

MIGHT CRIER

Written by

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EXT. MEDIUM-SIZED HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

APPEARS ON SCREEN: Huntsville, North Carolina

A few country houses are nearby, but not too close. A raggedy pickup truck sits in the yard.

It's pitch black out except for the porch light. Crickets chirp, and chimes blow in the wind.

An aggressive humanoid monster in country clothes and dirty hiking boots, NIGHT CRIER, appears through the dark, stomping.

The darkness hides her face. Long hair hangs down her back.

As she reaches the porch, the light hits her dirty face, green monster eyes, and razor teeth.

She rings the doorbell. Her hand and sharp nails are caked with dirt and old blood.

A sweet LADY (40s) with a country accent opens the door and steps outside. Night Crier sits on the stairs with her back to the lady, crying.

LADY

What's wrong? Are you hurt?

NIGHT CRIER

Yes. I need help.

The lady stands Night Crier up gently. Night Crier cries in her hands so the lady can't see her face.

NIGHT CRIER (CONT'D)

Can your husband take me to the hospital? Or one of your children?

LADY

I don't have any children. My husband can take you.

NIGHT CRIER

Ok.

LADY

Come inside, darling.

The lady walks Night Crier inside, comforting her.

MAN (O.S.)

Who's this?

LADY (O.S.)
I didn't get her name. What's your
name, dear?

The lady's scream rips through the wall as Night Crier attacks her.

Night Crier slings the couple around like ragdolls, furniture falls over, glass shatters.

The attack stops. Dead silence lingers... **BLACK SCREEN.**

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

APPEARS ON SCREEN: Battlefield, North Carolina

Bright summer day. A long path leads to a big, small-town house with a wrap-around porch. The house is far from neighbors and help, surrounded by woods.

A dirty luxury car and a dirty hybrid car sit in the yard.

INT. HOUSE - THROUGHOUT HOUSE - DAY

Everything is clean and organized. Photos of Kelsa and Dakota sit throughout the house. They were taken here.

MAIN BEDROOM

6:00 AM on an alarm clock. KELSA BANKS (30), a fierce, resourceful woman who never asks for help or accepts it, makes her bed. She's right-handed (also left).

UPSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa sweeps, making sure she covers every inch of the floor.

UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Kelsa scrubs the sink. She shakes empty air freshener. She observes it, thinking.

KITCHEN

Cooking equipment covers the counters. A fire extinguisher hangs on a wall.

Kelsa throws the empty air freshener away, boils orange peels and cinnamon. She smells the air, smiles.

OFFICE

Bedroom office. Kelsa dials on a cellphone at her computer. She talks without a country accent.

KELSA
Hello, Mr. Wolf. This is Kelsa
Banks, an investor here in
Battlefield. I spoke with you last
week.

She checks a planner. "*Four meetings*" is on today's date.

KELSA (CONT'D)
I can meet today... Thank you.

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

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Horror movie posters, Mexican flag, big TV, dresser, computer desk, and computer.

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

A humorous, lively writer, DAKOTA LÓPEZ (26), sleeps. She's tiny. Country accent. A horror chapter book rests by her.

Kelsa enters with Dakota's curious cousin, CAMILA LÓPEZ (28). Camila has a heavy country accent.

Kelsa shakes the bed. Dakota wakes up grumpy.

DAKOTA
Get outta my room.

KELSA
Camila's here, Dakota.

CAMILA
(Spanish for "hello")
Hola.

DAKOTA
(Spanish for "goodbye")
Adiós, Camila.

KELSA

Time to get the day started.

Dakota hides under the blanket. Kelsa pulls it off.

DAKOTA

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

CAMILA

For what?

DAKOTA

Disturbing the sleep.

Camila giggles. Kelsa laughs.

GYM ROOM

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.

Kelsa does leg stretches barefoot, wearing kickboxing gloves.

DINING ROOM

Dakota and Camila put on makeup at the table, having a girls day.

DAKOTA

Guess what!? I'm fixing to write my next book!

CAMILA

What's it about?

DAKOTA

It's about a dangerous neat freak. She hunts down dirty, unorganized people.

CAMILA

Oh, that sounds scary.

DAKOTA

It's gonna sell for big money! Gonna get my big break too! Be world famous!

Camila claps.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
Oh, I need to text my agent! He
might've sold my short story!

Dakota takes out a cellphone, texts. Her phone has a horror cover.

 CAMILA
You thought about finding somebody,
Dakota?

 DAKOTA
Yeah.

Dakota admires herself in a makeup mirror.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
I'm too pretty to be alone.

They giggle.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
But after I'm famous. No
distractions.

 CAMILA
Do you wanna get married and have
kids?

 DAKOTA
Yup.

Dakota knocks makeup on the floor. She reaches for the makeup, but it's too far away.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
Can you get that for me?

Camila hands her the makeup. Dakota notices a new, long cut on Camila's hand.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
What happened to your hand?

 CAMILA
Oh, I just cut myself on accident.

Kelsa enters, checking an email on her cellphone; dressed in a business suit and heels. She has a purse, laptop bag, and sneakers. Dakota notices Kelsa's sneakers.

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

KELSA

I have five meetings. I have to buy groceries, buy a new battery for my car, and run some other errands.

CAMILA

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

KELSA

No.

CAMILA

Ok.

Dakota and Camila go back to putting on makeup. Dakota looks at Camila:

DAKOTA

(copies Kelsa)

"No."

Camila and Dakota giggle. Kelsa finishes checking an email, turns to leave --

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

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

KELSA

What is it about?

DAKOTA

A dangerous neat freak.

KELSA

Is she based on me?

Dakota laughs loud. Camila giggles.

KELSA (CONT'D)

I'm not dangerous, so she can't be based on me.

DAKOTA

Not dangerous? Yeah, right!

Dakota points her fingers like a handgun, shoots.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

And your legs too! Go ahead! Kick!

Kelsa shows off a fierce kick, surprising Camila. Kelsa hugs Dakota and leaves.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT - DAY

Kelsa drives up in her dirty luxury car. Tired and wearing her sneakers, she carries groceries, a new car battery, her purse, laptop bag, and heels up the porch.

Dakota opens the front door and screen door.

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.

DAKOTA
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, unlocks the front door.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

It's pitch black out. Kelsa's headlamp shines as she washes the dirty cars.

A dog barks in the distance. She touches a Glock 19 handgun holstered on her right hip, eyes the woods. She goes back to washing the cars.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

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

She sees the back of Kelsa's house in the distance. Night Crier moves closer, stakes out the house.

INT. HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa takes a hot shower. She cuts it off, finishing. Her back is covered with small, old scars.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota sits on the sofa with her laptop, typing "*NEAT FREAK - Book Outline (Horror)*." She bounces, thrilled to be starting her new book.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier watches Dakota through the window. Night Crier 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 enter the long path. Its engine and pipes roar.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa and Dakota hear the truck in the distance, look at the window Night Crier was at.

EXT. HOUSE - SIDE OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Night Crier hides at the corner, peeping at the long path.

FRONT YARD

The new, 4-wheel drive truck parks by the luxury car and hybrid car. Two men (30s) sit in the cargo bed, wearing hunting clothes and hunting caps. They hold hunting rifles.

SIDE OF HOUSE

From the corner, Night Crier watches the men in the cargo bed. She sees their rifles.

A man looks in her direction. She ducks back, hides against the house.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelsa peeps out the window, sees the truck.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

The very kind, helpful driver, ARCH BRIGGS (30), gets out the truck with flyers. Handsome. Heavy country accent. He wears hunting clothes and a Glock 19 in a hip holster.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Arch knocks on the front door. Kelsa approaches the door with her Glock 19, looks through the peephole.

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 hurries outside with her gun, excited.

KELSA
Hi, 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.
(MORE)

ARCH (CONT'D)
Sorry about the noise. I finally
bought a new truck for hunting.
Took it out for the first time
today.

She looks at his truck.

KELSA
I like it.

ARCH
Probably cause it ain't dirty yet.

She laughs. He smiles, hands her a flyer.

ARCH (CONT'D)
That's for a big cookout I'm
having. It's to feed hungry
townfolk and guests.

KELSA
That's very nice of you.

ARCH
Just tryna help. The cookout's
gonna 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
flyers.

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

He smiles, causing her to smile.

FRONT YARD

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

KELSA
Hi, Buck. Hi, 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, goes inside.

Night Crier peeps at her from the corner of the house.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa puts a container of agua fresca on the table. Dakota reads the flyer.

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 thinks.

KELSA
Maybe.

Kelsa pours a cup of agua fresca.

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

Kelsa spills the drink. She looks at Dakota, worried.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
I'm kidding.

Kelsa smiles.

EXT. HOUSE - SIDE OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Night Crier glares at the long path, making sure the truck
doesn't return. She marches towards the front porch.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dakota drinks the cup of agua fresca, dances because it
tastes incredible. Kelsa laughs.

 DAKOTA
You gotta put this on your menu!

 KELSA
I will.

Dakota heads to the doorway.

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

 KELSA
I don't get you.

 DAKOTA
What in the world are you talking
about?

 KELSA
You're afraid of horror, but you
love it.

 DAKOTA
Blame my dad and his horror movie
nights.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier rings the doorbell, grinning. The porch light reflects off her razor teeth.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa and Dakota hear the doorbell.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa opens the front door, gripping her Glock 19. Night Crier sits on the steps with her back to Kelsa, crying. Kelsa stays behind the screen door.

KELSA

Hello?

Night Crier cries.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Who hurt you?

NIGHT CRIER

I... I don't know who it was.

Night Crier cries louder. Kelsa watches her sympathetic.

NIGHT CRIER (CONT'D)

Sorry for being so loud. Hope I didn't wake anyone. Your husband. Or your family.

KELSA

I live with my best friend. You didn't wake her.

NIGHT CRIER

Ok... I was just walking on the road and...

Night Crier sobs. Kelsa steps onto the porch, walks over. Night Crier cries in her hands, hiding her face from Kelsa.

KELSA

Come inside.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa walks in, comforting Night Crier. Night Crier cries in her hands. 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. Night Crier quickly hides
the gun behind cooking equipment on the counter.

Dakota rushes in, holding horror DVDs. Night Crier hides her
face with both hands, crying.

DAKOTA

Why is she crying?

Kelsa opens the fridge.

KELSA

Someone hurt her.

Dakota looks at Night Crier. Night Crier peeps at her. Dakota
notices her monster eye and gasps, scared.

DAKOTA

Green monster eyes. Crying...

Dakota looks at night through a window, faces Night Crier.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You're... You're a Night Crier.

Night Crier stops crying abruptly. She removes her hands from
her face, surprised.

NIGHT CRIER

How do you know about me?

Kelsa looks at Night Crier.

DAKOTA

She's a monster!

KELSA

What?

DAKOTA

A monster! Look at her eyes!

Kelsa steps towards Night Crier, sees Night Crier's eyes.
Kelsa backs up. Night Crier watches her.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

You gotta shoot her! Now!

Kelsa surveys the counter, doesn't see her gun. She looks at
the container of agua fresca on the table.

KELSA

Go to the living room, Dakota.

DAKOTA

Don't gotta tell me twice.

Distracted, Night Crier watches Dakota hurry to the hall. Kelsa grabs the agua fresca and throws it at Night Crier. Night Crier wipes her eyes, blinded.

Kelsa searches the counter for her gun, sees it behind the cooking equipment.

As Night Crier wipes her eyes, her face is shot.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota watches the doorway, terrified.

KITCHEN

The bullet hole on Night Crier's face bleeds. She glares at Kelsa. Kelsa shoots her face twice, like a professional.

Night Crier runs at her. Kelsa shoots her face two times. Night Crier brakes.

Green, sticky slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. She spits at Kelsa. It covers Kelsa's eyes, and she screams.

LIVING ROOM

Dakota hears Kelsa's scream.

DAKOTA

Kelsa!

KITCHEN

Kelsa fires randomly, blinded by slime. Night Crier ducks. Bullets hit a wall. Two bullets hit Night Crier's body. She races to a window.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

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

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Panicking, Kelsa drops her gun and tries to get the slime off her eyes, but it's sticky. Dakota tiptoes in, notices the slime.

DAKOTA
She spit on you!

Kelsa gets on her knees, 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 five times.

Dakota relaxes a bit and sighs, relieved.

DAKOTA
Five shots to the face is a lot.
She's gotta heal. She probably
won't be done till the morning.

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

KELSA
I'll be waiting.

DAKOTA
Oh, she won't be back tomorrow
morning. Tomorrow night.

KELSA
Why tomorrow night?

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

KELSA
How do you know all of that?

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

Kelsa walks towards 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.

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Kelsa stomps in livid, drying her face with a towel. The slime is gone. She holds her Glock 19. Dakota rocks back and forth on her bed, worried.

DAKOTA
Can you see ok?

KELSA
I see fine.

Dakota cries, scared.

DAKOTA
She won't stop coming for us.

KELSA
Are you sure?

DAKOTA
Yes! She found your house! She
won't stop till she eats us!

KELSA
How do you know about her?

DAKOTA
I read about her in a story.

Dakota searches the old printed papers in the wood crate.

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. Kelsa takes them, scans the cover page: "*Night Criers*" and "*Non-fiction written by Hugo Carey*"

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
What are we gonna do?

 KELSA
I'm going to kill her.

Dakota smiles hopeful, points to the papers.

 DAKOTA
If you're gonna kill her, you gotta
read that.

Kelsa gives Dakota the papers.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
Well, get someone to help you.
 (gets idea)
Call the sheriff!

 KELSA
I'm going to kill her.

Kelsa heads towards the doorway.

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

Kelsa turns around, glares at Dakota. Dakota stays quiet.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - DAY

Kelsa carries a basket of folded clothes. Bath towels sit on top the clothes.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Kelsa cooks breakfast. A trash bag covers the broken window, secured with tape. Her cellphone rings ("*Dakota*").

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

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

DAKOTA (PHONE)

Too worried to be sleep or grumpy.
Change your mind about the story
yet?

KELSA

I'm not reading it.

DAKOTA (PHONE)

You really should. How you gonna
know how to fight Night Crier?

KELSA

I'll manage.

DAKOTA (PHONE)

Manage to get us killed.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa brings in a shopping bag and her purse. Her Glock 19 is in the holster. She sees Dakota's old printed papers on the table. "*Night Criers*" is on the cover page.

KITCHEN

Kelsa drops the papers into a recycle bin. Her cellphone in her purse rings.

KELSA

Hello, this is Kelsa Banks.

ARCH (PHONE)

Hey, Kelsa. This is Arch.

Her face lights up.

ARCH (PHONE) (CONT'D)

I got your number from Scarlet. I
hope it's ok to call.

KELSA

Yes, it's 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 someone new.

She celebrates quietly.

ARCH (PHONE) (CONT'D)
Hello? Kelsa?

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

ARCH (PHONE)
Sure.

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

LIVING ROOM

Dakota and Camila watch a horror movie, scared. They eat
popcorn.

Kelsa enters with a cake and her purse. She's stunning. She wears a dress (covers her back) and heels. A holstered ankle gun is on the inside of her left leg.

DAKOTA
(Spanish for "very hot")
Muy caliente! Call the fire
department!

CAMILA
You're gorgeous, Kelsa.

DAKOTA
Where you headed looking like that?

CAMILA
Yeah, where?

KELSA
To see Arch. I'm taking him a cake.

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

KELSA
I'm spending some time with him.

Dakota claps, excited.

DAKOTA
They're gonna get together, Camila.
Watch.

Kelsa grins. Fear replaces Dakota's excitement.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
(to Kelsa)
You ready for tonight?

KELSA
Yes.

DAKOTA
Don't do it alone.

Kelsa frowns, annoyed. She leaves.

CAMILA
Don't do what alone?

Dakota doesn't answer Camila.

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. A bored employee (20s) stocks items.

Arch puts hygiene supplies in a bag. Piles of hygiene supplies are on the counter. His Glock 19 is in the holster.

Kelsa enters with the cake and her purse blissfully.

ARCH
Wow, you look amazing.

KELSA
(blushes)
Thank you.

ARCH
What are you doing here? Shopping?

Kelsa looks around at the merchandise.

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

Arch sees the cake.

ARCH
You made that for me!? It looks delicious!

KELSA
Where should I put it?

Arch makes room on the counter. Kelsa sees the hygiene supplies and bags.

KELSA (CONT'D)
What is that for?

ARCH
I make bags for people. Food, hygiene supplies, clothes, and so on. Today's hygiene.

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?

Kelsa nods, bags the supplies. Arch smiles.

KELSA

When did you start making these bags?

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 think if they accept my help, it means they're weak. I say, if you need help, ask. If you need help, accept it.

Kelsa stops bagging and watches Arch, pondering what he said.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I'm gonna start making medical supply bags.

Arch holds up a bag.

ARCH (CONT'D)

You think Dakota needs a bag?

KELSA

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

Arch laughs, making Kelsa laugh.

ARCH

How did you two meet?

KELSA

She was in a car wreck. I pulled her out.

ARCH

Oh, wow. When did she move in with you?

KELSA

A few months after the accident.

ARCH

Does her family live around here? Maybe they'd like to come to the cookout.

KELSA

Only her cousin Camila.

She looks around at the store.

KELSA (CONT'D)

You reorganized your store.

ARCH

Yeah, but it needs to be organized better.

KELSA

(thrilled)

We can organize it together.

ARCH

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

Kelsa laughs, then Arch laughs.

ARCH (CONT'D)

I would love your help.

Arch looks around.

ARCH (CONT'D)

My parents worked hard to open this store and run it. My goal's to run it best I can...

(worried)

I'm scared I'll do something one day and lose it.

KELSA

You won't. You're the best owner that I know.

ARCH

Thanks... Speaking of fears, what do you fear? Everyone has some.

KELSA
I'm afraid of heights and drowning.
(shivers, disgusted)
And spiders.

ARCH
(laughs)
I'm afraid of snakes, but spiders?
Really?

KELSA
(smiles)
Stop laughing. That's 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
um...
(thinks)
I don't know what else... Oh, find
a girlfriend and have a family. A
wife and kids.

Kelsa's eyes light up.

ARCH (CONT'D)
What about you? What's your goals?

KELSA
Find someone, get married, and have
children.

ARCH
We got things in common.

KELSA
We'll both be business owners soon.

ARCH
Oh, yeah. I remember you saying
something about a business. What
type of business are you gonna
open?

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

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

Kelsa smiles.

KELSA
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.

Arch grabs a semi-auto hunting rifle with a scope off the
wall.

ARCH (CONT'D)
I still train.

Arch aims like an expert. Kelsa stares at him, attracted. He
puts the gun on the wall.

KELSA
(nervous)
I like you. In the romantic way.

ARCH
You do?

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

ARCH
I get those things from my parents.

Kelsa laughs.

KELSA
Maybe in time, you will like me as
well.

Arch thinks, smiles.

ARCH
I can see that.

Kelsa beams, delighted. She peeps at him as they bag
supplies, smiling.

INT. HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

On the bed (neat): *Two pump action shotguns, two Glock 19s, handgun ammo clips.*

Kelsa takes a box of shotgun shells out a military store bag, adds it to the bed.

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Dakota types on her computer.

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

Kelsa stands at the doorway, wearing safety glasses with her fight uniform: *short sleeve shirt, watch, cargo pants with many leg pockets, hiking boots.*

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

KELSA
These are for you.

Dakota panics.

DAKOTA
I didn't mean me as the sidekick.

KELSA
They're just for emergency. In case
she gets to you.

DAKOTA
(Spanish for "I hope not")
Espero que no.

Kelsa looks at Dakota's computer.

KELSA
Save your work and follow me to 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 food, water.*

A wall is along the steps. Someone can hide behind the wall.

Dakota sits on a tote, shaking. She wears the second Glock 19 in a holster.

Kelsa hands her the shotgun. Kelsa takes shotgun shells and handgun ammo clips out her leg pockets, puts them on the tote by Dakota.

DAKOTA

Love you, bestie. Don't die.

KELSA

I love you too, and I won't.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa locks the basement knob and padlock with keys. They're on a ring with her house and car keys.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier marches through the woods fierce, wearing her hiking boots and different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are healed.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa glares at the trash bag on the broken window, wearing 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, pounds once on the front door.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

The entire front door rattles.

KITCHEN

Kelsa cuts her eyes at the kitchen doorway, checks her watch:
9:00 PM.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Night Crier pounds on the front door nonstop.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

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

The pounding continues. It stops abruptly, and 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 outside.

PORCH (KITCHEN WINDOW)

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

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Night Crier runs to the doorway.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH (KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Kelsa cautions towards 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 (KITCHEN WINDOW) - NIGHT

Kelsa hears the front door slam, spins around.

FRONT PORCH

Kelsa sprints to the front door, tries the knob. It's locked.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Night Crier looks around at the house.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa digs in a pocket, panicking. Her keys jiggle.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Night Crier races in, searches for Dakota.

BASEMENT

Dakota takes a horror chapter book out a tote, reads.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Kelsa shoves the key in the front door.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Night Crier hunts for Dakota.

BASEMENT

Dakota turns a page in the book, unaware a monster is searching for her. Her shotgun lies on her lap.

FOYER

Kelsa bursts in, shoving her keys in a pocket. She aims her shotgun ahead, leaving the front door and screen door open.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

The basement door is secured with both locks. Night Crier storms through the hall.

KITCHEN

Kelsa runs in, aims. She sees the ripped trash bag on the broken window.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier prowls. She's feet from the basement door. She walks by it, not knowing Dakota is in the basement.

Kelsa sprints into the hall with her shotgun. Night Crier spins around and faces her.

Kelsa runs at her. Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth.

Kelsa brakes a few feet from her, aims.

Night Crier spits slime. It covers Kelsa's safety glasses.

Kelsa throws off the glasses. She snatches another pair out a leg pocket, puts them on.

Kelsa aims at her face. Terror fills Night Crier's eyes.

Night Crier guards her face with her forearms, and Kelsa fires.

BASEMENT

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

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier guards her face with bloody forearms. Kelsa pumps her shotgun, shoots the forearms.

Kelsa pumps, shoots her forearms. Blood pours from Night Crier's arms.

Kelsa takes a shotgun shell out a leg pocket, reloads.

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

Kelsa reaches for her Glock 19. Night Crier sees, grabs Kelsa's hair.

BASEMENT

Dakota stands at the bottom of the steps, trembling. She watches the closed door. Her hands grip the shotgun.

 DAKOTA
 (to self)
 Great idea, Kelsa. Do it yourself.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier slams Kelsa to the wall by her hair.

Kelsa draws her Glock 19. Night Crier snatches it and punches her belly, knocking Kelsa back a few steps.

Kelsa grabs her belly, falls. She fights for air.

Night Crier throws the gun to the far end.

 NIGHT CRIER
 After I'm done with you, I'll eat
 the other one.

Night Crier opens her mouth to bite, marches towards Kelsa.

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

Kelsa shoots her face four times. Night Crier sprints away, too fast for a human to catch.

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

DOWNSTAIRS HALL (DIFFERENT AREA)

Night Crier sprints. Kelsa chases, far down the hall.

FOYER

The front door and screen door are open. Night Crier sprints out. Kelsa runs up late, aims through the front door.

BASEMENT

The door opens. Dakota aims her shotgun at it like an expert shooter. Her hands tremble though, shaking the gun.

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

Dakota lowers her gun and sighs, relieved. Kelsa enters, not in pain. Her hair's a mess. She holds ice on her bruised belly. Dakota notices the bruise.

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

KELSA
She punched me. I'm fine. I took medicine.

DAKOTA
Did you kill her?

KELSA
(angry)
No.

Dakota trembles.

DAKOTA
When she comes back, she's gonna use more abilities, like the story says. You can't keep fighting her by yourself.

KELSA
Yes, I can.

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 will get to do those things.

DAKOTA
(Spanish for "sure")
Segura.

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Dakota lies in bed, face frowned and arms folded. Kelsa hands her a homemade snack.

KELSA

I'm sure a horror movie is on.

Dakota doesn't respond.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Good night.

Dakota stays quiet. Kelsa leaves. Dakota makes sure she's gone, grabs her cellphone off the bed.

DAKOTA

(to self)

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

Dakota dials 911.

VOICE (PHONE)

Battlefield Sheriff Department.

MAIN BEDROOM'S BATHROOM

Kelsa puts her hair in a bun. She pulls it hard, shakes her head. She cuts her hair short, washes it in a hot shower. Her back scars show.

INT. HOUSE - GYM ROOM - DAY

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

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa puts her long spear in a corner.

KITCHEN

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

DINING ROOM

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

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

DAKOTA

Hey, Kelsa, I'm outlining my horror book, "*Neat Freak*" aka you.

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

DAKOTA (CONT'D)

(playful)

Going to see Arch?

Kelsa blushes. Someone knocks on the front door.

FOYER

Kelsa opens the front door. A serious man who hates nonsense, SHERIFF MAURICE WALKER (55), takes off his hat. He talks in short sentences, heavy country accent. He's in great shape for his age.

SHERIFF WALKER

Good morning, Kelsa.

KELSA

(surprised)

Sheriff Walker?

Dakota rushes up behind Kelsa.

DAKOTA

Sheriff!

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

KELSA

(to sheriff)

Did she call your department?

SHERIFF WALKER

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

Dakota bounces in place, excited. Sheriff Walker narrows his eyes at her, irritated.

SHERIFF WALKER (CONT'D)
Sounds like hogwash.

Dakota frowns, shakes her head upset.

SHERIFF WALKER (CONT'D)
(to Kelsa)
I didn't come for that. I need a
cake. Cousin's birthday.

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 the entire department!

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
some help!

SHERIFF WALKER
No one's coming.
(firm)
Got no time for nonsense. My
department neither.

Dakota mumbles. Kelsa leads Sheriff Walker outside.

KELSA (O.S.)
What flavor for the birthday cake?

Dakota strikes the door with her fist.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa stomps in furious. Dakota pounds on her laptop
keyboard, angered. Kelsa takes her laptop.

DAKOTA
What are you doing!? I'm working on
my book!

Kelsa snatches Dakota's cellphone off the table.

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

What!?! I'm not a kid! And 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 leaves with the laptop and phone, going upstairs.
Camila enters the dining room.

CAMILA

Hey, Dakota. Sorry for just coming in. The front door was open, and I heard yelling. Is everything ok?

DAKOTA

Everything's peachy.

CAMILA

I saw Sheriff Walker leaving. Did Kelsa finally call about the break-in?

DAKOTA

How do you know about that?

CAMILA

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.

CAMILA

What type of break-in was it? And why is there a blanket on the kitchen floor?

DAKOTA

(smiles)

Camila, 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 country.

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, blushes hard. 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?

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

They're good home defense weapons.
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

What do you do for fun?

KELSA

I work out, spend time with Dakota,
watch movies and television. I love
jigsaw puzzles.

ARCH

Really? Me too. I do them all the
time with family and friends.

KELSA

I do them by myself.

ARCH

I like hunting, training with guns,
and camping.

KELSA

I want to start camping.

ARCH

Maybe we can go camping together.

KELSA

Yes!

ARCH

Never seen anyone so excited about
camping.

KELSA
(to self, looks away)
It's not about camping.

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

They organize bullet-resistant vests. He admires her.

ARCH (CONT'D)
I like you.

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

KELSA
You like me?

ARCH
Yeah. I know it's only been two
days, but I got more feelings for
you than I've had for any woman.
Does that sound crazy?

KELSA
No, not at all. I'm glad.

He smiles. He stares off into space, thinking. She watches
anxious. He comes to, frowning downhearted.

KELSA (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

ARCH
You and Linda are alike. In a way.

KELSA
What do you mean?

ARCH
Doing everything yourself. Never
asking for help, never accepting
it.

She stays quiet, nervous.

ARCH (CONT'D)
For three years, Linda was like
that. 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.

(MORE)

ARCH (CONT'D)
The way Linda was led to big
problems between us.

KELSA
What type of problems?

ARCH
Nonstop fussing. And we grew
apart... I wanna be with you, but
not if I'm gonna get the same thing
I got with Linda.

She thinks over what he said.

KELSA
I like you more than you know, and
I want to be with you, but this is
how I am.

ARCH
(stunned)
But why?

KELSA
I was raised this way.

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.

A confused customer (20s) looks around, waves for Arch to come help.

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

Arch helps the customer. Kelsa watches, grieved.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Kelsa drives up in her car, grieved. Camila waits outside her pickup truck, fidgeting with her fingers worried.

Kelsa gets out her car with a large bag from the military store and her purse.

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

KELSA
What's going on?

CAMILA
Night Crier.

Kelsa shakes her head, sighs.

CAMILA (CONT'D)
Dakota asked me to help you kill
Night Crier. She's worried about
your life and hers.

KELSA
There is no monster.

CAMILA
Dakota said you would say that.

KELSA
Camila, there is no monster.

CAMILA
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?

Camila doesn't know how to answer.

KELSA (CONT'D)
We are adults, not children.

CAMILA
What about the broken window?

KELSA
It was a burglar.

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

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

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

KELSA
Exactly. A story.

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

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

KELSA
I won't.

CAMILA
Thank you.

Camila gets in her truck.

KELSA
Camila, when's the last time you
went on vacation?

CAMILA
Never.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Dakota sleeps at the table, holding a horror chapter book.
Kelsa enters with the bag and her purse. Dakota wakes up and
stretches wild.

DAKOTA
Did Camila talk to you?

KELSA
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.

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

Kelsa leaves. Dakota screams in a pillow.

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 to protect her belly/chest.

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

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps through vicious, same hiking boots but a different country outfit. Her wounds from last fight are gone.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The trash bag is on the broken window. The blanket covers the large area of the floor under the window. The papers that read "*Don't step!*" are gone.

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 soaks the counter with soap.

She removes the blanket. Broken glass cups cover the floor.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Night Crier stomps out the woods.

PORCH

Night Crier smashes first-floor windows around the house.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelsa stands by the glass cups with her shotgun, waiting for Night Crier to come through the broken window.

She hears Night Crier breaking windows, checks her watch:
9:00 PM.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa rushes in. She hears windows breaking and turns in circles, not knowing which room to head to. The breaking stops.

LIVING ROOM

Night Crier climbs through a broken window.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa hears Night Crier step on glass in the living room.

LIVING ROOM

Kelsa runs in, aims. Night Crier snatches her gun, throws it across the room.

Kelsa draws her Glock 19. Night Crier takes the gun, slings it to a wall.

Night Crier punches the belly of Kelsa's vest. The punch knocks Kelsa back a few steps, but she's not hurt.

Night Crier fake punches at Kelsa's face, and Kelsa puts up her guard.

While Kelsa's guarding, Night Crier snatches her ankle gun out the holster, hurls the gun.

Kelsa backs up, drawing her sword. Night Crier marches towards her. Kelsa slices her chest.

Night Crier lunges at her, trying to grab. Kelsa uses footwork to avoid, gashes Night Crier's hands.

Kelsa unleashes a combo of slashes on her. Night Crier backs up, bloodier.

NIGHT CRIER

You're not like my other prey.

Kelsa lifts her sword high, swings down heavy. Night Crier jumps back. The sword hits the floor.

As Kelsa lifts the sword, Night Crier snatches it and flings it across the room.

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

Kelsa runs to the corner, grabs her long spear. She turns around to thrust it --

Night Crier bites all over Kelsa's right hand. Kelsa screams, drops her spear.

NOTE: Kelsa only uses her left hand until page 86 (unless mentioned otherwise).

Kelsa takes a stun grenade out a leg pocket. She pulls the pin with her mouth, drops the grenade.

The grenade explodes, blinding both of them. Night Crier stops biting Kelsa's right hand. Their ears ring.

As their sight and hearing return to normal, Kelsa picks up her spear, then backs up.

Kelsa grips her spear (**both hands**), grimacing in pain because of her right hand.

Night Crier charges at her. Kelsa thrusts the spear in her neck repeated (**both hands**).

Kelsa shakes her right hand, in pain. It bleeds badly.

Night Crier snatches the spear, throws it across the room. She bleeds profusely.

Kelsa runs to her sword, picks it up. Night Crier sees, stumbles to the doorway.

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, stumbles through the hall.

Her sight and hearing return to normal. She looks back, dodges as Kelsa slices with her sword (**both hands**).

Kelsa shakes her right hand, in pain.

Night Crier bites her right hand. Kelsa screams, swings her sword wild. Night Crier ducks, avoiding it.

Night Crier stumbles towards the back of the house.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

The back door opens. Night Crier falls through it. She stands up, stumbles away.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Kelsa drops her sword, grabs her bloody right hand.

KELSA
(infuriated)
Night Crier!!!

BASEMENT

Kelsa enters, fighting pain. A towel is around her bloody right hand. Dakota sits on a tote, scared. She notices Kelsa's hand, and Dakota jumps to her feet.

DAKOTA
You're bleeding bad!

Dakota runs to a closed tote, snatches it open. She takes out a first aid kit.

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

Kelsa searches the tote for a different first aid kit.

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 take care of it.

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
No! It's too risky! I'm not losing
you, and I'm not dying! Get someone
to help you! 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.

DAKOTA
(frustrated)
Come onnnn. Just ask.

Kelsa finds a first aid kit in the tote.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
I could help you... Kill Night
Crier.

KELSA
No.

Dakota sighs, relieved. They hear Arch's loud truck in the distance.

EXT. HOUSE - PATH - NIGHT

Arch sees Kelsa rushing along the long path. She wears everything from the fight except the safety glasses, vest, and sword hip scabbard.

She hides her bloody right hand behind her back. A new towel is around it.

He parks midway of the path. He gets out, confused. His Glock 19 is in the holster.

ARCH
I could've drove up.

KELSA
No, it's fine...
(thinks)
I was taking a walk anyway.

ARCH
Oh. 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 - PATH - NIGHT

Kelsa and Arch stand outside his truck.

ARCH

Yeah. If this is a bad time, I can come back later.

KELSA

No, this isn't a bad time...

(thinks)

Let's just talk out here. It's nice out tonight.

ARCH

Ok. 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.

KELSA

(blushes)

That makes two of us.

ARCH

I was thinking about what you said. You really do everything yourself? Everything?

KELSA

Yes. Everything.

He watches her for a few seconds, thinking.

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.

She beams, excited.

ARCH (CONT'D)

Hold out your hands. I have a gift for you.

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

ARCH (CONT'D)
You're gonna need both hands.

He takes a big, heavy pots and pans gift set out his truck.
She stares at the gift, worried.

KELSA
Um...

ARCH
What was I thinking. It's heavy.
I'll just take it to the house.

KELSA
No, I'll take it!

She wraps her left arm around the gift, takes it. She almost drops it -- she grabs it (**both hands**). The gift drops.

ARCH
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 her down the path.

FRONT PORCH

Arch hurries up the stairs with Kelsa, sees the broken windows.

ARCH
What happened to your windows?

She stays quiet. He looks at her right hand, takes her inside.

KELSA
Arch, wait --

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Arch rushes in with Kelsa. He brakes, sees Night Crier's blood on the floor.

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

She doesn't respond.

DAKOTA (O.S.)
Arch!

Arch sees Dakota down the hall. She's smiling. Arch rushes to her.

ARCH
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 eat us.

ARCH
A monster?

DAKOTA
Yeah.

KELSA
Dakota, what are you talking about?

DAKOTA
(angry)
You know what I'm talking about.
(MORE)

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
(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.
Will you help her?

ARCH
Help her kill a monster?

DAKOTA
Yeah.

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)
Go ahead!

ARCH
Kelsa, what happened? The truth.

Kelsa hesitates answering.

DAKOTA
Tell him!

Kelsa doesn't say anything.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
(infuriated)
Tell him!!!

KELSA
(mad)
Ok... There is... There is a
monster.

ARCH
Monsters aren't real.

DAKOTA
Yes, they are! They're real!

KELSA
Monsters are real.

ARCH
Monsters?

DAKOTA
Yeah!

Arch looks at Kelsa, still not convinced.

KELSA
I wouldn't agree with something
like this if it wasn't true.

ARCH
You sure it wasn't a dog? It's dark
out.

DAKOTA
She ain't no dog! There's no way a
dog got close enough to bite Kelsa!
Not with how she shoots!

Arch scratches his head, processing what they told him. He
observes them a while.

ARCH
I believe y'all.

DAKOTA
(celebrates)
Yes, yes, yes!

ARCH
(to Kelsa)
I'm gonna help you. I'll bring
guns, ammo --

KELSA
Don't bring anything. You're not
helping me.

DAKOTA
(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 storms down the hall. Dakota rushes to Kelsa, catching up to her. Dakota grabs her shirt.

KELSA

Let go of my shirt, Dakota.

DAKOTA

(angry cry)

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 the shirt.

Kelsa turns to walk off. Dakota notices the small, old scars on her back. Dakota gasps, horrified.

DAKOTA

Your back.

Kelsa stands still. Arch sees her scars.

ARCH

Who did that to you?

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

KELSA

My mom... When... Whenever I asked someone to help me or I accepted their help, I was beaten. "*Mom, can you help me with my homework.*" Beaten. "*The teacher offered to help me with my classwork.*" Beaten!

Kelsa cries wild.

KELSA (CONT'D)

She expected me to be like her. Independent.

Dakota stares at Kelsa, lost for words.

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 killing Night Crier on my own.

Kelsa stomps down the hall. Dakota watches her.

DAKOTA
 (to self, Spanish for "*she's gonna die*")
 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 place ecstatic.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

For a test, Kelsa sprays the fire extinguisher, gripping the hose with her **right hand**. A gauze is on that hand. She shakes her hand, fighting pain.

MAIN BEDROOM

Kelsa wears her vest with her fight uniform.

She now wears a holster on her left hip. She puts her Glock 19 in it.

She now wears a holster on the inside of her right ankle. She puts her ankle gun in it.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa opens the basement door. Dakota waits behind her, smiling. Dakota holds her shotgun and wears her Glock 19.

KELSA
 What are you smiling about?

DAKOTA
 You'll see.

Dakota steps into the basement -- they hear Arch's loud truck in the distance.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Trash bags cover the broken windows, secured with tape. Arch knocks on the front door. His Glock 19 is in the holster.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Kelsa opens the front door, smiling.

KELSA
Hi, 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 checks her watch.

KELSA
Night Crier won't be here for a
while.

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

KELSA (CONT'D)
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

Dakota pulls Arch's unloaded semi-auto hunting rifle out the
container, the gun with the scope. She's wearing her Glock
19. She aims the rifle, thrilled. Kelsa watches.

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 something for
you.

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 takes the keys out her pocket, slams the door.

BASEMENT

Arch and Dakota hear the door shut.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa locks the padlock on the basement door.

BASEMENT

Arch and Dakota run up the steps, try to open the door.

ARCH
Kelsa, unlock the door!

DAKOTA
Kelsa!

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa leans into the basement door.

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 runs from the basement door. He beats on it.

ARCH (O.S.)
Unlock the door!

BASEMENT

Arch and Dakota listen for Kelsa.

ARCH

Kelsa!

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

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

The door is locked with a chain and padlock.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Dakota watches Arch push on the cellar door.

DAKOTA

That door's locked from the outside.

He runs to the window, unlocks it.

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Kelsa parks her car so a tire blocks the window.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Arch sees the car'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?

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Night Crier crawls through a broken window.

BACK DOOR

Kelsa enters the house, hears a chair slide across the floor in the dining room.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa sprints with her shotgun.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa charges in, aims. Night Crier isn't there. Kelsa sneaks along the table.

Night Crier hangs under the table by her hands, sees Kelsa's boots.

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

Night Crier pulls her under the table.

Night Crier opens her mouth to bite. Kelsa shoots her. Night Crier rolls from under the table.

Kelsa crawls from under the table, opposite side Night Crier. Kelsa stands up, ducks. A chair flies by.

Night Crier runs across the table, jumps off. She snatches the Glock 19, throws it across the room.

Kelsa runs towards the kitchen, and Night Crier chases. Kelsa knocks over a chair to slow her down.

KITCHEN

Kelsa waits with the fire extinguisher. Night Crier runs in, charges at Kelsa.

Kelsa sprays her, gripping the hose with her **right hand**. Kelsa fights the pain.

Night Crier battles the foam, unable to see Kelsa.

Kelsa drops the extinguisher. She draws her ankle gun, fires at the foam five times.

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

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

Kelsa backs up to safety, looks at the scratch. Night Crier grins, licks her lips.

Kelsa's right arm lowers to her side, paralyzed. She tries to raise her arm but can't.

Kelsa fires at her, misses.

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

ARCH (**FLASHBACK** V.O.)

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, looks at the doorway.

BASEMENT

Arch paces, panicked. He grips a pump action shotgun. It has a sling (holds 10 shells). Dakota sits on a tote, crying.

ARCH

Be ok, Kelsa, be ok.

KITCHEN

Night Crier circles Kelsa. Kelsa is staring at the doorway.

ARCH (**FLASHBACK** V.O.)

You really do everything yourself?
Everything?... But you can change,
right? People change.

Kelsa looks at Night Crier. Kelsa looks at her ankle gun.

KELSA (**FLASHBACK** V.O.)

Yes, people change.

Kelsa runs out.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa rushes through, stumbling; becoming more paralyzed. Her right arm dangles.

Night Crier lingers down the hall.

BASEMENT

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

KELSA
Can you help me!?

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier strolls through the hall, grinning.

BASEMENT

Arch dashes up the staircase to Kelsa with his shotgun. Dakota rushes up the steps, holding her Glock 19. Dakota stops midway of the stairs, afraid to go farther.

KELSA
(to Arch)
Not much time. I'll be paralyzed
soon. Wait until I say, then shoot.

Arch nods.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa stumbles out the basement. Night Crier strolls towards her, showing teeth.

Kelsa shoots her face. Kelsa stumbles back and drops, becoming more paralyzed.

KELSA
Now!

Night Crier reaches Kelsa. Arch runs out the basement with his shotgun. Night Crier freezes up afraid.

Arch sees Night Crier's eyes and teeth. She sprints away. He aims, shoots her back three times.

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

Slime drips from Night Crier's mouth. Arch runs up, 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, listens.

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

ARCH
Kelsa! Kelsa!

He gets to the basement door, 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's hot.

ARCH
Ok.

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

ARCH
(worried)
She's paralyzed.

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 slow. 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, sighs.

KELSA
It's not easy.

ARCH
It will get easy.

INT. HOUSE - GYM ROOM - 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.

KELSA

Arch, wake up. Come to the dining room.

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

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

KELSA

Dakota, wake up.

Dakota wakes up grumpy.

DAKOTA

I'll wake up in five years.

KELSA

We have to discuss our plan.

Dakota's eyes shoot open.

DINING ROOM

Arch and Dakota enter. She bounces in place, 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 (hunting rifle, shotgun, and Glock 19), Kelsa's guns (ankle gun and Glock 19), one combat knife, three 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. Guys and girls. They usually travel in packs, but sometimes alone. If a Night Crier travels alone, it'll ask you questions that seem innocent, but the Night Crier's just tryna find out how many people are in your house.

KELSA

Why?

DAKOTA

See, if a Night Crier's alone, it won't attack more than three people at once. The most important thing to a Night Crier is surviving. One Night Crier against a lotta people is too risky.

ARCH

They wear clothes. That's strange.

DAKOTA

They don't wanna bring attention to themselves. What would you do if you saw a bunch of naked bodies walking at night?

ARCH

Probably call the sheriff.

DAKOTA

Exactly. When Night Criers travel, they steal clothes and shoes, then stash them in hideouts. They change bloody clothes so they don't get unwanted attention.

KELSA

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

ARCH

(to Kelsa)

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 in there, thinking it's her. I'll throw a stun grenade, then we will rush in and kill her.

(touches weapons)

You will use your hunting rifle, shotgun, Glock 19, and combat knife. I will use my Glock 19, my ankle gun, and your stun grenades.

Dakota claps, excited.

DAKOTA

This is gonna be like a horror movie I saw.

KELSA

Do you have your cellphone, Arch?

Arch takes his cellphone out his pocket. A windproof lighter falls out. Kelsa picks it up 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. A small pot of vegetables boils. Arch makes potato salad at the table.

She stares at the boiling vegetables, takes a small pot out a cabinet. He notices.

ARCH

What's that for? You making another side dish?

KELSA

No. 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, thinks.

ARCH

Will you be my lady?

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

ARCH (CONT'D)

Yes?

She takes a deep breath and exhales, overwhelmed.

KELSA

Yes. Yes, I would love to be.

ARCH

(relieved)

Ok, good... Don't let the chicken burn.

She cooks. She looks back at him, elated.

DINING ROOM

Kelsa, Arch, and Dakota eat dinner, almost done.

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. After I write my book and
become famous.

ARCH
How many kids?

DAKOTA
(thinks)
Fifty.

They all laugh. Kelsa cleans the dishes off the table.

ARCH
Mind if I...

KELSA
Sure.

Arch helps Kelsa clean the dishes off the table. Dakota sits
in deep thought, worried.

DAKOTA
Backup plan.

 KELSA
What?

 DAKOTA
We gotta have a backup plan.

 KELSA
What did you have in mind?

 DAKOTA
If your plan turns to dirt, let me
help kill Night Crier.

 KELSA
Are you sure you want to help?

Dakota trembles in her seat.

 DAKOTA
No. Hell no. But we need a backup
plan. I'm an expert shot. And I'll
wear safety glasses. And one of
those vests.

 KELSA
Ok.

 ARCH
 (to Dakota)
I'll help you get ready.

Dakota smiles.

 DAKOTA
Ok, great.

Dakota's smile fades, and she stares off into space, afraid.

 DAKOTA (CONT'D)
Great.

DINING ROOM (LATER)

Kelsa wears her vest with her fight uniform.

She puts: *three stun grenades in leg pockets, her Glock 19 in the holster, her ankle gun in the 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, hunting rifle ammo clips, Glock 19 ammo clips, his combat knife.*

His hunting rifle and shotgun lie on the table.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The door is wide open. Computer speakers are connected to Dakota's laptop.

Her voice repeats loud (**throughout house**): *"Kelsa, you forgot to shut the basement door! Do you hear me!? Helloooo!? Where are you!?"*

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

The door is closed. 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. Glock 19 in left hand. Gauze on right hand.

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

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Dakota sits on her bed, staring at the closed door. She wears a headlamp (light off), safety glasses, and a bullet-resistant vest. Her shotgun lies on her lap, and she wears her Glock 19.

She tries her best not to tremble.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Night Crier rips through bloodthirsty, hiking boots crushing leaves. She wears different country clothes. Her wounds from last fight are healed.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Water boils in a small pot. Some has evaporated. Kelsa pours water in the pot, checks her watch: *9:00 PM.*

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Night Crier marches to a backup generator.

FRONT YARD

Night Crier looks at the second-floor windows.

INT. HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Night Crier stands on glass and window pieces. Slime drips from her mouth. She glares at the open door, ready to spit.

UPSTAIRS HALL, THEN DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier rips through, checking for people. Slime drips from her lips.

AT CIRCUIT BREAKER

Night Crier searches, finds the circuit breaker. She turns off the main switch.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

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

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dark except for sky light through a window.

KELSA

(to Arch)

The backup generator will come on.

AT CIRCUIT BREAKER

Night Vision: Night Crier spits slime on the circuit breaker so no one can open it.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

KELSA

(to Arch)

She did something to the generator.
Turn on your headlamp.

Kelsa and Arch turn on their headlamps.

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

Dakota has her headlamp on.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Vision: Night Crier approaches the open basement door.

BASEMENT

Night Vision: Night Crier marches down the steps, sees the laptop and speakers.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

Dakota's recorded voice in the basement 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 run. He leads with a few feet between them. She grips her Glock 19. He grips his rifle. Their headlamps shine through the dark.

BASEMENT

Night Vision: Night Crier stomps 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, hides behind it.

Arch rushes in. Kelsa hurries 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 rifle.

Night Crier runs from Arch's headlamp light.

Arch and Kelsa look around for her.

Night Vision: Night Crier snatches Arch's rifle, swings it at him. He ducks.

Kelsa aims at Night Crier. Night Crier launches the rifle at her hard.

Kelsa guards her face with her left forearm. The rifle hits it. She shakes her arm, in pain.

Arch stands up, draws his Glock 19. Night Crier pushes him. He stumbles back a few steps, falls.

Kelsa continues to shake her forearm.

Night Crier picks up the rifle. 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 rifle. Kelsa throws a stun grenade at the doorway.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

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

BASEMENT

Kelsa and Arch regroup.

KELSA

Come on. She won't escape tonight.

FOYER

Night Crier opens the front door, throws the rifle outside.

DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM

Arch grabs his shotgun from the corner.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa creeps in with her Glock 19. She lays it on the floor, takes an ammo clip out a leg pocket. Arch comes up behind her with his shotgun.

KELSA

Can you reload my gun?

He reloads her gun, cocks it, gives it to her.

LIVING ROOM

Arch inches into the room, aiming. He stays at the doorway, aiming around.

Night Crier hangs on the ceiling over the doorway.

Night Vision: Night Crier watches Arch.

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

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

Kelsa runs in. Night Crier hears her boots, jumps off Arch. Kelsa fires twice, misses.

Night Crier strikes Kelsa's face. Kelsa falls, dazed. She drops her gun.

Night Vision: Night Crier turns to Arch. He grabs his gun, aims at her.

Night Crier ducks. Arch fires, misses.

Kelsa shakes her head, coming out her daze.

Arch pumps his gun. Night Crier breaks for the doorway. He shoots her back twice. She runs out.

Kelsa gets to her feet, picks up her gun.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Arch leads. Kelsa stays a few feet behind him. They creep, headlamps shining. Blood on the floor leads to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Arch edges through the doorway, aiming his gun. Night Crier runs at him with the pot of boiled water.

ARCH

Duck!

Arch and Kelsa duck. Kelsa is at the doorway. Night Crier throws the water. It flies over them to the hall.

Night Crier tosses the pot aside. Slime drips from her 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 different places. He yells, drops his shotgun.

Infuriated, Kelsa aims at Night Crier.

Night Crier sees Kelsa out the corner of her eye. Night Crier stops biting Arch's hand, ducks.

Kelsa fires at Night Crier twice, misses. Night Crier runs at her. Kelsa shoots her twice.

Night Crier throws Kelsa to the floor hard.

Night Crier takes Kelsa's Glock 19 and ankle gun, throws them in the hall.

Arch holds his bloody right hand.

Night Vision: Night Crier bites Arch's left hand in numerous places. He yells.

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

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

Night Vision: Night Crier drops to the floor, bites Kelsa's right leg in different spots. 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 repeated, furious.

Night Crier pushes Arch. He stumbles back a few steps, falls.

Night Vision: Night Crier bites Kelsa's left leg in various 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 flies out the kitchen, slipping on the boiled water.

GUEST BEDROOM

Arch bangs on the closed door. Dakota jumps off her bed, startled. She aims her shotgun at the door.

ARCH (O.S.)
Unlock the door, Dakota!

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

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

ARCH
She's downstairs.

KITCHEN

Night Vision: Night Crier bites Kelsa's left leg in different places. Kelsa screams.

Blood gushes out Kelsa's legs.

Night Crier looks around for Arch. She grabs his shotgun off the floor, marches to the hall.

Night Crier slips on the boiled water. Kelsa sees her on the floor.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier throws Arch's shotgun through the open front door. She grabs Kelsa's Glock 19 and ankle gun off the floor, tosses them outside.

KITCHEN

Kelsa texts on her cellphone: "*She's coming!*"

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier storms through, sees blood on the staircase.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Arch and Dakota stand at the far end of the hall. His hands bleed badly. The cellphone in his leg pocket rings.

ARCH

Can you get my phone?

She takes his phone out, sees the text.

DAKOTA

(whisper shout)

She's coming!

ARCH

Just stick to the plan.

STAIRCASE

Night Vision: Night Crier stomps up the stairs, reaching the last two steps.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier jumps off the staircase, ready to attack.

Night Vision: Night Crier sees Arch at the far end. His back faces her.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

A few feet from the staircase, Kelsa puts bath towels along one wall. She grimaces in pain as she limps.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Night Vision: Night Crier marches towards Arch's back.

He hears her boots clashing against the floor.

She brandishes her nails.

Night Crier gets a few feet away -- Arch steps to the side, revealing Dakota was hiding in front of him.

Night Vision: Night Crier sees Dakota shivering. Dakota's shotgun is aimed at Night Crier.

Dakota pumps the shotgun. Night Crier guards her face with her forearms, and Dakota shoots them.

Dakota notices Night Crier's exposed belly. Dakota pumps, fires at her belly.

The shot makes Night Crier fold over. She quickly stands up straight and backpedals, guarding her face with her forearms.

Dakota steps towards Night Crier. Dakota pumps her gun, shoots the monster's belly.

Arch watches, doing his best to bear with the pain.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

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

UPSTAIRS HALL

Blood spews from Night Crier's belly. Dakota's trembling hand grabs a shotgun shell out her pocket.

STAIRCASE

Kelsa limps up the steps.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Dakota drops the shotgun shell. She crouches and tries to grab the shell, keeping her eyes on Night Crier.

Night Crier steps to Dakota and brandishes her nails. Dakota notices them.

DAKOTA

Uh-oh.

Night Crier draws back to scratch Dakota -- Arch steps in front of Dakota, and Night Crier scratches his arm.

Night Crier shoves Arch to the wall. He drops. Night Crier goes for Dakota. Dakota screams, terrified.

KELSA (O.S.)

Night Crier!

Night Vision: Night Crier turns and sees Kelsa standing at the staircase.

KELSA (CONT'D)

Dakota, shoot!

Dakota throws her shotgun down, draws her Glock 19.

Night Vision: Night Crier swings around and faces Dakota.

Dakota shoots Night Crier's face three times. Night Crier knocks her back.

Dakota hits the floor hard and slides to Arch, who's on the floor holding his scratched arm.

Severely wounded and bloody, Night Crier stumbles to Kelsa.

Kelsa takes a stun grenade out a leg pocket. She starts to pull the pin with her mouth --

Night Crier shuts her eyes, covers her ears. She 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, limps to the stairs.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL

Night Crier stumbles off the staircase a bloody mess. She sees the open front door, grins.

She stumbles a few steps through the hall. As she goes, she checks the staircase for Kelsa.

Night Crier slips on cooking oil, crashes.

STAIRCASE

Kelsa limps down the stairs, 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, terror in her eyes. Night Crier's breathing picks up.

NIGHT CRIER

If you let me leave, I won't come back.

Kelsa limps along the wall, stepping on the bath towels so she doesn't slip. Night Crier scratches at her legs, misses.

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

Kelsa returns with charcoal lighter fluid. She stops a safe distance from Night Crier.

KELSA

You won't come back.

NIGHT CRIER

(infuriated)

I'm not the only one! You can't kill us all!

Kelsa stares at her, thinking. Night Crier smiles, hopeful Kelsa will change her mind. Kelsa squeezes lighter fluid on her, killing Night Crier's hope.

Kelsa takes her windproof lighter out a leg pocket. Night Crier trembles, petrified.

Kelsa lights the lighter, throws it on Night Crier. Fire engulfs the monster. Night Crier swings her nails and kicks, screaming and screeching.

DOWNSTAIRS HALL (LATER)

Kelsa drops the fire extinguisher next to Night Crier's burned body.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Kelsa limps off the stairs.

Arch lies on the floor down the hall, completely paralyzed.
Dakota sits beside him.

Kelsa sits down by Arch, grabs his hand compassionately.

DAKOTA
Did you kill her?

KELSA
I burned her body.

Dakota sighs loud, relieved.

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

Kelsa stares at Dakota, thinking.

DAKOTA (CONT'D)
What?

Kelsa continues to stare at Dakota and think.

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

DAKOTA
(scared)
Alone?

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

DAKOTA
And Hugo Carey! He wrote the story
about Night Criers! We gotta track
him down!

Kelsa nods.

KELSA
We're going to kill every Night
Crier.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

APPEARS ON SCREEN: One Year Later

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

DAKOTA'S BEDROOM

A horror chapter book titled "*Neat Freak*" lies on the computer desk. It's written/autographed by "*Dakota López*." A cardboard box full of fan mail sits on the bed.

DINING ROOM

Arch, Dakota, Sheriff Walker, Camila, and HUGO CAREY (40) sit at the table.

Sheriff Walker is ex-sheriff and addressed as MAURICE now. He holds a cowboy hat.

Camila has a first aid bag.

Hugo is a highly-smart, friendly, humorous geek without a country accent. He's muscular. A scar runs along his face. He has a laptop, drone, and drone remote.

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 still short. She wears her fight uniform and vest, worn from repeated use.

Kelsa's Glock 19 is **in a holster on her right hip again.** Her Katana sword is in the hip scabbard.

A map of North Carolina lies 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.

ARCH

After we destroy those hideouts, we
should take everyone on a vacation.

CAMILA

Vacation cruise!

DAKOTA

No! Theme park!

HUGO

Maurice likes the Teacup ride.

Everyone but Maurice laughs. Maurice frowns and growls under his breath.

MAURICE
Nonsense, Hugo.

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

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Everyone exits the house with equipment and gear, ready for war. Kelsa leads.

END