

Int. BACKHOUSE. - a concrete-floored single-room shack, essentially bare. Two windows, one on either side of a locked doorway.

SLATER, a hardened female assassin dressed all in black, looks out a window. She's got a gun drawn, a blocky-looking .45 caliber pistol with a long suppressor attached. Behind her, strapped to a cheap folding chair with what looks to be a bunch of seatbelts, is KENNY, all nerves and adrenaline and buttoned-up white collared shirt. He's blindfolded. He clears his throat.

KELLY

Listen, when I said I was excited to see you again, this isn't *exactly* what I had in mind.

SLATER (keeping her eyes trained outside)

Hm?

KELLY

Just, uh. Last time I saw you, if you remember, not that you would, I know you're busy, busy worldwide traveler, it's why we split up in the first place- and least, that's what I've been telling myself-

SLATER

Kelly.

KELLY

-not that I don't understand, I *do*, I always have, we simply have different priorities but when you reached out after all this time saying that you *needed* me I guess I sort of had certain expectations about what that might entail-

Slater quickly, purposefully, strides over to the center of the room and rests a hand on his shoulder. He shuts up. She undoes the blindfold with one hand as she holsters the gun with the other.

SLATER

Kelly. Don't do the thing.

KELLY

What thing? I'm not doing a thing.

SLATER

You're doing the thing where you read too much into what I said. What *exactly* did I say to you in that text?

KELLY [smiling weakly]

Well I can't exactly get to my phone, can I? I'm a little tied up here.

SLATER

What I said was "I need you. It's important. I'll come to you." Three little statements. And you somehow took that to mean that you should rush out the door to try and find me?

KELLY

You said you needed me, Slater! How else was I supposed to react?

SLATER

I have always said *exactly* what I mean! What I *didn't* need was for you to start racing about like it's the third act of a romcom! *This is not that story!*

KELLY

How was I supposed to know how serious the situation was? You never tell me anything- never have- god, my mother was right-

SLATER

It's impossible to misinterpret! And just because *you* have a great relationship with *your* mother, doesn't mean you have to throw that back in my face-

KELLY

All you've ever told me about your mother is that you hated what she did to you! I don't know shit about your family!

They stare at each other. Both huff out a breath. After a beat, Slater speaks. Carefully.

SLATER

I know it's been eight years-

KELLY

Ten.

SLATER

Ten years. Right. But you have to understand- this is about more than just us. I didn't knock you out and strap you to a chair because I thought it'd be easier than leaving you a voicemail.

KELLY

So why *did* you knock me out and strap me to a chair?

SLATER

Because I didn't want you to run screaming when I did this.

She whips out a short, curved blade and draws it down Kelly's cheek. He's too shocked to respond beyond a surprised yelp as a thin line of blood appears from the corner of his left eye down to his chin.

KELLY

Excuse me, what the fuck?

Swiftly, she catches a few drops of blood in a vial.

SLATER

Shhhhh Kelly. This is what I need to show you.

She turns. For the first time, Kelly looks down and notices that his chair is smack in the middle of a circle of symbols drawn in white chalk. As blood drips down his cheek and onto the floor, the symbols start to glow.

KELLY

Slater...

SLATER (dripping some of
Kelly's blood onto her
fingertips)

Please. Try and stay calm. Otherwise
things might get messy.

A top-down view of the proceedings as Slater crouches on the floor, mixing Kelly's blood with some of the chalk markings. The whole circle is glowing now, neon-green, as Slater stands, muttering under her breath. Energy arcs towards Kelly, tracing itself along his skin- he cries out, not in pain, but in surprise. This all looks like it should *hurt*, but it doesn't. Kelly can't take his eyes off of Slater as she watches him writhing against the straps.

SLATER [bowing her head- a supplication]
...estum ergaya est. Nostum karaka kost.
There.

She wipes her fingers on her leathers. Kelly finds his voice.

KELLY
Slater. What. The fuck. Just happened.

SLATER
I promise I'll explain *everything*-

There's a muffled *whoomph* OUTSIDE- and a throaty, basslike growl. It sounds big. And menacing.

SLATER
Shit. That's sooner than expected. Well-
no time like the present.

Kelly winces as she whips out the curved blade again- but this time, she uses it to cut him free. Once his hands are free, he grabs her upper arms. She regards him coolly.

KELLY
I don't need to know *everything*. But I
need to know *something*. And I need to know
it *now*.

SLATER
Of course, my love. And you will. But
first- do me a favor and make a fist.

KELLY

What?

SLATER

A *fist*, babe. Like when you thought the waiter at Ariadne was flirting with me on our anniversary.

KELLY

Huh- I mean, he *was*, clearly-

As Kelly clenches his right first, his veins pulse with a bright green glow. He's startled- he raises his hand to eye level as a wave of energy *whoosh*-es out from him. He looks like a DBZ character powering up. Slater smiles grimly.

SLATER

Thank god. It took. Wasn't sure that it would.

KELLY

Wait, you slashed my face and you weren't even sure... *whatever this is* would work?

Just then, the entire Backhouse shudders as something SLAMS into the door. With every SLAM, dust falls from the ceiling, bolts fall to the floor, and things jump off of shelves. Slater spins towards the noise, .45 at eye level. She speaks calmly to Kelly, behind her, but doesn't look at him.

SLATER

Kelly. You're about to see something you don't see every day.

SLAM.

KELLY

Can't be any worse than when you came home after Chardonnay Sunday singing "Living on a Prayer" at the top of your lungs. The neighbors thought we were being robbed.

SLATER

Heh. When it breaks through the door-

SLAM.

KELLY

When?? Wait, *it*???

SLATER

When *it* breaks through the door-

SLAM.

SLATER

*Punch that motherfucker with everything
you've got.*

A *CRASH* as the door splinters off its hinges. With a deafening roar, a hulking gray demon thrusts its gnarled, horned, toothy head through the opening. As it attempts to shoulder its way into the building, Slater fires off six rounds- *thwup thwup thwup thwup thwup thwup*- into the beast's face. It yowls but isn't deterred, and lurches forward, clawed hands reaching out to crush Slater as inky black blood spills down its face. Kelly stumbles back, agog.

SLATER

Kelly. Listen to me, honey.

KELLY

It's a fucking... monster. Oh my shit.

SLATER

Babe. Be brave. I need you.

At that, Kelly snaps into the moment. Yeah, it's a big leathery demon, who cares? He takes a step forward as the monster rages closer, shouldering its way through the surprisingly steady doorframe, swiping at Slater and snarling *most* intimidatingly.

SLATER

ANYTIME NOW LOVE.

KELLY

HANDS OFF, BUDDY. THAT'S MY WIFE.

As the demon finally forces its way into the building and snarls its way towards Slater, Kelly pulls her out of the way with one hand, steps forward, and smashes the demon with an uppercut from his

charged-up fist. Instantly, the demon's head explodes and the room is splattered with brains, blood, and broken teeth. Kelly is stunned.

KELLY

How the hell-

SLATER

Aw, still holding a torch for me? After eight years apart?

KELLY

It's ten-

SLATER

Right, ten. The reason I needed you Kelly is because your blood- your *family's* blood- is powerful. More powerful than you know. Well, you might know now, or at least have some idea.

KELLY

Why the hell was a *demon* after you? That was a demon, right?

SLATER

In a manner of speaking.

KELLY

Well, that's just great- wait, how the hell did you know I could, uh, punch it?

SLATER

I didn't, really. Took a gamble. But figured with the right spell, a little adrenaline, and a bit of luck, we could unlock at least *something*. Thank god it was something explodey.

KELLY

Mother's never going to believe this.

SLATER

Heh. You'd be surprised. There's a reason she never liked us together. And a reason why she's going to ream me out once she

finds out you've unlocked your potential.
Now. This is just the beginning.

KELLY

She's not reaming you out, that's just how she sounds when she's stressed- oh my god, we are not doing this right now.

SLATER

Too right. Now. I know you've got questions. I'll fill you in as best I can on the way. We're going to Quinton's.

KELLY

Your brother? What's he got to do with this? Bastard never let me get a hold of you no matter how hard I tried.

SLATER

That was because we were trying to *protect* you, Kelly. When we fell in love, my family told me to stay away. I didn't listen. It wasn't until we were already married that I realized what was at stake. I.. didn't want to lose you. So I had to leave you.

KELLY

That makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.

SLATER [smiling sadly]

I know. It will. Come on. It's time to go.

KELLY [he stops her]

Slater.

KELLY

I want you to know- I never stopped loving you. All that time. I knew you had your reasons. I just wish you'd shared them with me.

SLATER

I- I can't promise you'll be satisfied with my answers. Just- let's get where

we're going before more of those things
show up, yeah?

KELLY

I love you. I mean it.

SLATER

I heard you. Let's go.

Cameron Daxon