

JACKAL (CONT'D)
 --hey! Wait! Where are you going??
 Get BACK here!

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - EVENING

PEOPLE flee from a bellowing smoke cloud. Light flashes periodically inside of it. V approaches, arm over her eyes.

The smoke clears and V looks up. A HELLHOUND with a wounded leg meets her gaze. It tries to walk, but crashes into a building. Lightning erupts around it as it lets out a haunting roar. Jackal and Minsheng reappear next to V.

JACKAL
 THE HELL'S WRONG WITH YOU, RUNNING
 OFF LIKE THAT?!

Minsheng tilts Jackal's head to put the Hellhound in view.

JACKAL (CONT'D)
 (sotto)
 Of course one found its way here.
 (to V)
 Well, V, here's your first test.
 Try not to screw it up.

Minsheng looks over to V. Her attention is unwavering. The Hellhound roars as it stomps its foot down in front of her. V dodges -- a claw only slicing a tuft of hair -- and scales the Hellhound's leg.

MINSHENG
 Good luck.

V rushes across the Hellhound, from its leg to the back of its head. V grabs the hilt of her sword. The Hellhound roars in defiance and desperately shakes its body to get V off.

V loses her footing but clings to the side of the beast. The Hellhound turns its head to her and she leaps onto its ear.

V climbs atop the beast's head and raises her sword up. The sword reflects in the Hellhound's eye and it helplessly roars. Suddenly, the Hellhound disappears.

V
 Huh?

She falls but sticks the landing. As the dust settles, V sees SETH (demon, broken horn) on the ground, slumped over.

SETH
 (whisper)
 Just do it...

V pauses. The demon turns to face her, a nasty cut along his arm. Blood trickles down onto the floor. Minsheng and Jackal reappear next to V. Jackal is stone-faced, but Minsheng looks at the demon somberly.

SETH (CONT'D)
 I said, do it.

V sheathes her sword and approaches the demon slowly. Seth stares at her for a moment. He clenches his fist.

SETH (CONT'D)
 JUST DO IT ALREADY!

V
 No.

SETH
 Wh- what?

Minsheng and Jackal reflect the demon's shock.

SETH (CONT'D)
 You serious? I said-

V
 You're hurt.

She motions towards Seth. He scrambles backwards. She sighs.

V (CONT'D)
 I don't want to hurt you.

SETH
 This must be some sick joke. You're toying with me to kill me when I least expect it! That's it!

V sits back and looks out towards the rubble. She sighs.

V
 I don't think you meant to do all this. I know what it looks like when someone wants to hurt others-

She points at him.

V (CONT'D)
 And you're not it.

SETH

You know nothing about me.

V

I know that you weren't trying to kill me. You slammed your hand down *in front* of me and never tried biting me. Your leg was hurting and you just wanted me to go away.

Seth stares at the ground momentarily. He looks at V.

SETH

Aren't you supposed to be a demon killer?

V

Aren't *you* supposed to be a ruthless killing machine?

V reaches her hand back out, offering a handshake.

V (CONT'D)

Listen, I've got a lot to figure out and it seems you could use some help, so let's work together here.

Seth's gaze softens.

V (CONT'D)

I'll help get you patched up and you can give me a bit of info. You know, favors for favors.

SETH

Why? Why would you waste your time on me?

V

Because I don't think you're all bad.

Seth looks at V, then her hand. He takes it and the two stand up together. Seth rushes in for a hug. V stiffens but reciprocates the hug. Minsheng smiles and disappears. Jackal follows suit.

V (CONT'D)

Uh... you're getting blood on me.

SETH

Shit, my bad.

Seth backs off and quickly rubs a tear from his cheek. V notices and smiles.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - DUSK

V and Seth walk away from the city. Seth, with a new wrap for his arm, looks back every few paces.

V
Hey, didn't catch your name earlier.

SETH
Oh, uh, I'm Seth. You?

V
I'm V.

SETH
Like... the letter?

Awkward silence.

V
I used to know someone who owned a cabin somewhere up here. It's away from the city and quiet.

SETH
That's good. I think I could use some quiet.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

CREAK! V opens the door and the two step inside. Its dusty with scarce furniture with grass in between the flooring. Seth throws himself on a couch. It coats him in dust.

V
How is it?

SETH
It's a step above my, state of the art, cardboard box.

He buries his face in the couch. V continues walking, quickly flipping down an old picture frame. Suddenly, a large metallic clank comes from the kitchen. Seth perks up.

SETH (CONT'D)
Holy shit! Food?

He hops onto the kitchen counter then pounces on something. V follows behind him.

SETH (CONT'D)

Whoa! I've been all throughout the city and I've never seen a rat THIS big.

He holds up something covered in dust bunnies shaped like a giant rat. It sneezes and PEGGY (young woman, orange, curly hair, green poncho) emerges from the dust.

PEGGY

Hi there~!!

She smiles brightly at V and Seth. V furrows her brow and Seth's excited gleam turns into a grimace.

SETH

Oh, what the fuck? LAME!

He drops her and turns around to face V. Peggy's already examining V's arm and outfit.

PEGGY

WHOA!! What are you? Some sort of soldier?

V

Wh-

PEGGY

No, that can't be right, your outfit's too exciting. A ninja?? No, a KNIGHT!!

Seth scoffs.

V

No, I-. Wait a sec, who are you?

PEGGY

Oh, silly me! I'm Peggy!

Fireworks erupt behind her spelling: PEGGY! She promptly kneels in front of V.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

It's an honor to meet you, my liege.

SETH

(to V)

I thought it was supposed to be quiet here.

V

Ok, Peggy. Are you some sort of-

PEGGY

Witch? Well, of course I am! Look at my outfit, ya goof!

Seth opens his mouth, but Peggy quickly puts her finger up to it to silence him. He tries to bite her.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

I already know what you're thinking. 'What powers could this "witch" possibly have?' First of all, rude.

Peggy flicks Seth on the nose. He tries to bite her.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Second, I'm happy to inform that I'm not your standard, run of the mill witch. I happen to be the most ✦ powerful ✦, conniving~~, and GRANDEST witch OF ALL TIME!!

She teleports onto the kitchen counter, ending her performance.

SETH

Never heard of ya.

PEGGY

Well, duh! It's because I'm *elusive*~

V

Well, if you're the powerful witch you claim to be, heal Seth's arm.

PEGGY

Why of course, my liege, but only if he says *pretty please*.

SETH

Kill yourself.

PEGGY

Close enough!