She wears a dress (covers her entire back), heels, and her ankle gun.

DAKOTA

Hey, Kelsa, I'm outlining my Horror book, "*Neat Freak*" aka Kelsa Banks.

Dakota laughs. Kelsa smiles. Dakota notices her dress and biscuits.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

(playful)

Going to see Arch?

KELSA

(blushes)

I'll be back before Naylene leaves.

Someone knocks on the front door.

FOYER

Kelsa opens the front door to SHERIFF MAURICE WALKER (55). He's serious and hates nonsense. Talks in short sentences with heavy country accent. Physically fit and handsome. He wears a sheriff hat and a Glock 19.

SHERIFF WALKER

Good morning, Kelsa.

KELSA

(surprised)

Hello, Sheriff Walker.

Dakota pushes in.

DAKOTA

(excited)

Sheriff!

Kelsa looks at Dakota, confused. Kelsa frowns, angered.

KELSA

(to sheriff)

Did she call your department?

SHERIFF WALKER

Yes, ma'am. Repeatedly. She asked us to help you. Kill a monster.

Dakota bounces in her wheelchair. Sheriff narrows his eyes at her, irritated.

SHERIFF WALKER (CONT'D)
 (angry)
 Sounds like hogwash.

Dakota frowns, angered.

SHERIFF WALKER (CONT'D)
 (to Kelsa)
 I didn't come for that. I want to
 buy a cake.

DAKOTA
 Forget the cake! There's a monster
 after us!

SHERIFF WALKER
 A real monster, ma'am?

DAKOTA
 Yeah! She's coming back tonight!
 Bring everyone!

KELSA
 (to sheriff)
 That isn't necessary.

DAKOTA
 It is necessary! You need help
 killing her!

KELSA
 Sheriff, don't bring anyone here.
 It would be a waste of time and
 money for the department.

DAKOTA
 It won't be a waste! Kelsa needs
 help! Bring the entire department!

SHERIFF WALKER
 No one's coming out.
 (firm)
 I got no time for nonsense. The
 department neither.

Dakota mumbles quietly.

KELSA
 Let me walk you out, sheriff.

Kelsa walks Sheriff out. Dakota hits her chair with a fist.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa stomps in, angered. Dakota types on her laptop in her wheelchair, angered. Kelsa closes and takes her laptop.

DAKOTA

What are you doing?! I'm outlining my book!

Kelsa takes Dakota's smartphone out the left pouch.

KELSA

I'm taking your desktop computer, the house phone, and the panic phone out of the basement. You're not asking anyone else to help me.

DAKOTA

Why would you take the panic phone?! It's a panic phone!

KELSA

We'll be ok without it.

DAKOTA

I love you as a best friend, but it's hard for me to like you.

KELSA

I'm going to see Arch. I'll be home later.

Dakota reaches for her phone and misses. Kelsa leaves with the laptop and phone, going upstairs.

Naylene brings in a basket of Dakota's folded clothes. Bath towels are on top.

NAYLENE

I heard yelling. Is everything ok?

DAKOTA

Everything's peachy.

NAYLENE

That sounded like my buddy Sheriff Walker. Did Kelsa finally call about the break-in?

DAKOTA

How do you know about that?

NAYLENE

I saw the broken kitchen window. I meant to ask about it. Did they steal anything?

DAKOTA

It wasn't that type of break-in.

NAYLENE

What type of break-in was it? Why is there a blanket on the kitchen floor? Why did Kelsa cut her hair?

DAKOTA

(smiles)

Naylene, I'm glad you asked.

INT. MILITARY SURPLUS STORE - DAY

Kelsa and Arch organize military camo jackets on racks (by color). They're almost done.

ARCH

I'm gonna have the most organized store in the nation.

KELSA

Probably the world.

They laugh.

KELSA (CONT'D)

I think you should buy signs to label your merchandise. They will help customers find things.

ARCH

I'll look into it... Why did you cut your hair?

KELSA

I'm trying something new. Do you like it?

ARCH

Yes. You're beautiful.

She hides her face behind a jacket and blushes. He smiles. She looks at his Glock 19 in the holster.

KELSA

We have the same gun. I didn't notice before.

He looks at his gun.

ARCH

Ain't that something. When did you start carrying a gun?

KELSA

When I turned eighteen. I was living in a dangerous city. I taught myself to shoot, kickbox, and fight with a Katana sword and a long spear.

ARCH

Katana sword and long spear?

KELSA

I like martial arts movies. I taught Dakota how to shoot for protection. We practice at my gun range in the woods.

She points to her ankle gun.

KELSA (CONT'D)

When I don't wear my Glock 19, I wear this. Or I wear both.

ARCH

I feel sorry for anyone who messes with you or Dakota.

KELSA

They would end up in the hospital or the grave.

ARCH

We got the same gun and some of the same goals. I wonder what else we got in common.

KELSA

I watch movies and television.

ARCH

(laughs)

I watch movies and TV too. I like jigsaw puzzles. I do them alone or with people.

KELSA

Really? I like jigsaw puzzles. I do them by myself.

ARCH

I like hunting, training with guns,
hiking, and taking walks.

KELSA

Taking walks is one of my favorite
things to do. I want to start
hiking.

ARCH

Maybe we can hike together.

KELSA

(excited)
Yes! Yes!

ARCH

Never seen anyone so excited about
hiking.

KELSA

(whispers to self)
It's not about hiking.

ARCH

The jackets are done. Let's move to
the vests.

They organize bullet-resistant vests. He stares at her as she
organizes vests, admiring her.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I like you.

She drops a vest, shocked. She picks it up and dusts it off.

KELSA

You like me?

ARCH

Yeah. In just two days, I have more
feelings for you than I've had for
any woman.

KELSA

Since we like each other, we should
become a couple.

He frowns, downhearted.

KELSA (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

ARCH

I was just thinking about something.

KELSA

About what?

ARCH

I wanna be -- I need to be -- in a relationship where the woman will ask for my help and accept it.

She waits for him to say more, worried.

ARCH (CONT'D)

For three years, Linda refused to do those things; even when she needed help bad. I blame her friends. They got in her head, telling her she didn't need a man's help. I mean, I like that a woman wants to do things herself, but not all the time. The way Linda was led to big problems between us.

KELSA

What type of problems?

ARCH

Nonstop fussing. And we grew apart. After she lost her job, she started drowning in bills. I tried to help her, but she refused it.

She stays quiet.

ARCH (CONT'D)

In a relationship, a man wants his woman to come to him for help, and he wants her to accept his help.

She stays quiet; still worried.

ARCH (CONT'D)

If we become a couple, you gotta ask me for help and accept it. Not all the time, but some of the time.

She hesitates responding.

KELSA

I like you more than you know, and I want to be with you, but I won't ask for your help or accept it.

ARCH
 (stunned)
 What? Why not?

KELSA
 I was raised to never ask for help
 or accept it.

ARCH
 That's a terrible way to be raised.
 What was wrong with your parents?

KELSA
 (emotional)
 My mom.

ARCH
 I'm so sorry for saying that. I was
 way outta line.

They organize the vests quietly. It's awkward.

ARCH (CONT'D)
 How you gonna run a business by
 yourself? You need employees for a
 catering business, right?

KELSA
 I've been planning my business
 since I was eight years old. I've
 figured out how to run it by
 myself.

ARCH
 What you gonna do if it gets bigger
 than you expect? Much bigger.

She doesn't know how to reply.

ARCH (CONT'D)
 You're a fantastic cook and baker,
 so I'm sure you're gonna get
 customers from all over the
 country.

KELSA
 I... I didn't think about that.

They organize the vests quietly. It's awkward. A confused
 customer (20s) looks around. She waves for Arch to come help.

ARCH
 Excuse me, Kelsa. A customer needs
 help. I'll talk to you later.

Arch leaves.

KELSA
You won't be with me the way I am?

Arch turns to Kelsa.

ARCH
I don't want my new relationship to
be like my last.

Arch helps the customer. Kelsa watches them, grieved.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Kelsa enters with a large bag from the military store and her purse, grieved. Dakota is sleep in her wheelchair. Naylene enters, scared.

NAYLENE
Kelsa. Um, Dakota told me what's
going on.

KELSA
What's going on?

NAYLENE
Night Crier.

Kelsa looks at Dakota, then shakes her head and sighs.

KELSA
(whispers)
Whisper so we don't wake Dakota.
She'll be grumpy.

Naylene nods. **They whisper:**

NAYLENE
Dakota asked me to help you... kill
the monster. Night Crier. She's
worried about your life and hers.

KELSA
There is no monster.

NAYLENE
Dakota said you would say that. She
also told me you wouldn't accept my
help, which I knew.

KELSA

(firm)

Naylene, there is no monster.

NAYLENE

I'll help in any way I can. I can even use my medical training if Night Crier hurts us.

KELSA

Do you really believe monsters are real?

Naylene doesn't know how to answer.

KELSA (CONT'D)

We are adults, not children.

NAYLENE

What about the broken window?

KELSA

The window is broken because of a burglar.

NAYLENE

Ok, but what about the blanket in the kitchen? Dakota showed me what's under it.

KELSA

Listen. Night Crier isn't real. I can't believe we are having this conversation.

Naylene looks at Dakota; unsure of what to think.

NAYLENE

Dakota told me about the short story. The one about Night Criers.

KELSA

Exactly. A story.

Naylene starts to reply. She stops. She giggles and shakes her head, embarrassed.

NAYLENE

I feel so silly. Please don't tell anyone about this.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota wakes up grumpy in bed. She sees Kelsa leaving.

DAKOTA

Don't carry me while I'm sleep. I'm not a baby.

KELSA

You're grumpy like one.

DAKOTA

Where's Naylene? Did she talk to you?

KELSA

She left. Yes, we talked. She doesn't believe Night Crier is real.

DAKOTA

(angry)

She did when I talked to her. Guess I'll just have to convince her again.

KELSA

No. I'm sending her on a vacation cruise. I'll stay here during the day and help you.

DAKOTA

While she's on vacation, we'll be on a monster's plate.

Kelsa leaves. Dakota puts a pillow on her face and screams. She removes it.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

(afraid; Spanish for
"goodbye")

Adiós world.

MAIN BEDROOM

Kelsa wears a bullet-resistant vest with her fight uniform. The vest covers her belly. She puts a lightweight, soft armor plate in the front of it. She puts a plate in the back.

She pours 2 stun grenades out the large military store bag. She puts them in leg pockets.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through vicious. She wears her dirty hiking boots and different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are gone.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The trash bag covers the broken window; secured with tape. The blanket covers a large area of the floor under the window. The papers that read "Don't step!" cover the blanket.

Kelsa enters with liquid dish soap. She wears safety glasses and her vest with her fight uniform. Her Glock 19 is in the holster. Her Katana sword is in the hip scabbard.

At foot of blanket, she squeezes soap at the counter that's under the broken window. She covers the counter with soap.

She looks at the trash bag on the broken window.

KELSA

She might not come through this window twice...

(taps lip; thinks)

I'll make her come through it.

BACKDOOR

Kelsa opens the door. She has her shotgun. A threshold ramp is in the doorway. She exits.

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps out the woods. She sees Kelsa at the backdoor with her shotgun. Night Crier backs into the woods.

SIDE OF HOUSE

Night Crier marches toward the house.

PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW)

Night Crier rips the trash bag off the broken window.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Night Crier climbs through the broken window. She steps on the counter and slips on dish soap.

She lands on broken glass cups and screams. The cups cover a large area of the floor.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa hears the scream. She checks her watch: 9:02 PM.

INT. HOUSE - BACKDOOR - NIGHT

Kelsa shuts and locks the door.

KITCHEN

Night Crier stands on the glass cups, grimacing in pain. Glass is stuck in her hands and body. She's bloody. She pulls the glass out her hands.

She hears Kelsa's boots running in the hall. Kelsa runs in with her shotgun and aims. Night Crier is gone.

Kelsa aims to her right. Night Crier snatches her gun and throws it across the room.

Kelsa draws her Glock 19. Night Crier snatches it and throws it across the room.

Night Crier hits the belly of her vest with a powerful punch. It doesn't hurt Kelsa.

Night Crier punches at her face. Kelsa blocks with a guard. The punch knocks her back a few steps.

Night Crier takes her ankle gun and throws it across the room.

Kelsa jumps back, making room. She backs up, drawing her sword.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa backs up; ready to swing her sword. Night Crier marches toward her. Kelsa slices her chest. Night Crier screams.

Night Crier lunges at her, trying to grab. Kelsa uses footwork to avoid and slices her arm. Night Crier screams.

Kelsa unleashes a combo of slices on her body. Night Crier screams and backs up; bloodier.

NIGHT CRIER

You're not like my other prey.

Kelsa moves in to slice. Night Crier shoots electricity at her. Kelsa tenses up. The shock is heard.

Night Crier snatches her sword and throws it across the room.

Night Crier opens her mouth to bite her. Kelsa strikes her face with a hard elbow, turning Night Crier's head.

Kelsa runs to the corner and grabs her long spear.

Kelsa turns around with her spear to thrust it. Night Crier bites her right hand in many places. Kelsa screams and drops her spear.

Kelsa takes a stun grenade out a leg pocket (left hand). She pulls the pin with her mouth and drops the grenade. It explodes, blinding them.

Night Crier stops biting her hand.

Their ears ring.

As their sight and hearing return to normal, Kelsa picks up her spear (left hand), then backs up. She grips it with both hands, grimacing in pain because of her right hand.

Night Crier charges at her. Kelsa thrusts the spear in her neck with both hands repeatedly. Night Crier screams.

Kelsa shakes her right hand; in pain. It bleeds badly. Night Crier snatches her spear and throws it across the room.

Night Crier bleeds profusely.

Kelsa runs to her sword and picks it up (left hand). Night Crier sees and stumbles to the door.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier stumbles. Blood pours out her neck and body.

A stun grenade flies out the living room and explodes, blinding her. She covers her ringing ears. She stumbles down the hall.

Night Crier's sight and hearing return to normal. She looks back and leans to the side as Kelsa slices with her sword (both hands). Kelsa shakes her right hand; in pain.

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. She spits at Kelsa nonstop. The slime covers her safety glasses and face.

Kelsa swings her sword wildly (both hands), trying to slice her. Night Crier stumbles back, avoiding the slices.

Night Crier stumbles toward the back of the house. Kelsa slices air.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier stumbles through the backdoor.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Kelsa swings her sword wildly (both hands), slicing air.

KELSA
(infuriated)
Night Crier!!!

She drops her sword and shakes her right hand; in pain.

BASEMENT

Kelsa enters, drying her face with a towel (left hand). The slime is gone.

Dakota sits in her wheelchair, scared. She notices Kelsa wrapping the towel around her bloody right hand.

DAKOTA
You're bleeding bad!

Dakota pushes to a closed tote and opens it. She takes out a big first aid kit.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
Let me clean your hand and wrap it.
Naylene taught me how to.

KELSA
No, I can clean and wrap my hand.

DAKOTA
You got one hand. It'll be easier
for me to do it.

KELSA
I'll manage.

DAKOTA
Did you kill Night Crier?

KELSA
(angry)
No, I didn't.

DAKOTA
How you gonna fight her now?

KELSA
I'll fight with my left hand. I'll
use my right hand if I have to.

DAKOTA
Don't do that! It's too risky! I
don't wanna lose you, and I don't
wanna die! Ask someone for help!
Ask Arch! I'm sure he can shoot! He
wears a gun, and he always talks
about hunting!

KELSA
He can shoot, but I'm not asking
him for help.

DAKOTA
(frustrated)
Come onnnn. Just ask.

They hear Arch's loud pickup truck.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa opens the front door a crack, surprised to see Arch. He
only sees her face. His Glock 19 is in the holster.

KELSA
Arch, what are you doing here?

ARCH
I came to --

He covers his eyes and turns around.

ARCH (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Are you naked?

KELSA
What?

ARCH
 You're hiding behind the door. I
 thought you might be naked.

KELSA
 I'm dressed.

He turns to her.

ARCH
 Ok. Can I come in and talk?

KELSA
 (worried)
 You want to come inside?

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Night Crier's blood from the fight is on the floor.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

ARCH
 I wanted to talk with you and give
 you something. If this is a bad
 time, I can come back later.

KELSA
 No, this isn't a bad time.
 (thinks)
 Let's talk um... Let's talk
 outside. It's a nice night. I just
 need a few minutes.

ARCH
 Take your own sweet time.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Kelsa shuts and locks the front door (left hand). Her right
 hand bleeds badly.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Arch waits. Kelsa exits, hiding her bloody right hand behind
 her back. A new towel is around it. She wears casual clothes
 and her sneakers.

FRONT YARD

Kelsa and Arch walk toward his truck and the wheelchair van. She's hiding her right hand behind her back.

ARCH

I wanted to apologize again for what I said. About your mom. I thought about it so much, I could barely get work done. That and I couldn't stop thinking about you.

They reach his truck.

KELSA

(blushes)

That makes two of us.

She backs into his truck, hitting her right hand. She grimaces in pain.

ARCH

Are you ok?

KELSA

I'm fine.

ARCH

So, you never ask for help or accept it? Never?

KELSA

Yes, never.

He watches her for a few seconds.

ARCH

But you can change, right? People change.

She thinks a while about her answer.

KELSA

Yes, people change.

ARCH

I hope you do, cause I really want us to be together.

KELSA

I want the same thing.

ARCH

Hold out your hands. I wanna give you something.

She holds out her left hand, hiding her right hand behind her back. The towel is bloody now.

ARCH (CONT'D)

Both hands please.

KELSA

I can hold whatever you give me with one hand.

He takes a big, heavy pots and pans gift set out his truck.

ARCH

You're gonna need both hands.

She wraps her left arm around the gift and takes it. She almost drops it, and she grabs it with her right hand. She grimaces in pain and drops it.

ARCH (CONT'D)

Your hand's bleeding!

He takes the towel off her right hand.

ARCH (CONT'D)

It's bit! What bit you?!

KELSA

(thinks)

It was a... Um... A wild dog.

ARCH

We need to clean the bites! Come on!

He rushes toward the front porch.

KELSA

(worried)

Arch, don't go in there!

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Arch rushes in. He sees Night Crier's blood on the floor. Kelsa rushes in behind him.

ARCH
 (concerned)
 You lost a lotta blood. Where else
 did it bite you?

She doesn't respond.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
 Helloooo! Kelsa, I'm still in the
 basement! How you gonna get me
 out?!

Arch looks in the direction of Dakota's voice.

BASEMENT

Arch runs through the open door.

DAKOTA
 (surprised)
 Arch?

Kelsa rushes in.

ARCH
 (to Dakota)
 Did the dog bite you too?

DAKOTA
 What dog?

ARCH
 The wild dog that bit Kelsa.

DAKOTA
 It wasn't a wild dog. It was Night
 Crier.

ARCH
 Who?

DAKOTA
 Night Crier. The monster.

Arch stares at Dakota, puzzled.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
 She's a monster. She comes here
 every night. She wants to kill and
 eat us.

ARCH
 A monster?

DAKOTA

Yeah.

KELSA

Dakota, what are you talking about?

DAKOTA

(angry)

You know what I'm talking about.

(to Arch)

She's tryna kill Night Crier.

Arch looks at Kelsa. She shrugs, playing dumb.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

She tried three times and failed.
She needs help. Will you help her?

KELSA

Dakota, please stop with the scary
stories --

DAKOTA

It's not a scary story! Tell him
the truth!

Kelsa doesn't speak.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Tell him!

ARCH

Kelsa, what happened? The truth.

Kelsa hesitates answering.

DAKOTA

(infuriated)

Tell him!!!

KELSA

(mad)

Ok... There is... There is a
monster.

ARCH

Monsters aren't real.

DAKOTA

They're real!

KELSA

Monsters are real. I wouldn't agree with something like this if it wasn't true.

ARCH

Monsters?

DAKOTA

Yeah! There's no way a dog got close enough to bite her! Not with how she shoots!

Arch takes a few moments to process what they told him.

ARCH

I believe y'all.

DAKOTA

(celebrates)

Yes, yes, yes!

ARCH

I'm gonna help you, Kelsa. I'll bring guns, ammo --

KELSA

You're not helping me, and don't bring anything.

DAKOTA

(to Kelsa; angry)

We're gonna die. You, then me. Die and be eaten. All cause of you.

KELSA

(angry)

That won't happen. I'll kill Night Crier tomorrow night, and it'll be over.

ARCH

Look at your hand, Kelsa. You can't do this alone. I don't wanna lose you. Let me help.

KELSA

No.

DAKOTA

He wants to help! Let him!

KELSA

No!

Kelsa glares at Dakota.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Arch, I'll walk you out. I need to clean up and get some sleep.

ARCH

Kelsa, please --

Kelsa walks toward the steps. Dakota pushes fast to her and grabs her shirt.

KELSA

Let go of my shirt, Dakota.

DAKOTA

(cries)

You're not leaving till you get Arch's help!

KELSA

Let go.

Dakota keeps her grip on Kelsa's shirt. Kelsa bends over and backs up, coming out it. As her bloody right hand comes out, she grimaces in pain.

Kelsa wears a bra. Arch covers his eyes and turns around.

Kelsa turns to go up the steps. Dakota notices the small, old scars on her back. Dakota gasps, horrified.

DAKOTA

Your back.

Kelsa stops walking. Arch turns around. He sees her scars.

ARCH

Who did that to your back?

Kelsa keeps her back to them. She stares ahead, teary-eyed.

KELSA

My mom... Whenever I asked for help or accepted it, I was beaten. "*Mom, I need help with my homework.*" Beaten! "*The teacher offered to help me with my classwork.*" Beaten!

Kelsa cries wildly.

KELSA (CONT'D)

She expected me to be like her. Independent.

Dakota doesn't know how to respond.

ARCH

I'm so sorry for what you went through. Why didn't your dad stop her?

KELSA

What dad?

Dakota looks at Kelsa's back closer.

DAKOTA

Kelsa, a belt doesn't make scars like this.

(afraid to ask)

What... What did she beat you with?

KELSA

A belt with a metal buckle. The buckle was broken and sharp, but my mom didn't care.

Dakota covers her mouth, horrified. Arch touches Kelsa's scars, grieved. She cries.

ARCH

What your mom did to you was wrong. How she raised you was wrong. You don't have to be that way anymore... Let me help.

Kelsa stops crying.

KELSA

I'm going to kill Night Crier on my own.

Kelsa takes Dakota's shotgun and lays it on the floor (left hand). Kelsa gets in position to pick her up.

DAKOTA

No. You'll drop me. Arch, can you carry me?

ARCH

Sure.

Kelsa grabs the big first aid kit off the tote (left hand) and goes up the steps. Dakota watches the door, scared.

DAKOTA

(to self; Spanish for "she's gonna die")

(MORE)

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Ella va a morir.

(to Arch)

She's gonna die. I'm gonna die too.

ARCH

No, y'all won't.

(whispers)

I'm gonna help her.

Dakota bounces in her wheelchair ecstatically.

INT. HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Kelsa types "*Night 4*" on her computer (left hand). A gauze is on her right hand. She types "*Handguns*" and thinks. After "*Handguns*" she types "*and fire extinguisher.*"

KITCHEN

As a test, Kelsa sprays the fire extinguisher, squeezing lever with left hand and gripping hose with right hand. She shakes her right hand, grimacing in pain.

MAIN BEDROOM

Kelsa wears her vest with her fight uniform. Her Glock 19 is in the holster. She wears her ankle gun.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa opens the basement door (left hand). Dakota waits in her wheelchair, smiling. She grips her shotgun. Her Glock 19 sticks out her right pouch.

KELSA

What are you smiling about?

DAKOTA

You'll see.

Kelsa takes Dakota's shotgun and lays it on the floor (left hand). Kelsa gets in position to pick her up. Dakota points at the gauze on Kelsa's right hand.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

How you gonna do this?

Kelsa looks at her right hand. They hear Arch's loud pickup truck.

FOYER

Kelsa sees Arch through the peephole. Excited, she unlocks and opens the front door (left hand). His Glock 19 is in the holster.

KELSA
Hello, Arch.

He looks at her vest and fight uniform.

ARCH
That's what you wear to fight Night
Crier?

KELSA
Yes. What do you think of it?

ARCH
I like it. You look dangerous and
beautiful.

KELSA
(blushes)
Thank you.

ARCH
Can I come in?

She steps aside. He grabs a military surplus storage container off the porch, **which was off to the side; unseen.**

KELSA
What is that?

ARCH
Guns, ammo, bullet-resistant vests,
and some other stuff.

He tries to enter, but she blocks him, angered.

KELSA
You're not helping.

ARCH
Yes, I am.

KELSA
No, you're not. Take that away.

ARCH

(mad)

I'm not letting you fight Night Crier alone. I'll sit outside until she comes if I got to.

She thinks for a few seconds.

KELSA

Ok... You can help me.

ARCH

(stunned)

Really?

She moves out the way. He enters with the container, excited.

BASEMENT

Arch's container sits on the floor. It's open, but **what's inside isn't shown**. Dakota aims Arch's AR-15 rifle in her wheelchair, thrilled. It's not loaded. Kelsa watches her.

DAKOTA

It's gonna be a piece of cake killing Night Crier now.

Arch brings in the pots and pans gift set.

ARCH

(to Kelsa)

My gift from last night.

KELSA

Thank you. I'll cook for you with it.

DAKOTA

Don't forget me.

Kelsa and Arch laugh. He looks around the basement.

ARCH

This isn't your average basement.

DAKOTA

It's our panic room for now. We're gonna get a real one built.

KELSA

Arch, is there anything else in your truck?

ARCH
No. I'll go lock the front door.

KELSA
I'll lock the door.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa exits the basement. She quickly takes the keyring out her upper pants pocket and shuts the door (left hand).

BASEMENT

Arch and Dakota hear the door shut.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa locks the padlock on the basement door (left hand).

BASEMENT

Arch runs up the steps and tries to open the door.

ARCH
Kelsa, unlock the door. Kelsa!

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

KELSA
I'll unlock it after I kill Night
Crier.

ARCH (O.S.)
No, Kelsa! Unlock the door now!

KELSA
There is food and water down there.

She sprints from the basement door.

ARCH (O.S.)
(angry)
Unlock the door!

BASEMENT

ARCH
Kelsa!

He bangs on the door. He rushes to the cellar door and tries to push it open.

EXT. HOUSE - CELLAR DOOR - DAY

The door is locked with a chain and padlock.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

 DAKOTA
 That door's locked from the
 outside.

Arch runs to the window and unlocks it.

EXT. HOUSE - BASEMENT WINDOW - DAY

Kelsa parks the wheelchair van so a tire blocks the window.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Arch sees the van's tire. He smacks the wall, frustrated.

 ARCH
 She blocked the window.

 DAKOTA
 Where's your phone?

 ARCH
 I left it in my truck. Do you got a
 phone?

 DAKOTA
 Kelsa took it. She took the panic
 phone too.

 ARCH
 What's a panic phone?

 DAKOTA
 The phone down here...
 (afraid)
 She's gonna need help.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through ferocious. She wears her dirty hiking boots and different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are gone.

INT. HOUSE - THROUGHOUT HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelsa walks through; ready for Night Crier. She wears safety glasses and her vest with her fight uniform.

She grips her Glock 19 (left hand). A gauze is on her right hand.

She checks her watch: 8:50 PM.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa stares at the basement door; Glock 19 in left hand.

ARCH (**FLASHBACK** O.S.)

What your mom did to you was wrong.
How she raised you was wrong. You
don't have to be that way anymore.

She holsters her gun and takes her keyring out the upper pants pocket (left hand).

She stares at the door, then puts the keyring back in her pocket and leaves.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (AT KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Night Crier marches past the broken window. A trash bag is taped on it.

INT. HOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Kelsa sits, waiting for Night Crier. She checks her watch: 9:00 PM.

She stands up. She hears the doorbell and looks at the front door.

FOYER

Kelsa looks through the front door peephole. No one's outside. She hears banging on the backdoor and spins around.

BACKDOOR

Kelsa snatches open the door, draws her Glock 19, and aims (left hand). No one's outside. She hears a smashed dining room window.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa runs in. She sees glass and window pieces on the floor. She aims (left hand). She hears a smashed living room window.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa runs in. She sees glass and window pieces on the floor. She surveys the room, aiming (left hand).

DINING ROOM

Night Crier climbs through the broken window. Her boots land on the floor.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa hears the boots in the dining room.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa runs in and aims (left hand). Night Crier isn't there.

Kelsa walks along the table cautiously. Night Crier hangs under it by her hands. She sees Kelsa's legs and boots.

Kelsa continues along the table cautiously. Night Crier drops to the floor and grabs Kelsa's leg, surprising her.

Night Crier pulls her under the table and opens her mouth to bite. Kelsa shoots her face (left hand). Night Crier screams and rolls from under the table.

Kelsa crawls from under the table; opposite side Night Crier rolled. Kelsa stands up, then ducks. A chair flies past.

Night Crier runs across the table and jumps off. She snatches Kelsa's Glock 19 and throws it across the room.

Kelsa runs around the table, then runs toward the hall. Night Crier chases.

Kelsa knocks over a chair with her left hand to slow Night Crier down.

KITCHEN

Kelsa waits for Night Crier; fire extinguisher in left hand.

Night Crier runs in and charges at her. Kelsa sprays her, squeezing lever with left hand and gripping hose with right hand. She grimaces in pain.

Night Crier fights the foam; unable to see Kelsa.

Kelsa throws the extinguisher and draws her ankle gun (left hand). She fires at the foam five times.

Night Crier is ducked in the foam. The shots miss. Night Crier brandishes her nails.

Night Crier runs through the foam, ducked. She scratches Kelsa's right arm.

Kelsa drops her gun and grabs the arm in pain.

NIGHT CRIER

(grins)

In two minutes, I'll eat you, then
I'll eat the other woman.

Kelsa looks at the scratch. Her right arm lowers to her side, paralyzed. She lifts it with her left hand. Her arm falls to her side.

Kelsa picks up her gun and fires at her (left hand); misses.

Night Crier circles her. Kelsa turns, trying to keep up, but Night Crier is too fast.

ARCH (**FLASHBACK** O.S.)

What your mom did to you was wrong.
How she raised you was wrong. You
don't have to be that way anymore.

Kelsa stops turning. She looks at the door.

BASEMENT

Arch paces, worried out his mind. He grips a pump action shotgun. It has a sling (holds 10 shells). Dakota watches him in her wheelchair, scared.

ARCH
Be ok, Kelsa, be ok.

KITCHEN

Night Crier circles Kelsa, grinning. Kelsa is staring at the door.

ARCH (**FLASHBACK** O.S.)
So, you never ask for help or
accept it?... But you can change,
right? People change.

Kelsa looks at her ankle gun (left hand). She looks at Night Crier.

KELSA (**FLASHBACK** O.S.)
Yes, people change.

Kelsa runs out.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa rushes through, stumbling; becoming more paralyzed. She has her gun in her left hand. Her right arm dangles.

Night Crier lingers down the hall, grinning.

BASEMENT

The door swings open. Kelsa steps in and leans on the wall.

KELSA
Can you help me?!

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier scrolls through, grinning.

NIGHT CRIER
She's in a wheelchair. She can't
help you.

BASEMENT

Arch dashes up the steps to Kelsa with his shotgun.

KELSA

Not much time. I'll be paralyzed soon. Wait for my signal.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa stumbles out the basement with her gun (left hand).

Night Crier scrolls toward her, grinning. Kelsa shoots her face. Night Crier screams.

Kelsa stumbles back and drops, becoming more paralyzed.

KELSA

Now!

Night Crier reaches Kelsa. Arch runs out the basement with his shotgun. Night Crier looks at him, terrified. He sees her eyes and teeth.

Night Crier sprints away. Arch aims. He shoots her back three times. She screams.

Arch draws his Glock 19 and shoots Night Crier's right calf. She screams and leans on the wall.

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. Arch runs up and aims. She spits at his eyes.

Kelsa lies on the floor, completely paralyzed.

DINING ROOM

Night Crier drags her bloody right calf to the broken window; to escape.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Blinded by slime, Arch aims his Glock 19 down the hall, thinking Night Crier is there. He shoots twice, then listens.

He tries to get the slime off, but it's sticky. He walks toward Kelsa's paralyzed body, feeling the wall.

ARCH

Kelsa! Kelsa!

He gets to the basement door. He feels it.

ARCH (CONT'D)
Dakota, Night Crier spit something
on my eyes.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
Wash it off before you're blind.
Use white vinegar and water. Make
sure the water is warm.

ARCH
Ok.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
(afraid)
Where's Kelsa? Is she ok?

ARCH
(worried)
She said she'll be paralyzed soon.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
It's not permanent. She'll be ok.

ARCH
Glad to hear.

He walks from the door, feeling the wall.

ARCH (CONT'D)
Kelsa, wherever you are, you're
gonna be ok.

MAIN BEDROOM

Kelsa sits in bed, moving slowly. Arch knocks on the open
door. The slime is off his eyes.

ARCH
How you doing?

KELSA
I'm still recovering. My body feels
terrible. I'm sorry for locking you
in the basement.

ARCH
I was going nuts down there, not
knowing what was happening to you.
But what's done is done. I'm just
happy I didn't lose you.

She smiles.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I'll be in the guest room.

KELSA

We'll discuss our plan tomorrow morning.

ARCH

I'm glad you're letting me help.

She frowns and sighs.

KELSA

It's not easy.

ARCH

It will get easy.

INT. HOUSE - GYM - DAY

Kelsa strikes the freestanding punching bag with quick, strong kicks. She's barefoot. A gauze is on her right hand.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa knocks on a closed bedroom door (left hand).

KELSA

Arch, wake up! Come to the dining room!

LIVING ROOM

Dakota sleeps in bed with her laptop. The document titled "*NEAT FREAK - Book Outline (Horror)*" is on it. Kelsa enters.

KELSA

Dakota, wake up. Come to the dining room.

Dakota wakes up grumpy.

DAKOTA

I'll wake up in five years.

KELSA

We have to discuss our plan.

Dakota's eyes shoot open, excited.

DINING ROOM

Arch pushes Dakota in. She's thrilled. He wears the clothes from last night. Kelsa waits for them.

Arch and Dakota see what's **on the table (neat)**: Arch's guns (AR-15, shotgun, Glock 19); Kelsa's guns (ankle gun and Glock 19); 1 combat knife; 3 stun grenades.

DAKOTA

It's a buffet of weapons.

KELSA

Can you tell us about Night Criers?

ARCH

Night Criers? She isn't the only one?

DAKOTA

Nope. There are thousands and thousands. Male and female. Sometimes they travel solo. Sometimes in a pack. A Night Crier travels alone cause it doesn't have to share food. But if it travels alone, it won't attack more than three or four people at once.

KELSA

Why is that?

DAKOTA

The most important thing to a Night Crier is surviving. One Night Crier against a lotta people is too risky.

ARCH

Why are they called Night Criers?

DAKOTA

They go to people's houses at night and cry. People think they're hurt, so they take them inside. After Night Criers get in your house, it's over.

ARCH

They wear clothes. That's strange.

DAKOTA

They don't wanna bring attention to themselves.

(MORE)

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

What would you do if you saw a bunch of naked bodies walking at night?

ARCH

I would wonder why they're naked, probably think something weird was going on, then call the sheriff.

DAKOTA

Exactly. When Night Criers travel, they steal clothes and shoes, then stash them in hideouts.

KELSA

What abilities do Night Criers have?

DAKOTA

They got the strength of two men, they got the speed of Usain Bolt, they take a lotta damage, and their bodies can heal.

(thinks)

Um... They shoot electricity, spit slime, and bite. They'll paralyze you with poisonous nails, but it's only temporary. And they crawl on things. Oh, and they can see in the dark.

KELSA

The Night Crier I fought used all of those except seeing in the dark.

DAKOTA

The story says Night Criers cut the power and attack in the dark.

ARCH

Do y'all have a backup generator?

KELSA

Yes. I also have headlamps that we can wear.

ARCH

How exactly are we gonna kill Night Crier?

KELSA

We will play Dakota's recorded voice in the basement. Night Crier will go down there.

(MORE)

KELSA (CONT'D)

Once she's in there, I will use a
stun grenade, then we will rush in
and kill her.

Kelsa touches the weapons as she talks (left hand):

KELSA (CONT'D)

You will use your AR-15, shotgun,
Glock 19, and combat knife. I will
use my Glock 19, my ankle gun, and
your stun grenades.

DAKOTA

Bye bye, Night Crier.

KELSA

Do you have your cellphone, Arch?

Arch takes his smartphone out his pocket. A windproof lighter
falls out. Kelsa picks it up (left hand) and observes it,
thinking.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Can I borrow this in case I need
it?

ARCH

You can have it.

KELSA

Thank you. Charge your phone. We
might need to text each other if we
get separated tonight.

DAKOTA

(playful)

Oh, you have his number.

Arch smiles. Kelsa looks away, blushing.

KITCHEN

Kelsa fries chicken on the stove (left hand). A small pot of
vegetables boils. Arch makes potato salad at the table.

She stares at the boiling vegetables. She takes a small pot
out a cabinet (left hand).

KELSA

I'm going to boil water for the
fight. I can use it as a weapon.

ARCH
That's smart.

They continue making dinner. He watches her.

ARCH (CONT'D)
I'm guessing you never let anyone
help you with dinner.

KELSA
Never.

He smiles.

ARCH
Will you be my girlfriend?

She turns to him, shocked. He waits for her answer eagerly.

ARCH (CONT'D)
Yes?

She takes a deep breath and exhales, overwhelmed.

KELSA
Yes. Yes, I would love to be.

ARCH
(relieved)
Ok, good. We're together. Don't let
the chicken burn.

She turns around and cooks. She looks back at him, elated.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa, Arch, and Dakota (wheelchair) eat a delicious dinner;
almost done. They're in mid conversation.

ARCH
(to Dakota)
I'm thinking about making my store
bigger.
(worried)
But I gotta make sure it's the
right move for my business.

DAKOTA
Kelsa, did you tell him about the
business you're gonna start?

KELSA
I told him about it.

ARCH

You gotta put this chicken on the menu.

Kelsa blushes. Arch smiles. Dakota watches them, delighted.

DAKOTA

You two are so cute together. Arch, do you wanna get married?

ARCH

Yes.

DAKOTA

Not to me. To Kelsa.

They all laugh.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

Do you wanna have babies?

ARCH

I want kids.

DAKOTA

I'm gonna get married and have kids too. After I write my book and become a famous writer.

ARCH

(careful)

I'm not tryna offend you, but can you have kids?

DAKOTA

Yeah. Women in wheelchairs can have babies. I'm gonna have fifty.

They all laugh. Kelsa stands up.

KELSA

Arch, can you take Dakota into the basement while I clean?

DAKOTA

Take me upstairs to a guest room.

KELSA

It's safer in the basement.

DAKOTA

If Night Crier hurts y'all bad, I need to be outta the basement so I can kill her, or least injure her enough that she'll run.

KELSA

(firm)

You're not helping. It's dangerous.

DAKOTA

(afraid)

Yeah, it's dangerous -- and my worst nightmare -- but I'll help.

KELSA

No.

DAKOTA

Come on, Kelsa. I'll have my guns, and I'll wear safety glasses.

KELSA

No.

ARCH

I don't want Dakota in danger, but having another shooter is smart.

Kelsa doesn't respond.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I'll give her a vest, and she'll only help as a last resort.

KELSA

(not wanting to agree)

Take her upstairs.

Dakota celebrates.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Only as a last resort.

DINING ROOM (LATER)

Kelsa wears her vest with her fight uniform. With left hand, she puts: *3 stun grenades in leg pockets; her Glock 19 in the holster; her ankle gun in its holster.*

Arch wears a bullet-resistant vest with his **fight uniform**: *short sleeve shirt; battle belt; cargo pants with many leg pockets; combat boots.*

He loads the battle belt with: *his Glock 19; AR-15 ammo clips; Glock 19 ammo clips; his combat knife.*

His AR-15 and shotgun lie on the table.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The door is open. Dakota's computer speakers are connected to her laptop. Her voice repeats loudly: "*Kelsa, you forgot to shut the basement door! Night Crier will come down here! Do you hear me?! Where are you?!*"

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

The door is closed. **Dakota's recorded voice is heard.** Kelsa and Arch wait for Night Crier; ready for battle. They wear headlamps (lights off).

She wears safety glasses, her vest, and her fight uniform. Her Glock 19 is in her left hand. A gauze is on her right hand.

He wears safety glasses, his vest, and his fight uniform. He grips his AR-15. His shotgun is in the corner.

GUEST BEDROOM

Dakota stares at the closed door in her wheelchair, scared. She wears a headlamp (light off), safety glasses, and a bullet-resistant vest.

Her shotgun lies on her lap. Her Glock 19 sticks out her right pouch.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through bloodthirsty. She wears her dirty hiking boots and different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are gone.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dakota's recorded voice is heard. Water boils in a small pot. Some has evaporated. Kelsa pours water in it (left hand). She checks her watch: 9:00 PM.

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Night Crier marches to a backup generator.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Dakota's recorded voice is heard. Night Crier kicks open the front door. Slime drips from her mouth. She glares inside; ready to spit. She steps in.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota's recorded voice is heard. Night Crier marches in, checking for people. Slime drips from her mouth. A trash bag covers the broken window; secured with tape.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Dakota's recorded voice is heard. Night Crier stomps through, checking for people. Slime drips from her mouth.

AT CIRCUIT BREAKER

Dakota's recorded voice is heard. Night Crier turns off the main switch in the circuit breaker.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The house goes dark. **The night sky lights some areas in it.**

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dakota's recorded voice is heard.

KELSA

(to Arch)

The backup generator will come on.

AT CIRCUIT BREAKER

Night vision: **Dakota's recorded voice is heard.** Night Crier spits slime on the circuit breaker so no one can open it.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

Dakota's recorded voice is heard.

KELSA
 (to Arch)
 She did something to the generator.
 Turn on your headlamp.

They turn on their headlamps.

GUEST BEDROOM

Dakota has her headlamp on.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night vision: **Dakota's recorded voice is heard.** Night Crier marches toward the open basement door.

BASEMENT

Night vision: **Dakota's recorded voice is heard.** Night Crier marches down the steps. She sees the laptop and speakers.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

Dakota's recorded voice turns off.

KELSA
 She's in the basement.

ARCH
 Let me lead, and stay a few feet
 behind me. If anything bad happens,
 it'll happen to me first.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Arch and Kelsa creep. He leads with a few feet between them. She grips her Glock 19 (left hand). He grips his AR-15. Their headlamps shine. **They whisper:**

ARCH
 She might see the headlamps.

KELSA
 It won't matter in a minute.

BASEMENT

Night vision: Night Crier marches to the steps. A stun grenade rolls down. It explodes, blinding her.

She covers her ringing ears. She stumbles to the wall that runs along the steps and hides behind it.

Arch rushes in. Kelsa rushes in, staying a few feet behind.

Night vision: As Night Crier's sight and hearing return to normal, Arch shines his headlamp at her and aims his AR-15.

Night Crier runs from Arch's headlamp light. Arch and Kelsa look around for her.

Night vision: Night Crier snatches Arch's AR-15 and swings it at him. He ducks.

Night Crier throws the rifle at Kelsa. She guards her face with her left forearm. The rifle hits it. She shakes her arm in pain.

Arch stands up with his Glock 19. Night Crier pushes him with enhanced strength. He stumbles back a few feet and falls.

Kelsa aims at Night Crier (left hand). Night Crier shoots electricity at her. Kelsa tenses up. The shock is heard.

Night Crier picks up the AR-15. On floor, Arch aims at her. She sees and leaps to the wall, sticking with one hand.

Arch fires nonstop, missing as Night Crier crawls fast.

Night Crier crawls out the basement with the AR-15. Kelsa throws a stun grenade at the door (left hand).

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier sprints away with the AR-15. The stun grenade flies out the basement and explodes. She's too far for it to affect her.

BASEMENT

KELSA
(to Arch)
Come on. She won't escape tonight.

FOYER

Night Crier throws the AR-15 out the kicked-open front door.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

Arch grabs his shotgun from the corner.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa creeps in with her Glock 19 (left hand). She lays it on the floor and takes an ammo clip out a leg pocket. Arch creeps in behind her with his shotgun.

KELSA

Can you reload my gun?

He picks up her gun, then loads the clip, cocks her gun, and gives it to her.

He leads down the hall; a few feet between them. They creep. Their headlamps shine at the darkness.

LIVING ROOM

Arch steps in cautiously, aiming. He stays at the door, aiming around.

Night Crier is on the ceiling over the door. Night vision: She watches Arch.

Night Crier drops on Arch. He lands face first. His shotgun slides a few feet from him.

Night Crier brandishes her nails and draws back to scratch Arch.

Kelsa runs in. Night Crier hears her boots and jumps off Arch. Kelsa fires twice (left hand); misses.

Night Crier strikes Kelsa's face with a powerful punch. Kelsa falls, dazed, and drops her gun.

Night vision: Night Crier turns to Arch. He picks up his gun and aims at her.

Night Crier ducks. Arch fires; misses. On floor, Kelsa shakes her head, coming out her daze.

Arch pumps his gun. Ducked, Night Crier hears it. She runs toward the door. He fires twice at her back. She screams. She runs out.

Kelsa picks up her gun (left hand).

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Arch leads. Kelsa is a few feet behind him. They creep. Their headlamps shine. Blood on the floor leads to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Arch enters cautiously, aiming. Night Crier runs at him with the pot of boiled water. He ducks.

ARCH

Duck, Kelsa!

Kelsa ducks at the door. Night Crier throws the water. It flies over them to the hall.

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. Kelsa and Arch stand up. Arch aims at Night Crier. She spits slime at his safety glasses. He takes them off.

Night vision: Night Crier bites Arch's right hand in many places. He yells and drops his shotgun.

Angered, Kelsa aims at Night Crier (left hand). Night Crier sees her out the corner of her eye. She stops biting Arch's hand and ducks.

Kelsa fires three times; misses. Night Crier shoots electricity at her. Kelsa tenses up. The shock is heard.

Night Crier takes her Glock 19, then takes her ankle gun. She throws them in the hall.

Arch holds his bloody right hand. Night vision: Night Crier bites his left hand in many places. He yells.

Kelsa hits Night Crier's face with a quick, strong kick, knocking her off Arch's hand.

Kelsa kicks Night Crier's face and body. Night Crier grabs her boot and throws her down.

Night vision: Night Crier drops to the floor and bites Kelsa's right leg in many places. Kelsa screams.

Arch's hands bleed badly. He grabs his Glock 19 and combat knife on his battle belt. He lets go, grimacing in pain.

Arch kicks Night Crier's head repeatedly, angered. She stops biting Kelsa's leg and shoots electricity at him. He tenses up. The shock is heard.

Night Crier pushes Arch with enhanced strength. He stumbles back a few feet and falls.

Night vision: Night Crier bites Kelsa's left leg in many places. Kelsa screams.

On floor, Arch looks at his bloody hands. He looks at Kelsa; unable to help her.

ARCH (CONT'D)

Kelsa, I can't use my weapons!

KELSA

Can you get Dakota?!

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Arch runs out the kitchen, slipping on the boiled water.

GUEST BEDROOM

Someone bangs on the closed door. Dakota jumps in her wheelchair, startled. She aims her shotgun at the door.

ARCH (O.S.)

Unlock the door, Dakota!

She unlocks and opens the door. She notices his bloody hands.

DAKOTA

Your hands! Are you ok?! And where's Kelsa?!

ARCH

She's downstairs. We need your help.

KITCHEN

Night vision: Night Crier bites Kelsa's left leg in many places. Kelsa screams. Her legs are bloody.

Night Crier looks for Arch. She grabs his shotgun off the floor, then marches to the hall. She slips on the boiled water. Kelsa sees her on the floor.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier throws Arch's shotgun at the kicked-open front door. She grabs Kelsa's Glock 19 and ankle gun off the floor and throws them at the door. The three guns fly outside.

KITCHEN

Kelsa texts on her smartphone (left hand): "*She's coming!*"

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier stomps through. She sees blood on the staircase.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Arch pushes Dakota to the far end. His hands bleed badly. He grimaces in pain. He tries to ignore it. She grips her shotgun, terrified.

His smartphone in a leg pocket rings.

ARCH

Can you get my phone?

She takes his phone out and sees the text: "*She's coming!*"

STAIRCASE

Night vision: Night Crier marches up; at the last two steps.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier marches off the staircase. Night vision: She sees Arch at the far end. His back faces her.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Few feet from staircase, Kelsa puts Dakota's bath towels along one wall (left hand).

UPSTAIRS HALL

Night vision: Night Crier marches toward Arch's back.

He hears her boots. She brandishes her nails.

She gets a few feet away. He turns, spinning Dakota's wheelchair to Night Crier. He grimaces in pain. Dakota is terrified.

Night vision: Dakota's shotgun is aimed at Night Crier.

Dakota pumps her gun. Night Crier guards her face with her forearms. Dakota shoots them. Night Crier screams.

Dakota notices Night Crier's exposed belly. She pumps and fires at it. Night Crier screams, then backs up.

Arch pushes Dakota toward Night Crier, grimacing in pain. He does his best to bear with it. Dakota pumps and shoots Night Crier's belly. Night Crier screams.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Few feet from staircase, a big, empty bottle of cooking oil lies on the floor. Oil covers the floor.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier's belly bleeds profusely. Dakota takes a shotgun shell out the left pouch.

STAIRCASE

Kelsa limps up the steps.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Dakota drops the shotgun shell on the floor. Night Crier brandishes her nails. Dakota notices them.

DAKOTA

Arch, her nails!

Arch turns Dakota's chair around, grimacing in pain.

Night Crier scratches Arch's arm. At staircase, Kelsa gasps, worried. Night Crier pushes Arch to the wall hard. He drops.

KELSA
Night Crier!

Night vision: Night Crier looks back at Kelsa.

KELSA (CONT'D)
Dakota, shoot!

Dakota throws her shotgun, then takes her Glock 19 out the right pouch.

Night vision: Night Crier looks at Dakota.

Dakota turns her chair around, facing Night Crier.

Dakota shoots Night Crier's face three times. Night Crier screams, then kicks her chair back.

Dakota's chair flies past Arch. He's on the floor, holding the arm Night Crier scratched.

Dakota holds onto her gun and chair as her chair flies, screaming. Her chair stops.

Severely wounded and bloody, Night Crier stumbles to Kelsa.

Kelsa takes a stun grenade out a leg pocket (left hand). She starts to pull the pin with her mouth.

Night Crier shuts her eyes and covers her ears, then stumbles to the staircase.

DAKOTA
Don't let her get away, Kelsa!

KELSA
She won't get away.

Kelsa puts the grenade in its pocket (left hand) and limps to the staircase.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier stumbles off the staircase. She sees the kicked-open front door and grins.

She stumbles through the hall. She checks the staircase for Kelsa. Night Crier slips on cooking oil and crashes.

STAIRCASE

Kelsa limps down. She sees Night Crier trying to get off the floor. Night Crier keeps slipping on oil.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa limps to Night Crier. Night Crier watches, scared.

NIGHT CRIER

If you let me leave, I won't return.

Kelsa limps along the wall, stepping on the bath towels. Night Crier scratches at her legs; misses.

Kelsa limps to the kitchen. Night Crier watches, confused.

Kelsa returns with cooking spray (left hand). She stops a safe distance from Night Crier's head.

Kelsa takes her windproof lighter out a leg pocket (right hand); in pain.

KELSA

You won't return.

Infuriated, Night Crier shoots electricity at her, slipping on oil. The electricity hits a wall.

NIGHT CRIER

I'm not the only Night Crier! You can't kill all of us!

Kelsa stares at her, thinking. Kelsa lights the lighter (right hand); in pain. Night Crier watches, terrified.

Kelsa sprays the flame with cooking spray (left hand), making a ball of fire. It burns Night Crier. She screams and kicks.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa limps off the staircase. Arch lies on the floor down the hall, completely paralyzed. Dakota sits in her wheelchair by him.

Kelsa sits down by Arch, grimacing in pain. She grabs his hand with her left hand compassionately.

DAKOTA

Did you kill her?

KELSA
I burned her body.

Dakota sighs loudly, relieved.

DAKOTA
(Spanish for "goodbye")
Adiós, Night Crier.

Kelsa stares at her, thinking.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
What?

Kelsa continues to stare at her and think.

KELSA
I'm not opening a business. I'm
going to hunt Night Criers.

DAKOTA
(scared)
Alone?

KELSA
Arch. You. Naylene. Maybe Sheriff
Walker will retire early.

DAKOTA
(excited)
And Duncan Grimm! He wrote the
story about Night Criers! We gotta
track him down!

Kelsa nods.

KELSA
We'll destroy their entire race.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: One year later

A framed photo of Kelsa and Arch is on a table by the front door. They're a happy couple. The photo was taken here.

LIVING ROOM

A Horror chapter book titled "*Neat Freak*" lies on the computer desk. It's written/autographed by "*Dakota Lopez*."

A cardboard box sits on the bed. It's full of fan mail.

DINING ROOM

Arch, Dakota (wheelchair), Sheriff Walker, Naylene, and DUNCAN GRIMM (45) sit at the table.

Sheriff Walker is ex-sheriff and addressed as Maurice now. He wears a cowboy hat.

Duncan looks intimidating because he's huge, muscular, and he has old scars on his face, but he's really friendly and humorous.

Everyone wears a fight uniform and a vest; worn from many uses. They all wear handguns in hip holsters.

Kelsa stands at the table. Her hair is short. She wears her fight uniform and vest; worn from many uses. Her Glock 19 is in the holster. Her Katana sword is in the hip scabbard.

A map of North Carolina is in the middle of the table.

The map is marked with small circles. "Hideout" is written above each circle. Xs are on the circles.

Kelsa points to an area of the map without circles.

KELSA

We will search this area for
hideouts.

DUNCAN

After we destroy those hideouts, we
need a paid vacation.

Everyone but Maurice laughs. He frowns.

Unseen until now: "*Where is nest?*" is written at the top of the map.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Everyone exits the house; ready for war. Kelsa leads.

FADE OUT.