

WAR BORN

by

Elijah Cooksey

OVER BLACK:

A high pitched scream vibrates.

FADE IN:

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

An intense flame ravages multiple huts scattered within a humble campsite. Disorientated villagers flee from the billowing smoke with iron weapons in hand. Children CRY, longing for their absent parents.

INT. HUT - NIGHT

YOUNG CROW sleeps on the floor. He wears fur and animal hide. He is twelve, blonde and blue-eyed.

YOUNG CLAY
CROW! CROW!

YOUNG CLAY steps through the hut's opening. Blonde and blue-eyed as well, he wears a hat made from raccoon hide. The raccoon's face blankets Young Clay's scalp. Young Clay is twenty.

Young Clay rushes to his younger brother. He shakes him.

YOUNG CROW
Clay, what?

Young Clay rises to his feet then sprints to the hut's door. He grabs a large Claymore near the hut's exit before he bolts out.

Young Crow rubs his eyes. He slowly stands up as he adjusts himself. Young Crow stumbles to the hut's exit. Light shines through the cracks in the door.

PIERCE
(muffled)
East Town is gone.

YOUNG CLAY
Where are they now?

Young Crow opens the hut's door. The firelight blinds him.

INT. NINJA HOUSE - NIGHT

Shadows hide a meek house made entirely from wood. A girl's shrouded figure shakes within the shadows. She is twelve.

YOUNG MIKASA
No!

She holds her father. Blood shines on Young Mikasa's hand in the moon light.

YOUNG MIKASA
Daddy!

Tear drops trickle onto the father's cold face.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

PIERCE is large, a head taller than Young Clay despite being the same age. He holds a giant sledgehammer with one hand.

To the side of Pierce is YOUNG RAGNAROCK, his younger brother. Young Ragnarock is the same age as Young Crow, but could be mistaken for a fifteen year-old. Young Ragnarock shelters himself behind Pierce.

PIERCE

We have to move!

Young Clay nods confidently, while Young Crow and Ragnarock tremble. The four sprint into the forest with weapons drawn. Young Crow and Ragnarock clutch their knives. They trail behind their older brothers.

PIERCE

Ragnarock, keep up!

A horn sounds off. Pierce panics. He searches frantically.

YOUNG CLAY

Ninjas? Here already!

PIERCE

Stay close!

Young Ragnarock trails further behind. Fire burns around them. Pierce spots the glint of metal. Someone hides in this bush feet away from Young Ragnarock.

Pierce dashes to Ragnarock. A Ninja leaps from the bush. The Ninja's small katana thrusts toward Young Ragnarock. Everyone else tries to grasp the suddenness of this attack.

Young Ragnarock's fear paralyzes his body.

PIERCE

Down!

Pierce slams his massive hammer against the Ninja's back. CRACK! His hammer forces the Ninja to the dirt.

Young Ragnarock gazes at his brother. Pierce smiles to Ragnarock with relief.

YOUNG CLAY

Pierce!

A second Ninja stayed hidden in the bush. The Ninja shoots thin needles from her mouth. The tips of the needles are covered in white sap.

Every needle strikes Pierce. Some puncture his chest while others stick out from his neck. Pierce topples over with a

thud. Ragnarock's eyes broaden.

Young Clay pursues Pierce's attacker through the thick woods.

Young Ragnarock hugs his brother. Pierce fights to keep conscious while blood oozes from his wounds.

YOUNG RAGNAROCK

Pierce!

Tears fall onto Pierce's pale face. Young Ragnarock screams out recklessly. Pierce forces part of his bloody hand into Ragnarock's mouth.

PIERCE

You have to be quiet.

Pierce's eyes water, his head falls back.

Crow watches Ragnarock shake his dead brother. Young Ragnarock's mouth is open wide but he fights the urge to yelp.

YOUNG CLAY

Bastards!

Young Clay traps the Ninja against a tree. He thrusts his blade through the Ninja's stomach. The Claymore pins the Ninja to the tree. Clay rips the Ninja's mask off.

YOUNG CLAY

Why break the treaty!

The Ninja coughs up blood.

NINJA

I should ask you that.

The Ninja's head falls, lifeless.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Young Clay bursts through the forest. He hurries to YOUNG CROW.

YOUNG CROW

Brother, Pierce...

YOUNG CLAY

...Come here.

Young Clay wraps his arm around Young Crow's shoulder.

Young Ragnarock buries his head into his brother's bloody chest.

YOUNG CROW

I will end this war Ragnarock. I
won't let anyone else die! For
Pierce, I'll.

Young Crow cries, he can't finish his sentence.

Young Ragnarock addresses CROW, his face blood soaked.

YOUNG RAGNAROCK

Finish them all.

The blood on Ragnarock's face takes the shape of the map of
EVERSHORE.

GRAPHIC - THE MAP OF EVERSHORE

The withered map depicts three main areas, all evenly cut
from a rough circle.

On this map there is a coast to the east and more unnamed
land to the west. The map has Japanese characters written
on it with holes burned from fire.

PIERCE (V.O.)

One hundred years of bloodshed,
that's how long it took for a
treaty to be established.

CLASH and CLING sounds of metal ring as roughly outlined
warriors fight over the map in a stop motion style. These
outlines are bold drawn in black calligraphy.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Determined to avenge their fallen,
each side broke the treaty. Hate
has a way of taking over the heart.

Warriors are stabbed, they SCREAM and MOAN.

PIERCE (V.O.)

A pissing contest. Samurai against
Ninja. Killing for revenge and
pride. Children fighting a war
their grandparents began.

The west part has "Dounine" clearly labeled in English and
Japanese characters. A group of the Samurai clan is drawn
in the same outline style. The outlined Samurai face the
east; all stand tall by each other's side.

The Samurai are reimagined. They are European style
swordsmen who wear a combination of Japanese Samurai and
skin/fur styled clothing.

All carry heavy weapons, mostly large swords, but some wield
shields, axes, spears, and clubs. The Samurai have their
weapons sheathed.

PIERCE (V.O.)
Dounine, Oneumi. Their differences
are apparent at first.

To the east of Dounine is Oneumi. The Ninjas hang from trees and hide behind bushes. They face the west.

These Ninja are wrapped in cloth. Thin metal plating worn on the outside of the cloth rests over their chests and forearms. The Ninjas are Asian and carry metal needles, Ninja stars, throwing knives, and small katana blades.

PIERCE (V.O.)
But they fight for the same thing.

The border of Dounine and Oneumi stretches vertically.

The outlines break their stances, they charge at each other. The Samurai run while they shout war cries. The Ninjas jump and dash from spot to spot, they make SWISH and TSU sounds.

PIERCE (V.O.)
The Love they lost.

Each side attacks at close quarters. Bodies fall. WAILS, SCREAMS, and CRIES echo as the outlines show the aftermath of a battlefield.

PIERCE (V.O.)
Children of these clans hold on to
their pain forever.

The outlines change to children. They mourn their lost family members.

On the right over Dounine a boy on his knees cries, his head rests against a tombstone.

To the left a girl grasps her father's cold hand while his body is lowered into a grave.

PIERCE (V.O.)
Ready to pass it on.

The outlines of the boy and girl grow into a young man and young woman. They are armed and face each other.

PIERCE (V.O.)
Eventually, war broke both nations.
Pride insisted on a third party.

North of Dounine and Oneumi lies Triceles. The boarder between Dounine and Oneumi fork where Triceles begins.

PIERCE (V.O.)
Triceles, who stayed neutral as a
merchant class country, wrote the
treaty.

The black outlines form into men of business and trade. They hold coins, gems and wares. They face forward lined up side by side. The ones furthest left and furthest right pass down weapons to Dounine and Oneumi.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Supplying both clans with weapons enabled them to write a treaty each side could agree to.

Evershore encompasses the three lands. The black outlines animate leaders from all three groups as they argue.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Anyone who commits an act of war is hung by the court houses of Triceles.

The table dissipates into a merchant leader who stands in the upper middle of the map. His right hand points up.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Only two are legally allowed to fight.

The black outlines morph into pregnant women. They stand in rows as they face the merchant leader. There are two rows of pregnant women, one row aligned to the right and one aligned on the left.

PIERCE (V.O.)

One hapless unborn from each clan.

All but one woman from each side disappears.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Would decide the war.

The pregnant women and merchant leader disappear. The outlines form into a male Samurai who resembles CROW over Dounine. A female Ninja who resembles Mikasa is over Oneumi.

Both outlines stare at each other. CROW grips a sheathed sword behind his back. Mikasa's left hand tightens around the throwing knife strapped to her left leg.

PIERCE (V.O.)

Two children forced to kill each other, the War Borns.

They assault each other, there is a CLASH of metal.

EXT. CITY OF HAVEN-DAY

Pagoda buildings reach six stories high casting shadows over the city of Haven. These unkept buildings resemble classic Asian themed architecture. The massive pagodas are perfectly square, about one-sixth of a mile on each side.

Each level has its own roof that reaches out just enough to shelter from the rain. The city is a metropolis for this time period, but Haven is now abandoned. Nothing is in sight except buildings and old signs.

The city is held together by random objects. Certain pillars have rope tied around it with chopsticks and pencils shoved into broken parts. Pieces of metal have been added to reinforce pillars.

CROW and TIGO explore the abandoned streets.

Crow, now twenty has developed a very defined jaw line. He is well built and wears a tight fitted vest that exposes his toned biceps. He has wooden sandals and this friendly smile on his face. The large Claymore is sheathed on his back.

CROW

Think we can find her here?

As Crow investigates the hallow buildings, Tigo, a talking hamster, pops out from under Crow's right sleeve.

Tigo has white and orange fur and appears to be an average hamster. Tigo wears a metal device, the bulky contraption wraps around his waist.

TIGO

An empty city like this has plenty of hiding spots.

CROW

I can't believe anyone ever abandoned it.

Crow squats, he plays with a chopstick that has been shoved into a wooden pillar.

CROW

They used strange building methods.

TIGO

Don't mess with that!

Tigo relaxes when Crow lets go of the chopstick.

TIGO

You wouldn't want the whole building to fall.

CROW

A chopstick, Tigo.

TIGO

It could be bearing weight!

CROW

Chopsticks don't bear weight.

Crow stands. He gazes high at the massive buildings.

CROW
Imagine living here.

TIGO
We used to share it with the Ninja
before the war. Haven was the
capital of Evershore.

The two stroll through the empty streets of Haven.

TIGO
But when the war started, the
people of Haven turned against each
other. No one could decide who
should control the city. It was
abandoned.

CROW
They almost destroyed the city
fighting for it.

Crow KNOCKS on a pillar. He emphasizes the random objects.

TIGO
Wasn't from the fighting. A couple
of weeks before the war started, a
large earthquake struck the city.
Ninja and Samurai came together
doing whatever they could to keep
the buildings from falling.

CROW
Like using chopsticks?

TIGO
Chopsticks and all.

Tigo whirls his head. He spots something shining around the corner.

TIGO
Hey, stop.

Crow halts, then glances at Tigo.

CROW
What?

TIGO
Over there, 'round the bend.

Crow focuses. He spots a metal string tied above the ground.

CROW

Trip wire. Our lead was right.
Tigo, run around on foot. I'm
going to get some high ground.

Crow points to an adjacent building. Tigo and Crow nod,
then split up.

CUT TO

INT. CITY OF HAVEN-DAY

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN'S face is barely visible, hidden in the
shadow of a building. She wears a cloth mask that covers
her mouth and cheeks. She peers out of a window. Her black
hair is braided back.

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN

There you are.

EXT. CITY OF HAVEN-DAY

Crow is high up on a large pagoda. He scans the city from
the fifth story balcony. The pagoda is six stories tall and
seems to be the center of the deserted city.

The air is unbelievably clear. White clouds roll through
the sky. The wind blows gently at his height.

Crow scouts the streets of Haven

CROW

Where are you hiding?

Crow squints at the distance; an ocean comes into view.

CROW

The ocean?

This ocean boasts crystal blue water, light waves brush
against the sand. Sea gulls soar through the air. The sand
has an inviting warmth to it.

Crow holds out his arms to the paradise. He makes a
rectangle with his hands that he peers through.

Through Crow's looking glass he imagines himself lounging in
the sand. He digs his feet into the warmth. A RUSTLE
sounds in the sand. The Crow on the beach stares at a
woman.

The woman is light skinned and has dark chestnut eyes. Her
hair flows from under a sun hat. She is Crow's age. Her
baby blue sun hat spans past her shoulders.

She gives a faint smile, but her eyes gaze at Crow.

TIGO

Crow! Crow!

Crow's imagination is cut. He grabs the railing, then leans over.

TIGO
Over here! Hurry!

Tigo runs on the roof of a smaller pagoda. The pagoda is to the left of Crow. Crow has to run around the corner of the pagoda to face Tigo.

TIGO
Look out!

Glass breaks on the street level. Crow spots three Ninja stars, they head up to him.

As the stars glide they twist and turn; its impossible to track where they will land. Crow quickly runs to his left, toward Tigo.

The Ninja stars crash into the pagoda's walls.

Another volley of Ninja stars tries to cut off Crow. Crow jumps from his sprint. He slides feet first.

The Ninja stars land above his head. One star shatters a window at the corner of the pagoda, glass showers the balcony.

Crow's slide ends at the corner; he jumps up to run along the balcony. He trips slightly, almost loses his balance. Tigo runs along the smaller pagoda at Crow's pace. Crow eyeballs Tigo.

CROW
Get over here!

Tigo looks at the metal contraption that wraps around his stomach.

TIGO
You're too far, I'll crash!

CROW
I'll catch you!

TIGO
You can't even catch me when we practice!

CROW
I'm in the heat of battle. My senses are heightened!

Tigo reluctantly stops. He aims his body at Crow. Crow smiles. He holds his hand out high, makes a catching gesture. Tigo groans, he slaps his chest.

The metal contraption SPRINGS out violently. Tigo launches wildly through the air. The roof where the contraption sprung off SHATTERS. Tigo maintains his balance as he soars to Crow.

Crow lifts up his hand to catch Tigo. He is too slow. Tigo crashes into the wooden wall in front of Crow, dust shoots out.

Crow halts, his feet slide against the floor. His arm is still stretched out ready to catch Tigo. Crow smiles dumbly.

CROW

You didn't say go or anything!

A moment goes by as the dust clears. Tigo jumps from the dust cloud, lands on Crow's shoulder then fiercely bites his ear lobe.

CROW

AHH! Dammit Tigo!

Tigo lets go of his ear, he comically wipes blood from his mouth. Crow runs on, Tigo rides his shoulder.

TIGO

Do you think that's funny?

CROW

It was the heat of battle.
Catching you is not my main concern!

TIGO

Then it's none of my concern to tell you about the trap!

Crow whips his head. He spots the trap that Tigo points to. A bunch of metal wires hold up a giant log. The log faces the pagoda's pillars.

TIGO

Another log is on the other side.
If they are set they will bring the whole building down!

CROW

This one?

TIGO

Obviously!

CROW

Come on!

The wires SNAP, they fling wildly. Crow and Tigo watch the giant log crash into a pillar of the pagoda.

The second trap goes off. Another log crashes into the adjacent pillar. The giant pagoda leans toward the side of the broken pillars.

TIGO

It was nice knowing you!

Tigo jumps onto the wooden railing. He slaps his chest. The metal contraption springs out. The force breaks the rails. Tigo makes no momentum forward, he starts to fall. Crow grabs Tigo.

CROW

There are those heightened senses!

The Pagoda's lean scares Tigo.

Crow frantically searches for a way out. The pagoda falls apart while it leans to the sea.

TIGO

Crow! Crow! Crow!

CROW

(mocking)

Tigo! Tigo! Tigo!

The pagoda's lean is at a forty-five-degree angle. Debris shoots up from the bottom of the pagoda. Crow spots the roof that Tigo jumped from.

CROW

Got it!

Tigo looks around. He tries to reveal Crow's plan. Crow turns around. He runs with the downward lean of the pagoda.

TIGO

Got what?

Crow jumps onto the railing. His body faces the small pagoda. Tigo's face enters panic.

TIGO

An excellent way to kill ourselves!

CROW

Feel free to suggest ideas.

TIGO

At this angle we won't land on the roof!

CROW

Sounds more like a complaint.

The pagoda's destruction is imminent. It rapidly leans past forty-five degrees. It hangs diagonally in the air. Debris falls and crash all around. Dust flies up from the bottom.

Visibility becomes harsh.

As the pagoda rushes to the ground, Crow hangs on to the railing. The pagoda leans further. For an instant, Crow is in perfect position to hurdle onto the other roof.

CROW

Now!

Crow leaps from the rails which are so far bent they are almost perpendicular to the ground. Crow flies through the dust and lands on the adjacent roof.

He lands with a roll. As his roll finishes, he bounces up to his feet. He sprints across the roof. Behind him the pagoda crashes into the ground. Debris shoots out.

Within the debris chopsticks and the other "makeshift" material fling about. A cloud of dust emerges from the destruction. Crow and Tigo are engulfed in the cloud.

CUT TO

EXT. SUMANA BEACH - DAY

Mysterious woman is at the top of a palm tree, held up by wire that wraps around the tree. She peers through this small spyglass. Behind her is the same beach that Crow saw.

Mysterious woman peers through the spyglass. A giant dust cloud covers her visibility as the spy glass pans. The spyglass focuses on the edge of the dust cloud. Crow emerges from the cloud covered in dust.

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN

It's never that easy.

The Mysterious woman cuts the wire. She descends the tree nimbly.

CUT TO

EXT. BORDER FOREST- AFTER NOON

Crow and Tigo wash the dirt off in a small lake. The forest they are in is not thick, but instead resembles a plain with trees scattered about. Bright grass covers the rolling hills.

CROW

You tried to ditch me.

Tigo shakes his body to dry his wet fur. Water sprays about.

TIGO

With all the trouble we get in I should have left a long time ago.

Crow has that dumb smile.

CROW
You could have it worse.

Crow laughs to himself.

CROW
Beats being in a cage running
around on a wheel.

Tigo rolls his eyes. A branch breaks!

Tigo and Crow scans the forest, Crow grips his sheathed sword.

CROW
No break?

TIGO
Take a break when she is dead.

An arrow flies from behind a tree, it lands a few feet from Crow. Crow watches the tree. Another arrow is shot off. It lands a few yards on the opposite side of Crow.

Crow eases his stance and lets go of his sword. A little girl holds a bow, she is nine and dressed in a ragtag Ninja outfit. She prepares another arrow.

CROW
The War Born is a lot smaller than
I imagined.

Crow takes the small wooden rectangle from his pocket, he holds it out to the GIRL. The wooden panel reads "War Born".

CROW
Of course you have one of these.
It would be a war crime to kill me
if you didn't.

GIRL
I don't care!

The Girl aims her bow, but a BOY comes from behind her and pushes her bow down. He is thirteen. He wears farming clothes that are covered in soil.

BOY
Let's go.

GIRL
We could win the war!

BOY
Not if we break the treaty.

GIRL
How would anyone know!

BOY
Triceles is always watching.
Erica, I'm not going to say it
again.

ERICA
Make me!

ERICA raises her bow.

Crow approaches them. The two face Crow. Crow towers over them. The Boy shields his sister; he holds out his fists. Crow leans over to pat the Boy's shoulder.

Crow smiles kindly.

CROW
I'm Crow. This is Tigo.

Tigo pops out from Crow's shoulder.

TIGO
Hello!

Tigo waves with a warm smile.

ERICA
What is that!

Tigo tilts his head.

BOY
It's just a spell.

ERICA
Spell?

CROW
From a witch. They used to be more
common.

ERICA
I wasn't talking to you!

The Boy is cautious, Erica has anger in her eyes. Crow walks to Erica then leans behind her. He falls to his knees then lifts her bow.

CROW
Keep your bow aligned with your
body. As you aim, hold your
breath.

Crow helps Erica steady the bow.

CROW

See the tree? Hold your breath,
aim.

Erica does as Crow says, she releases the bow's string. The arrow races through the air then pierces the center of a tree. Erica's face lights up. She turns to Crow with a serious look.

ERICA

Lets go.

The Boy and Erica walk off.

TIGO

Bye! Be safe!

Tigo waves his tiny arm.

CUT TO

EXT. BORDER FOREST- SUN SETTING

The Mysterious woman hides behind a bush not far off from Crow. She peers through the spy glass.

The Mysterious woman lowers her spy glass.

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN

There goes my chance.

CUT TO

INT. SMALL FARM HOUSE- NIGHT

The dark house is lit by a dim candle. MIDAN and MWIFE stand across a small wooden table with the candle at the center. Wax drips to the table.

Mysterious woman stands across the table. Her mask is off, but the low light cloaks her face.

MWIFE

Erica could have been killed!

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN

I was watching the whole time. He wasn't going to hurt them.

Erica leans her ear against an ajar door that connects her room to the kitchen.

MIDAN

Why didn't you try to stop him!
He's the damn War Born!

MYSTERIOUS WOMAN

If I had rushed in they could have
been killed in the crossfire!

Midan slams his hands on the table. The candle knocks over, the light in the room changes. Mysterious woman's face comes into light. Her face has a sharp confidence to it. The candle brightens her light complexion.

MIDAN

Damn it MIKASA! Twenty years is more than enough time. He should be dead! A man would have taken care of this!

Mikasa steps back, she hides herself in darkness.

MIKASA

I'll bring his scalp tomorrow.

Mikasa starts to give a bow, Erica bursts through the door.

ERICA

Don't kill Mr. Crow!

MIDAN

What are you doing up!

Erica turns to FATHER with her head down.

ERICA

He is nice, and he has a cute hamster.

Midan stands.

Erica puts the candle upright. She exits quietly, but before she leaves she turns to Mikasa. Erica's eyes plead with Mikasa

MIDAN

You better finish things tomorrow.

Mikasa gives a nod. She turns, takes a few steps to the door. Mikasa fights herself, but asks.

MIKASA

Have you heard anything?

MIDAN

You know the answer.

MIKASA

Nothing?

MIDAN

I have been doing everything I can to find TAO and your mother.

Mikasa exists silently.

CUT TO

EXT. NOON PLAIN - MORNING

Crow walks through a lush plain, a few large trees are scattered about. Tigo rides on his shoulder. The grass reaches past Crow's knees.

As Crow walks, off in the distance, a Ninja star shoots out from under the grass. The star cuts the grass as it spins wildly. Crow side steps to dodge, he unsheathes his sword in the process.

CROW

You ready!

Crow searches for Mikasa. Tigo leans against Crow's neck, Tigo concentrates on their surroundings. Wind blows lightly against the tall grass.

Suddenly a large Ninja star, about a yard and a half wide, flies towards Crow from the same spot. The large star is launched ankle high, it shortens the grass as it approaches Crow.

Since the star levels the grass Crow can see the origin of the star. A metal wire trap sits where the Ninja star launched from.

TIGO

Trip wire!

Crow jumps into the air to fly over the star. Behind Crow, Mikasa emerges from the tall grass.

Mikasa has her two small katana out and is in a blue Ninja outfit that covers her face.

She spins counterclockwise and strikes with the katana in her right hand. Crow, still airborne from his jump, is trapped.

In a last second effort, Crow stabs his large sword into the ground. He pushes himself up above the sword. He holds his body in place.

Mikasa's first katana lands high on the Claymore, CLING!

While Mikasa continues her spin, she spots Crow's acrobatic move. She finishes her spin with a second strike. Her blade heads high toward Crow.

Crow turns his body in air to land onto the grass leveled by the star. Away from Mikasa. Mikasa's katana cuts his forearm as he lands, but it is only a graze.

Mikasa disappears into the grass. The wind makes a blowing sound as it moves the grass in one direction. Crow searches for Mikasa.

CROW
(To Tigo)
Lost her.

Tigo scans intensely. He spots grass that moves against the wind.

TIGO
The grass is moving against the wind!

Crow nods.

CROW
Right!

Crow dashes to the spot. He swings his Claymore. The grass is cut short. A wooden bamboo stick with multiple wires tied around it is revealed.

The bamboo stick moves back and forth. It made the grass move against the wind.

CROW
Crap!

Mikasa's head pops out a good distance away from Crow. As her head lifts above the grass, the flap of her mask that covers her face rises. Multiple needles are in her mouth.

She shoots the needles from her mouth. Mikasa immediately ducks back into the grass. Crow looks over his shoulder. He sees the needles rush toward him.

He blindly puts his Claymore behind his back. The needles zoom towards Crow, one of them heads straight to Crow's undefended neck.

Tigo spots this needle. He jumps from Crow's back and successful catches the needle in his mouth. The rest of the needles TING against the Claymore, then spin off target. Crow pivots to Mikasa's last location.

CROW
Nice save! Look for her on foot, okay?

Tigo nods his head with the needle still in his mouth. He scampers off in the grass. Mikasa crawls stealthily.

MIKASA
Dumb rat.

Crow spins while he swings his Claymore around him. His Claymore cuts a circle of shortened grass.

CROW
Waiting on you Tigo!

Crow stands guard in the center of the cleared grass. He holds his sword close to his chest. Tigo runs through the thick grass in his search for Mikasa.

Mikasa peeks up high enough to get a visual. She leans back down.

MIKASA

Don't get comfortable.

EXT. RAGNAROCKS YARD - DAY

The sledge hammer crushes a stone.

Sweat beads off Ragnarock's brow. He pants heavily as he sets another stone on a boulder.

He stands tall like Pierce did. His sharp brown eyes match his chestnut hair. Pierce's sledge hammer is in his hands.

He crushes the stone. He hustles to a large pile of stones to retrieve another.

Clay appears behind the stones. Clay looks identical to Crow; when they stand side by side, it is hard to tell them apart.

CLAY

You've been out here all day.

RAGNAROCK

Hey Clay.

Ragnarock picks a stone from the pile.

CLAY

Come have lunch with us.

RAGNAROCK

I'll eat later.

CLAY

(mocking)

Are you getting paid per stone?

RAGNAROCK

Crow needs a challenge.

Ragnarock marches to the boulder.

CLAY

He is capable.

RAGNAROCK

No.

CLAY

He took you down.

Ragnarock grins.

RAGNAROCK
I let him. He hesitated.

CLAY
How?

RAGNAROCK
When I fell, he stopped. He is soft.

Ragnarock places the stone on the boulder.

CLAY
Too soft to fight?

RAGNAROCK
He can't kill.

Ragnarock shatters the stone.

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Crow pans his surroundings. Mikasa darts up a tree not far from Crow. Crow spots her in the act.

A barrage of Ninja stars fire from the tree. They curve and twist through the air. Crow dodges with a swift dunk.

TIGO
In the tree!

CROW
Already on it!

Crow continues to dodge Mikasa's stars and knives. He moves side to side while he blocks the stars and knives that he can't dodge.

TIGO
You can't keep that up forever!

Crow rushes to the tree.

TIGO
Don't be careless!

Crow proceeds. More Ninja stars jet toward him. Crow barely steps out their way. Some of them cut his clothes as they pass. He closes in on the tree.

CROW
You can't win without guts, Tigo!

Crow dashes with mad speed as he avoids Ninja stars.

MIKASA
Show me.

Mikasa throws her Ninja stars at a more furious rate.

Crow continues his assault. He dodges the stars. Tigo spots one star that will hit Crow.

TIGO

Get back!

Crow's eyes are intense.

CROW

I got her!

A Ninja star gashes Crow's shoulder. Crow yells out in agony. Crow moves faster to the tree. He ignores the pain. Mikasa's head jolts back.

MIKASA

What? How!

Crow reaches the tree.

CROW

AAAAAHHHHH!

Crow swings his Claymore. In one swoop he cuts through the tree. Mikasa stumbles back from the branch she stands on. Crow has a sharp stare fixated on her.

Crow runs up the tree as it falls. His wooden sandals make loud CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK sounds as he bolts to Mikasa. Mikasa's eyes open wide.

MIKASA V.0.

(Her thoughts)

This is it!

Mikasa leaps back from the tree in an effort to widen the distance between them, but Crow is already too close. He jumps from the trunk in her direction. Crow forces the trunk to SLAM to the ground.

With both of them in midair, Crow swings his Claymore in a wild uppercut motion, but hesitates before his blade lands. His sword slices the side of her face. It cuts her mask off.

Mikasa lands, then leaps back to flee from Crow. Crow makes no attempt to pursue her. Instead, he gazes up at her.

Crow's face is soft. Mikasa resembles the woman on the beach from Crow's imagination.

Mikasa's eyes are large and her skin is fair. She is small in stature, but in no way fragile.

Crow imagines the beach behind her. Crow's vision swiftly fades back into reality when Mikasa lands far from Crow.

CROW

Can't be.

Mikasa studies Crow. She grips her katana.

MIKASA

What was that!

Crow is dazed, she glares back at him.

CROW

I missed.

MIKASA

I won't.

Mikasa reaches for a Ninja star, the pouch strapped to her upper leg is empty.

Crow examines her for a moment. He is in disbelief.

CROW

Then?

Mikasa squinches her eyebrows. She regains her assertiveness.

MIKASA

Don't just stand there!

CROW

Do it. End the war.

MIKASA

Why aren't you fighting back!

Crow pauses.

CROW

It will be the first kill in eight years.

MIKASA

What are you getting at?

CROW

Eight years of peace because of the treaty. Do you want to end that?

MIKASA

The treaty is a game! As soon as I win, the war will be over. The Samurai will have to obey the laws set by Oneumi!

CROW

Sounds likely. I die and the Samurai just roll over.

Mikasa ponders.

MIKASA
The Ninja would never listen.

CROW
My point.

Crow grins, he puts his hand on his head.

CROW
We could never kill each other.

Crow chuckles, but Mikasa is unamused. Tigo jumps from the grass onto Crow.

CROW
Crow, this is Tigo.

MIKASA
Mikasa.

Crow walks away.

MIKASA
Where are you going!

CROW
Think about it Mikasa, do you want to start a war or end it?

MIKASA
I can't trust you.

Mikasa's words surprise Crow.

CROW
I'll be back in a week.

MIKASA
Don't run from me coward!

Mikasa dashes a few feet forward. Crow turns swiftly, he raises his sword.

CROW
I don't trust you either.

Mikasa pauses, she stares Crow up and down.

MIKASA
You don't scare me.

Crow lowers his sword. Mikasa puts her katana down. Crow begins to walk away.

MIKASA

One week is more than enough time
to have this whole place booby
trapped.

CROW

Knock yourself out.

MIKASA

Going to let me have the advantage?

CROW

You always have traps.

MIKASA

Coward.

Crow ignores Mikasa.

MIKASA

One week.

Mikasa maintains a dominating glare.

CUT TO

INT. PALACE OF TRICELES- DAY

GARRISON rests on his lavish throne, he has this idle
expression. His palace resembles a Roman palace, beautiful
art work with marble architecture.

Garrison rests his elbow against the throne. His face leans
against his fist.

Garrison is a large forty year-old man with an impressive
amount of dark scruff that covers his jaw line. Garrison
wears fancy light leather armor, with fine pants.

Advisors and towns people bicker back and forth. They argue
about a recession. Towns people SHOUT that eight years is
too long for the economy to be crippled.

PATTON appears behind the throne. His clothes are trimmed in
gold. He is a skinny man, fragile even. Sixty four years
old, he still has a Boyish look to him.

Patton whispers into Garrison's ear. Garrison is
immediately interested. He rearranges himself in the chair
to lean in closer.

GARRISON

Still? Get the carriage ready.

PATTON

You can't possibly go yourself King
Garrison.

GARRISON

You can't possibly be giving me an order.

PATTON

There is a need for you in the palace.

GARRISON

Tedious. Real entertainment is about to start.

PATTON

I'll take your place.

GARRISON

Playing king for a week? No, you would enjoy it too much. Those days have long passed Patton.

Garrison grins to himself.

GARRISON

I want you to take the Girl in your carriage. We leave tomorrow.

PATTON

It wouldn't be proper to start a show without you.

Garrison chuckles.

GARRISON

It wouldn't be a show.

Garrison playfully smacks Patton's cheek.

GARRISON

Prepare clothes, food and the Girl.

Garrison doesn't look at Patton. Patton gives a bow.

PATTON

Yes, my lord.

Patton exists quickly.

GARRISON

Let's see if she was worth the trouble.

CUT TO

EXT. CROW'S VILLAGE- DAY

Crow walks in a forest full of bushes and small plants. The trees have massive trunks, their branches stretch to the sky.

There is plenty of walking room between the trees, their large roots surface the ground. Dirt and pine needles cover the floor.

Crow has white gauze wrapped around his shoulder. He approaches a humble village, much like a small campsite. Tents made from leather are scattered about. Fire pits blaze as meat skewers.

Children dressed in worn leather run amok. Few wear animal hats. The women and men work together to prepare food. Some skin animals. Everyone in the village has a smile.

A child sees Crow approach the village. The child glows with excitement. He sprints to Crow. Other children follow.

CHILDREN

Crow is back!

The children bombard Crow.

BOY 1

Did you do it yet!

BOY 2

Is the Ninja dead?

GIRL 1

Were you scared?

BOY 1

Crow is never scared!

Ragnarock watches with a sour expression.

GIRL 2

You're hurt!

The children admire Crow's shoulder. They collectively let out a GASP as they lean closer. Crow walks forward into the village as the children pester him. Crow gives them his attention.

CROW

It's nothing!

Ragnarock enters the group.

RAGNAROCK

Hey! Crow needs his rest. Go on!
He isn't here for leisure.

The children "AWWHH" together, then scatter.

CROW

I'll fill you in later!

Ragnarock closes in on Crow.

RAGNAROCK

What happened?

CROW

Back to visit. It's been a couple months.

RAGNAROCK

You haven't found her? What about the lead I got?

CROW

I found her. In a couple days we end it.

They march through the village.

RAGNAROCK

Why drag it out? You should be following her now! Kill her in her sleep.

Crow tries to reply but is cut off by Ragnarock's rant.

RAGNROCK

Finish it already!

CROW

...A couple days, Ragnarock. Patience.

RAGNROCK

It's been eight years since...

CROW

...What's a few days then?

Ragnarock blows hot air from his nose.

RAGNROCK

You're scared.

Crow turns violently to Ragnarock.

CROW

Say it again.

They stare each other in the eyes. A slight wind rolls by. SUSAN walks to the two with a plate of meat in her hands.

Susan has long blondish-red hair. She is a youthful twenty-eight year-old. She is petite next to the large men.

SUSAN

Crow! You are back! Eat some before it's gone.

Crow and Ragnarock greet Susan.

CROW

Susan!

Susan hands the plate to Ragnarock. He picks at the meat. Susan embraces Crow warmly.

SUSAN

Ragnarock, could you pass this out?
We have food inside.

RAGNAROCK

No problem.

SUSAN

Thank you!

Susan turns to the tent behind her. A fire blazes in front of it.

SUSAN

Clay! Guess who!

Clay emerges from the tent.

CLAY

Hey!

Clay has a wide grin. He jogs to Crow. Clay hugs his brother tightly.

CLAY

What are you doing back?

Clay notices Crow's injured shoulder.

CLAY

Playing with your sword?

CROW

This, is actually from battle.

CLAY

(Sarcastically)

Of course.

CLAY

Hop in the tent. I'll grab some wrappings.

Crow enters the tent. Crow peers out the tent at Clay and Susan. Clay grabs her playfully. Susan laughs. They share a quick kiss, then walk to get supplies.

As they walk side by side, their happiness flows from them. Crow watches with envy.

CUT TO

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Mikasa paces through the tall grass.

Mikasa picks up wire and Ninja stars. She bends down and ties a star to a wire. The aftermath of the fight is present. Grass is cut short. A tree lies on the ground.

The wind blows peacefully: it moves the grass gently. Mikasa SIGHS. Her mask is off. She relaxes.

MIKASA

Done, three days to spare.

Mikasa walks to the broken trunk. She sits on the grass with her back against the trunk. She takes the knife strapped to her leg. She grabs a stone, then sharpens the knife. A SHEE sound is made.

EXT. CROW'S WOODS - DAY

Crow sits on a small boulder, his feet press against pine needles.

His sword sits across his lap, he sharpens the blade. SHEE sounds as he loses himself in thought.

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Mikasa slides a paper from her inner chest pocket. She rests it on the grass in between her lap, it is an old letter.

A slight SHEE sound as Mikasa runs the blade across the stone. She reads aloud, to herself

MIKASA

Dear Mikasa, when you read this I
will only be an idea. Your
imagination will paint my image.

Mikasa has an empty stare. Her head wanders up from the letter. She recites words that are not hers. The SHEE sound of the blade rings faintly.

MIKASA

Do not paint a sweet picture. I
am the reason you are fighting.

CUT TO

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP- NIGHT PAST

Ten Ninja elders stand around a campfire. KATSUMI waits, she stands outside it's light. The elders murmur to each other. One says "she is our best chance".

KATSUMI V.O.

We all knew they would choose me.

A light SHEE of the blade is heard.

Katsumi steps forward, her face enters light. She is twenty. A scar runs below her left eye, a thin knife cut that curves down her cheek. Her belly is plump, fat with a child.

KATSUMI V.0.

No Ninja or Samurai measured up.
As a woman, they were infuriated.

Katsumi walks to MFATHER. Her strut has power.

KATSUMI V.0.

Samurai conspired I was a witch,
our own swear I was a fluke. It
didn't stop them from depending on
me.

Mfather hovers his hand over Katsumi's plump belly.

KATSUMI V.0.

I was phenomenon. A miracle their
pride denied.

Mfather leans in to kiss her cheek. She walks past him.

A light SHEE of the blade is heard.

INT. WOODEN HOUSE - NIGHT PAST

A small Ninja house, wood covers the home top to bottom. Ninja women rush about. Katsumi grits her teeth, sweat runs across her skin.

KATSUMI V.0.

When I was chosen your fate was
sealed. My success titled you as
the War Born Ninja.

Katsumi holds an infant. Mfather grins at the child with water in his eyes.

TAO stands on his toes. He is small for a eleven year old. His head is buzzed bald. Tao clenches a toy ship in his hand, its mast passes between his fingers.

Midan, Tao's father, watches beside him.

KATSUMI V.0.

The Ninja hated you, a Girl.

Ninjas leave the house with their heads low. One shouts "WE ARE DAMNED". Tao swings his fist at the Ninja.

KATSUMI V.0.

Your cousin Tao and your father
believed in you. Midan did his
best.

Midan grabs Tao, then smacks his cheek.

EXT. FIREFLY FOREST N - LATE DAY PAST

OVER BLACK:

KATSUMI V.O.

I left after you clung to me for
the first time. My skin folded
under your fragile fingers. Your
mother, Katsumi UMI. The demon of
the east.

FADE IN:

A light SHEE of the blade is heard.

The sun is low. The trees stretch to the sky. The forest
feels spacious, branches only spread out at the tops of the
tall trees.

CHILD MIKASA is five. Her eyes are large. child Mikasa
stands in front of Mfather.

KATSUMI V.O.

Take care of your father. Love him
for me.

Her hair stretches past her chest. Its dark shade
compliments her white face, like her mother's.

Tao watches with Midan. Tao, now sixteen, is still short
and bald.

A Ninja ELDER eases himself closer to YOUNG GARRISON. He is
the only other Ninja there. Young Garrison kneels to child
Mikasa's level.

YOUNG GARRISON

The War Born Ninja, Mikasa.

Young Garrison grins.

YOUNG GARRISON

My bets on you.

The Ninja elder stomps to Young Garrison

NINJA ELDER

Don't mock us!

YOUNG GARRISON

I'm mocking?

NINJA ELDER

We are doomed with her! The
Samurai have a healthy Boy and
we...

TAO
 ...shut up!

The Ninja elder storms off.

YOUNG GARRISON
 Do the Samurai act this way?

child Mikasa hides tears. Tao clenches his fist.

MFATHER
 Worse.

Young Garrison stops listening. He walks past Mfather.

MFATHER
 At least we still believe in
 Mikasa.

Mfather gestures to Midan and Tao.

Young Garrison walks toward the north. A group of Samurai
 wait in the distance.

The three watch Young Garrison march away.

MIDAN
 How dare you talk to an elder that
 way!

TAO
 I hate the Ninja! They're making
 MIKA cry!

MIDAN
 Tao!

TAO
 I don't want to be a damn Ninja!

MIDAN
 Wish what you want, this is who you
 are.

child Mikasa cries, her tears sink into the dirt.

The sun fades, darkness spreads.

TAO
 Everyone is obsessed with war! I
 won't be apart of it!

MIDAN
 This is a treaty.

TAO
 Treaties don't force little Girls
 to slaughter! You're all too
 wrapped up in revenge to see it!

MIDAN

Tao! You know what the Samurai
did...

TAO

...to my mother! But whose mother
died first? What father dug a hole
six feet deep first?

child Mikasa runs into the forest unnoticed. A light SHEE
of the blade is heard.

Midan attempts to cut Tao off from his rant.

MIDAN

Tao.

TAO

Which brother laid flowers over
their sister first?

MIDAN

Tao!

Midan grabs Tao by his shoulders, jolts him.

TAO

Who did what first! A hundred
years and it's hard to remember!

Tao's words affect Mfather more than he thought a Young Boy
could. Midan grips Tao's shoulders tight.

MIDAN

Do not disrespect us!

Midan smacks Tao. Tao breaks away, he hurries from his
father.

MIDAN

Where are you going!

Tao forces words through his sobs.

TAO

I'm not coming back, not until I
can end this!

MIDAN

See you at the house.

TAO

Don't! I mean it!

MIDAN

Where would you go?

TAO

The sea!

Midan waves his hands outward.

MIDAN
Go, no vessel will take you. Not
even a pirate's

Tao stomps his foot.

TAO
I'll do the taking!

Tao turns his back, he runs far.

MIDAN
He'll be back.

MFATHER
Mikasa is going to be a challenge
at that age.

Mfather glances over his shoulder. He can't find Mikasa.

A light SHEE of the blade is heard.

MFATHER
Mikasa?

MIDAN
Where'd she go?

Mfather jogs between trees, he scans around their trunks.

MIDAN
I'll look over here.

MFATHER
What about Tao?

MIDAN
Don't worry about him.

EXT. CROW'S WOODS - DAY

Crow continues to sharpen his blade. He gazes at nothing in particular.

EXT. FIREFLY FOREST S - LATE DAY PAST

The sun's last light cuts through the nearby mountains.

child Crow clings to MCrow's hip. Only five, this blonde and blue eyed Boy is not ready for his fate.

Young Garrison stares at child Crow. Young Garrison bends his knees, falls to his eye level.

child Crow tucks behind his mother's dress. MCrow pushes him forward.

YOUNG GARRISON
You are the War Born Samurai.

CHILD CROW
What is that?

YOUNG GARRISON
You're the only Samurai who
matters. Born to end a war.

CHILD CROW
How?

YOUNG GARRISON
You'll figure it out.

A Crowd of Samurai cheer on their hero.

A light SHEE of the blade is heard.

child Crow sprints to TEEN CLAY.

CHILD CROW
War Born!

TEEN CLAY
Training starts now!

TEEN PIERCE and CHILD RAGNAROCK wait behind TEEN Clay.

TEEN CLAY
Grab your sword.

child Crow nods, he runs to MCrow.

MCROW
I don't know where you left it.

child Crow peers into the forest. He sees his wooden sword.
It rests against a tree. He jogs to it.

child Crow scrambles through the dark forest. A light
appears, a firefly. child Crow watches it curve through the
air. He follows it.

More lights appear; each second another firefly glows.
child Crow beholds the light. The fireflies illuminate the
forest.

child Crow stares at this one firefly. It flies to a tree.
It lands on the dark figure beside a tree.

The figure twitches, fireflies hover above her.

The fireflies illuminate child Mikasa. She studies child
Crow, her eyes red, her cheeks damp.

child Crow gazes at her, mesmerized.

MCROW

Crow!

MCrow grabs child Crow's hand. child Crow points to child Mikasa.

CHILD CROW

Who is that?

The fireflies dim, MCrow scans the forest.

MCROW

Where?

CHILD CROW

There was an angel.

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Mikasa slices her hand.

MIKASA

AHG!

Blood runs. She sucks on the wound.

CUT TO

EXT. CROW'S WOODS - DUSK

Clay interrupts Crow's meditation.

CLAY

Crow, it's late.

INT. CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

Clay, Crow, Tigo, and Susan are inside the tent. Susan is fast asleep to the side. Tigo sleeps beside her. His hind legs kick occasionally. Clay and Crow rest near a dim fire.

The fire makes light CRACKING sounds. Tigo snores.

CROW

I had the chance.

CLAY

Why did you stall? Second thoughts?

Crow looks away.

CLAY

Nothing harder than killing someone.

CROW

How'd you manage it?

CLAY
I was protecting you, Just like
you're protecting us.

CROW
You sure?

Clay tilts his head.

CROW
If I died, you would try to avenge
me.

Clay nods.

CROW
There are Ninja who would do the
same thing if I killed the War
Born. The fighting won't stop.

CLAY
That's not your fault.

CROW
The treaty has kept us safe for
eight years. If I end the
treaty...

CLAY
... No one will be safe.

CROW
This cycle will repeat. No one
else should have to die.

CLAY
She wants you dead. You gave her a
week to prepare.

CROW
I know.

CLAY
She won't hesitate.

CROW
Got it.

CLAY
You are awfully depressing.

The two chuckle. Crow returns to a serious demeanor.

A twig SNAPS outside. Crow reacts quickly. He snatches his
sword.

CLAY
Just a twig.

Crow sits back.

CLAY

This fighting has you on edge.

Crow SIGHS.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

Ragnarock leans close to the tent. He eavesdrops on Crow's and Clay's conversation. He is on Clay's side of the tent. He can only hear Clay.

CUT TO

INT. CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

CROW

I got attacked by other Ninja.

Clay jolts.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

Ragnarock gazes at the tent. The fire inside creates shadows of Clay and Crow.

Ragnarock listens to Clay.

CLAY

Other Ninja attacked you?

Ragnarock clenches his teeth.

CUT TO

INT. CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

CROW

Only children. By Border Forest, hunting. Her heart was set on killing me.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

CLAY

Border Forest? Ninja are settling that close?

CUT TO

INT. CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

CROW
Nice kids though. Hard to see them
hate you.

Crow yawns.

CROW
I'm up too late. Night, brother.

CLAY
Here.

Clay takes off his raccoon hat, he holds it out to Crow.

CROW
Huh?

CLAY
Take it.

CROW
Your stupid hat? Keep it.

CLAY
It's good luck.

CROW
I need sleep, not luck.

Clay's eyebrows harden, his eyes demand.

CROW
I'll take it as a trophy for
winning the war, then immediately
burn it.

The two laugh.

Clay smiles, puts his hat back on.

CLAY
As long as I'm not throwing it in
your casket.

CROW
Deal.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE CLAY'S TENT - NIGHT

Ragnarock is gone. Clay's voice sounds from the tent.

CLAY
Night.

Clay puts out the fire. The forest sleeps.

CUT TO

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - EARLY MORNING

Crow strides through tall, damp grass. Tigo rides his shoulder as he scans the area with passion. A light fog covers the plains.

TIGO

Ready?

CROW

I was born ready.

TIGO

Okay tough guy!

Crow glances at Tigo.

CROW

Things might take an unexpected turn, just go with it.

TIGO

Unexpected? No, they better not, Crow!

Crow stares ahead.

Mikasa's figure appears deep in the fog. She stands on the fallen tree trunk. Her katana sticks out from the trunk.

MIKASA

Early. Eager to die?

CROW

The early bird catches the worm.

Mikasa smirks. She yanks her katana from the bark of the tree. She raises it to her forehead, the katana runs between her eyes.

MIKASA

You don't know the difference between a worm and a cobra.

Crow smirks back, impressed. A large gust of wind rolls in. Mikasa's Ninja suit flaps wildly. Tigo hangs on to Crow's vest.

The wind carries the fog away. Smoke rises from the nearby forest.

TIGO

A fire?

Mikasa turns her head sharply. Crow squints in the direction.

Mikasa investigates the smoke. She sniffs. Her eyes go wide.

MIKASA

Erica!

Mikasa jumps from the log. She dashes toward the forest.

CROW

Erica? That's...

TIGO

...The Girl with the bow!

Crow runs after Mikasa. Mikasa pivots with a Ninja star in hand.

Crow shoots his unarmed hands up.

CROW

Truce! I'm worried about her too.

She maintains eye contact as she runs.

CROW

I'll keep my distance.

MIKASA

That's a good Boy.

Crow slows. Twenty yards stand between them. Mikasa looks forward, Ninja star still in hand.

MIKASA

Get close and I won't think twice.

The two sprint to the forest. They run from the clear sky into the hellish fire and smoke.

CUT TO

EXT. BORDER VILLAGE - DAY

Border Village sits in a cleared patch of forest. The trees are wide and stand tall. The trees shade the forest floor to a dim light.

The trees on the immediate perimeter of the village lean in to the village center. They fight for sunlight. When the sun is directly above the village, sunlight bathes the village.

The wooden houses in the village are humble. They match traditional Japanese style. The village has four to five houses, all spread within walking distance.

Crow and Mikasa burst into the village from the surrounding forest. Crow keeps his distance.

Weapons are trashed about. Two houses are ablaze. Lifeless bodies lie in chaos, trails of blood trace their last movements. The fires provide the main source of bright light.

MIKASA

Crow!

Mikasa turns with hate. The villages destruction baffles Crow. Mikasa grits her teeth.

Crow remembers images from Pierce'S death. The fires that roared that night. The pain in Ragnarock's eyes.

TIGO

What is this?

CROW

A battlefield.

Mikasa unsheathes her large katana. She darts to the village's center. Crow follows Mikasa into the village. He spots a body on the ground in Samurai attire.

CROW

THORTAN?

TIGO

Don't tell me.

Mikasa squats over a bloody Ninja. She checks for vitals. Anger takes hold of Crow. He rushes to the village center.

At the village center, Crow finds Ragnarock. Ragnarock stands to the side of a house engulfed in flames.

He holds Midan's face up by the chin. He inspects the face with distaste. Crow stares at Ragnarock. Blood covers Ragnarock's hands.

CROW

Ragnarock! What are you doing?

Ragnarock pivots his head to Crow. He drops the Ninja's head disrespectfully. Ragnarock walks with a strut to Crow. Ragnarock's sledge hammer drags through the grass behind him.

RAGNAROCK

I did it. I got them back.

Crow's face twitches with rage. Mikasa holds out her katana, ready to attack.

RAGNAROCK

I overheard your brother.

CROW

Kids! They were kids Ragnarock!

Crow unsheathes his Claymore with one hand.

RAGNAROCK

They attacked you! What if their parents ordered...

CROW

...You weren't there!

RAGNAROCK

If you die, war will break out again!

CROW

You ended eight years of peace!

RAGNAROCK

I am trying to protect you!

Crow swings his sword through the air. He leans his face forward.

CROW

You did this for yourself!

Mikasa is taken aback. Ragnarock stares down at Crow as if to lecture a child.

RAGNAROCK

Crow this is about you. You're not strong enough to finish the war!

CROW

It's not your job to fight for the Samurai!

RAGNAROCK

If it was this war would be over! Everyone has waited too long!

CROW

Pierce would hate this! He had honor! Attacking a village by surprise!

RAGNAROCK

Don't speak for him. You haven't lost anything!

Mikasa bursts from the side. She sprints at Ragnarock. She grasps her large katana in her right hand and a small katana in her left. Tears run down her cheeks.

MIKASA

You're dead!

Ragnarock smirks at Mikasa.

RAGNAROCK
 AWH, the War Born Ninja.

Ragnarock has a sly look in his eye.

RAGNAROCK
 Crow, I know you can't kill her.
 I'll do it.

CROW
 Triceles will see...

RAGNAROCK
 ...I made sure they won't.

Mikasa reaches Ragnarock. She sidesteps to the left, then thrusts her right katana at Ragnarock.

Ragnarock, who still has the head of his hammer on the ground while the tip of its handle is in his right hand, leans swiftly to his left while he extends his hammer's hilt out to the right.

Mikasa's katana goes through the space between Ragnarock and the hilt of his hammer.

Mikasa is in disbelief.

MIKASA
 Fast!

Ragnarock smiles at this comment. He swiftly pulls the hilt of his hammer to him. At the same time he moves his left hand to the hilt.

Mikasa's forearm is between the hilt and his left arm. Ragnarock smashes the hilt and his arm against Mikasa's forearm. He traps her there.

Mikasa's face turns to agony.

MIKASA
 ARGHH!

Mikasa's fingers open. Her katana drops to the ground. She swings her other katana at Ragnarock, but Ragnarock stomps his right foot against Mikasa's left leg, inches above her knee.

A loud THOWMP sound echoes, Mikasa's motion halts as her left hand winds back. Her body arches forward to compensate for her leg being forced back.

Ragnarock lets go of the hilt of the hammer, then catches it with his left hand. His right palm opens as he sweeps his arm down then up in an uppercut motion. He grabs Mikasa's bent over neck with a loud SMACK sound.

Mikasa drops her sword after the impact. Ragnarock lifts Mikasa by the neck. Her feet kick in the air. Her hands try to pry Ragnarock's hand from her neck.

Ragnarock wastes no time. He crushes his left forearm into Mikasa's stomach. A SQUASH and CRACK sound ring out simultaneously, Ragnarock drives his forearm deeper into her stomach.

Ragnarock lets go of her neck, then swings his left arm up and over his shoulder. Mikasa flies through the air from the force of his arm. Ragnarock brings his arm to an outstretched position.

Mikasa's body bows over his massive forearm, then slams to the ground. As Mikasa lands on her back her body bounces back up for a moment. She SHOUTS in pain. She coughs and a small amount of blood flies into the air.

Ragnarock snatches his sledge hammer with his right hand, its hilt faces up. He lifts it quickly then slams the head of the hammer onto a katana. The katana SNAPS like a twig.

He paces to Mikasa. She tries to stand but falls. The head of the hammer drags through the grass.

He lifts the massive hammer up with his right hand. He arches it over his body to bring it down on Mikasa. She struggles to move. The hammer plunges to Mikasa.

A loud TING sound rings. Crow stands above Mikasa. His sword pushes against the head of the hammer and its wooden shaft. Crow uses his free hand to push the flat part of his blade into the hammer.

Crow struggles to force the hammer back. Mikasa looks up bewildered. Ragnarock's head snaps back in surprise.

CROW

Don't you dare!

Mikasa is in shock. Crow immediately follows with a kick to Ragnarock's stomach, but Ragnarock jumps back to avoid the kick.

RAGNAROCK

Turned on your own?

Ragnarock's lips quiver.

RAGNAROCK

For the bloody one you're supposed to kill?

CROW

I decide who I am to kill.

RAGNAROCK

I should have been the War Born.

Ragnarock raises his hammer.

RAGNAROCK

You don't deserve it. I'll rip the title from you.

Ragnarock is about to rush Crow. But Crow rushes first.

TIGO

Wait, Crow! Think!

Tigo doesn't finish his sentence because Crow thrashes his shoulder back. Tigo falls from his shoulder.

CROW

You want my title!

Crow unleashes a wild swing at Ragnarock. Ragnarock hops back to avoid it. He lifts his hammer to his chest to defend himself from Crow's onslaught.

CROW

Take it!

Crow makes haste, He closes in and delivers an upward slice with his sword. Ragnarock is barely able to turn his hammer, he blocks the strike. Crow isn't phased. He winds back his sword to thrust it at Ragnarock's chest.

Ragnarock is stunned for a moment. He retreats from Crow's thrust. The thrust barely pierces Ragnarock's vest before he is able to clear enough room. The sword leaves a slit on his chest.

Ragnarock's cocky demeanor is gone. He studies Crow with caution.

CROW

Weak! I'll show you I can kill!

RAGNAROCK

Stop bluffing!

Crow assaults Ragnarock. Ragnarock is preemptive and swings his massive hammer down at Crow. Crow spins to his side. Ragnarock's hammer crashes inches away from Crow's feet.

Crow swings his sword high at Ragnarock's neck. Ragnarock ducks to avoid the high swing, but Crow spins with the motion of his sword to rotate again.

As the spin finishes, Crow delivers a brutal kick to Ragnarock's face.

Ragnarock flies into the air as Crow's foot lands. Ragnarock hits the ground then rolls back to his feet. He kept his hammer despite the blow. Blood pours from Ragnarock's nose.

CROW

Revenge has made you sick.

Crow closes the distance on Ragnarock, Crow leaps at Ragnarock. Ragnarock flees to the side, but for once is too slow. Crow swings, blood sprays.

Crow's sword makes a loud slash sound as it gashes Ragnarock's upper biceps. Ragnarock's eyes shut. Mikasa watches with her head turned, still on the ground. She is flabbergasted.

RAGNAROCK

ARGHH!

Ragnarock puts pressure on his gash. Crow lands from his leap. Crow faces Ragnarock. Crow is calm. Blood pours down Ragnarock's arm, it curves around his defined biceps and forearm.

RAGNAROCK

You're dead, Crow!

Ragnarock panics at the sight of his wound.

RAGNAROCK

Lucky shot!

Ragnarock lifts his hammer, but after a short struggle to hold it, he drops it. Crow stands tall.

CROW

It's over Ragnarock.

Crow takes a deep breath.

CROW

I'm taking you to the court house.
If they deal with you, hopefully,
the violence will stop here.

RAGNAROCK

Don't be stupid! That won't be
enough! The Ninja will want more!

CROW

Whose fault is that!

RAGNAROCK

You can fix this! Just finish it!

Ragnarock leans his head at Mikasa. Mikasa is on all fours. Blood drips from her lip.

RAGNAROCK

It's easy. She's right there,
ready. This war will be over. One
person has to die, then everyone
can live in peace.

Crow examines Mikasa. His sword still in hand.

RAGNAROCK

I'll go with you to the court
house. I'll do anything. Please,
finish her.

Crow paces to Mikasa. Mikasa stares, her hair covers parts of her sharp eyes. She reaches to her leg, thin needles are strapped to her thigh. Ragnarock has a vision of Pierce being stuck with those same needles.

RAGNAROCK

If you were on the ground, and she
stood above you, would she think
twice? The promise you made me that
night, it's here.

Mikasa forces her head up to Crow. Her heads twitches, she fights to stay conscious. She hears laughs, her eyes fog. She shuts her eyes.

EXT. MIKASA'S PAST - DAY

A group of Young children enjoy a cliff's view. Trees are scattered about to the left and right, but none too high to block the view of the sky. Young Mikasa has her hair tied in a bun. She is seven. Her eyes are large.

The other children are the same age. Boy 3 points to the sky.

BOY 3

No one will be able to beat me! I
will be the strongest Ninja ever!

GIRL 3

I'm gonna see the Grand Palace in
Triceles.

GIRL 4

Me too! And have a castle on the
beach!

BOY 3

You can't have a castle on the
beach!

BOY 4

I want two castles on the beach!

The children exclaim back and forth. They demand each other's attention. Young Mikasa observes them as they go back and forth.

Boy 3 turns to Young Mikasa.

BOY 3

Mikasa, what about you?

Young Mikasa blushes, she looks around nervously.

GIRL 4

Tell us!

All of the children focus on Young Mikasa. Young Mikasa stares at her feet. With a burst of courage she lifts her head.

YOUNG MIKASA

I'm going to find my mother!

All of the children are quiet.

BOY 4

Your mom?

Some of the children begin to laugh.

GIRL 3

Isn't she dead?

Young Mikasa's face drops immediately. Her eyes water.

BOY 3

That's dumber than having a castle
on the beach!

The children laugh.

Young Mikasa's head falls. She holds in her tears, then looks up assertively.

YOUNG MIKASA

My dad said she is lost! My mom
will come back or I will find her
myself!

The children go quiet. Some chuckle.

BOY 4

Have you tried using a shovel?

The children laugh. Young Mikasa squats. She can't hold her tears anymore.

The children make harsh comments. Some about Mikasa's mom, others about how sand couldn't hold the weight of a castle. Their voices mix together and drown out. Young Mikasa cries to herself.

CUT TO

INT. MIKASA'S HOUSE - DAY PAST

Young Mikasa squats while she cries, she is inside a small wooden house. The house has large windows that let in plenty of light.

Young Mikasa leans on the wooden legs of a table. Mfather enters and sees his daughter. Mfather has a warm expression.

MFATHER

Whats the matter, angel?

Young Mikasa tries to dry up her tears.

YOUNG MIKASA

Nothing.

Young Mikasa turns her head from Mfather in an attempt to shut him out. Mfather walks to her slowly, he holds her tight.

MFATHER

Little angel, you can't keep secrets from me.

Young Mikasa begs Mfather.

YOUNG MIKASA

I want mom to come back so everyone in training will know she is still alive.

Mfather is taken back for a second.

MFATHER

Those kids have no idea. Your mom is still out there, she was the best Ninja in the entire clan, beat out the men too. But she needs time to come back.

Young Mikasa's face regains some color.

YOUNG MIKASA

We can go rescue her!

Mfather smiles, he lets go of Young Mikasa. He pours water into dry rice. A plant sits near the window.

YOUNG MIKASA

Daddy?

Mfather responds while he works on the rice.

MFATHER

Yes, angel?

YOUNG MIKASA

What was your mom like? Did she love you?

Mfather stops. The room is quiet. Mfather turns with a calm tone.

MFATHER

My mom wasn't always around either.

Young Mikasa's eyes fall.

MFATHER

But.

Young Mikasa's eyes lift.

MFATHER

Love, no matter where it comes from, is the only thing you need to be happy. Does daddy love you?

YOUNG MIKASA

Very much so!

MFATHER

That's right! That's all you need angel.

Young Mikasa smiles, she ponders.

YOUNG MIKASA

Daddy, what is love?

MFATHER

Love is made up of many parts. It's a complicated thing.

YOUNG MIKASA

What is one part?

MFATHER

What is one of the parts of love?

YOUNG MIKASA

Yea.

Mfather takes a moment.

MFATHER

The first part of love is trust.

YOUNG MIKASA

Trust?

MFATHER

Yes, but not just trusting someone to keep a secret. It's more than that. It's like.

Mfather searches the kitchen. He spots the small potted plant near the window.

MFATHER

Like this.

Mfather picks up the potted plant. He brings it to Young Mikasa. Young Mikasa inspects the plant.

YOUNG MIKASA

Like a plant?

Mfather chuckles.

MFATHER

This is my favorite plant. It is important that it gets water and some sun everyday. Take care of it now.

YOUNG MIKASA

You trust me?

MFATHER

Smart Girl.

Young Mikasa slowly takes the small potted plant from her father.

MFATHER

Trusting someone with what is important to you, that is a part of love.

Young Mikasa gives her father a smile. The plant rests in her hands.

YOUNG MIKASA

Did mom trust you with anything?

Mfather smiles with love.

MFATHER

She trusted me with you.

Young Mikasa's eyes gaze at Mfather.

MFATHER

Trusts me with this little angel!

Mfather picks up Young Mikasa. He spins her around as her feet dangle.

CUT TO

EXT. BORDER VILLAGE - DAY

Fire ROARS. Mikasa forces her eyes open. Crow still stands above her, not a second passed.

CROW

You're right.

RAGNAROCK

I'm proud of you Crow.

Crow lifts his sword, he glances back at Ragnarock.

CROW
I was bluffing.

Mikasa smirks. Fury fills Ragnarock.

RAGNAROCK
I won't let you condemn the
Samurai!

Ragnarock snatches his hammer with his left arm. Blood pours from the open wound. Ragnarock lets the blood cloak him.

CROW
You're finished! Accept it.
Salvage your honor!

Ragnarock charges Crow. Crow glares confidently at Ragnarock. Crow brings his sword back, he takes a stance.

RAGNAROCK
You haven't won yet, Crow!

In mid-run Ragnarock launches his hammer at Crow. Crow's face is thrown into shock, he barely gets his Claymore up in time to block the hammer.

The force of the hammer knocks Crow's sword from his hands. Crow's sword crashes to the ground. Ragnarock slams his open palm against Crow's neck. Ragnarock hits Crow hard, Ragnarock winds his hand back swiftly.

Crow's head snaps back from the impact. Crow CHOKES. He forces his head forward. As Crow's head moves forward, Ragnarock's fist collides with Crow's face.

Crow flies back, then rolls on the ground. Crow lays on his side. He gasps for air. Ragnarock retrieves his hammer.

Ragnarock strolls, he lets his hammer's head drag. Mikasa struggles to crawl to them, still badly injured. Ragnarock stands above Crow.

A house blazes behind Ragnarock. Crow sees his dark silhouette approach.

Tigo dashes up a nearby tree with a broken katana shard in his mouth. Tigo slaps his chest halfway up the trunk.

The boost machine makes a loud THUD as it springs against the tree. Tigo soars to Ragnarock as he positions the broken blade. Ragnarock veers his head to Tigo.

He mutters.

RAGNAROCK
Filthy rodent.

Ragnarock, with one fell swoop backhands Tigo from the air. Tigo's limp body rolls to the center of the village.

Crow tries to yell out but is voiceless. Crow crawls away, like this injured animal in an attempt to flee from the hunter. Ragnarock stomps Crow's lower back.

RAGNAROCK

Salvage some honor, worm!

Ragnarock lifts his hammer. Crow is helpless.

CROW

(Whisper)

Clay.

Ragnarock lets out a brutal war CRY then swings his hammer down. As the hammer falls, a CHEE sound is heard. The hammer lands above Crow's head.

Crow glares up to see Ragnarock in pain. An arrow sticks out of his knee. CHEE! Another arrow Pierces Ragnarock's knee, he HOWLS violently.

Not far off, hidden within the forest, stands Erica. Erica fires a third arrow at Ragnarock. It lands above the last. Ragnarock falls to his knees.

Ragnarock's eyes are wide open in despair. Crow is on his hands and knees, he raises his head.

RAGNAROCK

I, I can't move my legs.

CROW

Must be hard for you to lose to a little girl.

Ragnarock smiles.

RAGNAROCK

Better than losing to you.

Ragnarock falls to the ground. He passes out from blood loss.

Crow picks himself up, he waves to Erica. Erica gives a nod back. Her brother and mother appear behind her.

Crow struggles to stand. He stumbles to Tigo. He kneels to shake Tigo.

CROW

Tigo! Tigo can you hear me?

Tigo's lifeless body wags back and forth.

CROW

Tigo! Come on Tigo!

Crow's face drops. There is a short pause. Nothing can be heard other than the nearby fires.

Tigo pops up to his feet in a chipper motion. Crow's face shows instant relief.

TIGO

That's what you get for knocking me down!

CROW

You think faking dead is good pay back for a little shoulder bump!

TIGO

How many times do I save you! That's how you repay me?

CROW

You have never saved me.

TIGO

You never catch me!

CROW

You're not important.

TIGO

I must be!

Tigo grabs a blade of grass. He shakes it back and forth.

TIGO

(mocking)

Tigo! No don't die!

CROW

Some of my acting.

Crow COUGHS in pain. His body leans forward. Tigo examines him in disbelief.

TIGO

Your acting is terrible.

Crow falls to his hands and knees.

ERICA

Mom! Why! Not Mr. Crow!

Behind Crow is Mwife. She holds a needle that sticks from Crow's side.

MWIFE

Look at our village! They killed your father!

ERICA

Crow didn't!

MWIFE

He is one of them!

ERICA

He's different!

MWIFE

He is the War Born! Mikasa can say she killed him! The war will be over!

ERICA

No mom, that's a lie!

Mwife bursts into tears. She picks up Erica who scrambles to break free. Mwife hurries away, Erica calls over her mom's shoulder.

ERICA

I'm sorry MR. Crow! I know you're different! MR. Crow I'm sorry!

MOM)

(In tears)

Hurry up TADE!

The Boy, TADE, studies Crow for a moment then hurries to Mwife. They exit into the forest.

Tigo runs around Crow to inspect the wound. The needle is covered in white sap.

TIGO

Crow! They're poisoned!

CROW

Feels like it.

TIGO

Crow!

Mikasa runs to them. She slides down, then sits crisscross next to Crow. She fetches a pouch from her hip, her fingers rummage through it.

TIGO

What are you doing?

Mikasa doesn't look at Tigo. She pours out a few dried leaves from the pouch. She mashes them up in her hand. She removes the needle, then shoves the crushed leaves into Crow's wound.

CROW

ARGGHH!

TIGO

What is that?

Mikasa focuses on the wound.

MIKASA

An antidote.

Mikasa rubs the leaves around the wound. She presses forcefully. Crow WAILS.

TIGO

Why are you helping?

Mikasa gives Tigo a sharp look.

MIKASA

Would you rather me not?

TIGO

No! It's great but you're supposed to kill him.

MIKASA

Don't tell me what I am supposed to do.

Mikasa returns to the wound. Crow CRIES out.

MIKASA

Baby!

Mikasa presses against the wound. She faces Tigo.

MIKASA

He saved me.

Mikasa tends to the wound, then pauses.

MIKASA

I owe him.

Mikasa inspects the wound.

MIKASA

Then, back to killing him.

Tigo wants to protest, but can't find the words.

MIKASA

All done.

Mikasa begins to stand up, but Crow falls onto her lap. Mikasa is stunned.

CROW

What is this?

Mikasa peers down at him as his head is in her lap.

MIKASA

It's a side effect of the antidote.
And you have lost blood.

Crow has an intoxicated smile.

CROW

Really! Is Tigo bothering you? He
bothers me constantly.

Mikasa laughs slightly. She hides it.

CROW

You know.

MIKASA

What?

CROW

You remind me.

Tigo gazes at Crow with his mouth ajar.

CROW

You look just like it.

Crow's words fade in and out. He fights to keep conscious.
The noon sun shines strongly, it fills the village with warm
light.

CROW

Mikasa.

The sun gives Mikasa a heavenly glow.

MIKASA

Yes?

CROW

An angel.

Mikasa's mouth hangs. Crow passes out. Crow lays
motionless in Mikasa's lap. The warmth engulfs them.

CUT TO

EXT. WALL OF TRICELES - DAY

A stone wall separates an open field from the Crowded city.
A line of over thirty carriages wait to exit the city.
People yell and holler at the line. The carriages are at a
dead stop.

A KNIGHT argues with a SAMURAI outside the gate. Carriages
wait for the Knight's permission to exit.

KNIGHT

Samurai and Ninja are prohibited by
the treaty.

SAMURAI

Please, there is no village nearby,
I need food.

Garrison leans his head out of his carriage. Patton's carriage is behind Garrison's. It is jet black and has three horses tied to it. Garrison WHISTLES.

DEADLY WOMAN steps out from Patton's carriage. She wears loose fabric, a tan hood covers her face.

Patton looks out the carriage.

GARRISON

Stay there Patton.

Garrison hops out of the carriage. He strolls confidently to the Knight and Samurai.

KNIGHT

Maybe I can get you some bread.

SAMURAI

Thank you! Bless you!

Garrison is close. The Knight notices his presence. The Knight immediately bows.

KNIGHT

LORD Garrison! How may I assist
you?

While the Knight bows, Garrison makes a signal with his hand. Deadly Woman snatches the Knight's sword from his sheath. She slides it into the Knight's stomach.

GARRISON

Stop wasting my time.

Deadly Woman removes the blade from the Knight's limp body. Garrison glides to the Samurai. The Samurai quivers, he watches blood drip off the sword.

GARRISON

This is, over your head. In
Triceles we work as a business.
Ever hear that time is money?

Samurai stares at the sword. Garrison's presence petrifies the Samurai.

GARRISON

Time is money, have you heard of
that!

Samurai nods spastically.

GARRISON

You're wasting my time.

Garrison waits for Samurai to respond. Nothing.

GARRISON

So you're wasting my money. What does a business need to survive?

Knight's leg twitches behind Garrison. Samurai is in shock.

GARRISON

I can't do this.

Garrison eases in.

GARRISON

Hungry?

The Samurai nods cautiously.

GARRISON

Steel goes down smooth.

Garrison signals again, Deadly Woman slides the sword into the Samurai's stomach. Blood spurts out, some of it lands on Garrison's hand. Samurai falls to his knees. Garrison crouches to Samurai's level, pats him on the shoulder.

GARRISON

Don't be afraid to ask for seconds.

Garrison stands. Samurai falls back, the sword sticks from his stomach. Two new Knights enter from the wall. They bow to Garrison.

Garrison walks to one. Knight 2 wears a longsleeved cloth shirt with metal padding. Garrison wipes his bloody hand off on the sleeve.

GARRISON

I trust you will perform in a timely manner.

KNIGHT 2

Yes, Lord!

Garrison walks past Knight 2 to his carriage. Knight 2 quickly proceeds to let the carts through without inspection. Garrison calmly enters his closed carriage.

Garrison grabs a bowl of bread from the center of the cart. He leans out to Deadly Woman. She walks to Patton's carriage.

GARRISON

Do you want any of this?

DEADLY WOMAN

No.

GARRISON

I'm sick of it too.

Garrison blindly tosses the basket from the carriage.

CUT TO

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Crow stands next to a large wooden wagon. Ragnarock is restrained in the wagon. A gag immobilizes his mouth. Mikasa is a few yards from Crow, her weapons sheathed. Tigo sits on Crow's shoulder.

MIKASA

How long?

CROW

I'm taking him north, about four days.

MIKASA

I have to wait again.

CROW

(sarcasm)

Did you want to come along?

Mikasa raises her eyebrows, she lets them set on Crow.

MIKASA

I'm tired of you delaying.

CROW

What's stopping you?

MIKASA

I don't want you to hold back.

CROW

Killing each other won't solve anything!

MIKASA

Neither will running away. You should do what you were born to do.

CROW

I won't cause anymore death. Samurai or Ninja.

Mikasa wants Crow to convince her.

CROW

We can end the war by working together.

MIKASA

Nonsense.

CROW
Force our people to work alongside
each other, like they did in Haven!

MIKASA
Haven is history.

CROW
It happened once, it could happen
again! Peace is possible, it
starts with us!

Mikasa starts to give a little. Crow picks up on this.

CROW
These eight years could be
extended. We could keep the treaty
in play.

MIKASA
Only for so long. What will that
do?

CROW
children will grow up, have their
own families. Those kids will have
no reason for war.

Mikasa ponders.

MIKASA
I can't trust you.

CROW
I can prove myself.

MIKASA
Bring back his trail record.

CROW
Proof of death.

MIKASA
And leave the talking rat with me.

CROW
Tigo?

MIKASA
Trust goes both ways.

TIGO
Huh!

Crow snatches Tigo up from his back.

CROW
 (To Tigo)
 I told you we might have an
 unexpected turn.

TIGO
 This is more than a turn!

Tigo is cut off when Crow hurls him at Mikasa. Tigo flies through the air as he struggles. Mikasa catches Tigo.

TIGO
 Crow, did you see that!

Crow tilts his head.

TIGO
 (sarcasm)
 She caught me! You should ask her
 what her secret is!

Mikasa holds Tigo up by the scruff of his neck.

MIKASA
 Quiet, rat.

Mikasa playfully flicks Tigo on his head.

TIGO
 OWW! Watch those tubby fingers!

Mikasa's glare frightens Tigo.

Tigo rubs his head with his paws.

CROW
 I am trusting you. That rat is
 important to me.

TIGO
 Told you!

Crow lifts the wagon.

CROW
 Don't be annoying.

The wooden wheels of the wagon turn roughly through the grass. Ragnarock sits motionless.

CUT TO

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Garrison reads through a ledger book. His tent is fire-lit and is as large as a small house. He is absorbed in his work. A shadow appears outside the tent.

PATTON

Garrison?

GARRISON

Lord Garrison.

Garrison jots a numbers in his book. Patton waits, he feels awkward.

PATTON

Lord Garrison?

Garrison shuts his book.

GARRISON

AHH, yes please come in.

PATTON

The War Borns are a problem.

GARRISON

Elaborate.

PATTON

Our spies were killed. A Ninja village has been decimated. Our reports say that the two worked together to stop the attack.

Garrison looks up from his book.

GARRISON

They are a liability.

PATTON

We have their locations, at the moment they are split up.

Garrison returns to his book.

GARRISON

It's obvious they will meet again. That will do.

CUT TO

EXT. ROCKY PATH - NIGHT

A campfire blazes under a full moon. Ragnarock sits in the wagon, his gag is off. Ragnarock's somber eyes gaze into the distance. Crow takes meat from the fire. He salts it. Ragnarock is tied down at the waist.

RAGNAROCK

Venison?

Crow jolts slightly. He fights the urge to ignore Ragnarock.

CROW
Slow cooked.

RAGNAROCK
My favorite.

Crow puts the meat on a flat stone. He takes a small knife from his side. He cuts the meat in half.

RAGNAROCK
I know you don't owe me anything.

Crow slides the stone with the meat on it to Ragnarock. Ragnarock plays with the meat. Crow sits a few feet away on a rock. He eats.

RAGNAROCK
Tomorrow, my last name is Pierce.

Crow shakes his head.

RAGNAROCK
Please.

Ragnarock waits for Crow to respond. After a pause Ragnarock nibbles at the meat.

CROW
I have lost a lot in this war.

Ragnarock swallows.

CROW
I lost your brother, I also lost you.

Ragnarock stares at Crow.

CROW
After that day you changed. You became full of hate.

Ragnarock's head falls.

CROW
You were my friend.

Ragnarock drops the meat. His eyes water.

CUT TO

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The courthouse isn't actually a house; instead it is a lifted wooden stage in a cleared forest. The noose hangs in the middle of the stage. Stairs lead to the noose.

On the left of the stage is an elderly Samurai man, easily recognized as the JUDGE. Two large Samurai stand at the

back of the stage. They wear black masks.

A small audience sits on wooden benches. Crow is in the middle of the rows, mixed in with the Crowd.

Ragnarock is on his knees behind the stage. The executioners lift Ragnarock, they place him under the noose. Ragnarock is motionless. The executioners manipulate his body like a doll.

JUDGE

Ragnarock Pierce, You have failed to provide a defense. The court accepts the accusations against you.

Ragnarock's head is cast down.

JUDGE

For your war crimes, you are sentenced to hang from the neck until dead.

The Judge signals the executioners.

JUDGE

Prepare the noose. Ragnarock Pierce, now is the time for last words.

Before the executioners are able to approach Ragnarock, he turns to them.

RAGNAROCK

I got it.

Ragnarock grabs the noose. He puts it over his neck, then tightens it.

JUDGE

This is your only chance.

Ragnarock raises his head. His eyes burn into Crow. Crow stares back at Ragnarock with sympathy. Ragnarock's eyes brim with emotion; they hold rage on the verge of tears.

RAGNAROCK

I would choose this again Crow!
You will feel the pain I feel! We
are no different! If your brother
fell,

Ragnarock grits his teeth. He doesn't want to cry, but does.

RAGNAROCK

Our only difference would be the
names we hold!

A second goes by, the executioner pulls a lever. The rope is pulled tight.

Ragnarock is not shown hanged. Crow watches the stage. He can't look away. He fights to turn. He can't.

CUT TO

EXT. NOONS PLAIN- DAY

Mikasa sits against a tree with Tigo in front of her. Mikasa sharpens a knife.

TIGO

Every day you sharpen knives and set traps? That's it?

MIKASA

I can find you a running wheel.

TIGO

You're worse than Crow!

MIKASA

Ninja are more methodical than Samurai. We take time to prepare.

Mikasa taps her forehead a few times with her index finger.

MIKASA

We use our brains.

Tigo lies down, he studies the sky.

TIGO

Do you ever visit family?

MIKASA

No family.

TIGO

Friends?

MIKASA

None.

TIGO

You never had anyone you cared about?

MIKASA

My father.

TIGO

What was he like?

MIKASA

Nice.

TIGO

This is a compelling conversation.

Mikasa leans over Tigo. She lifts her hand.

MIKASA

Rats shouldn't have conversations.

Mikasa flicks him on his head.

TIGO

AWH!

Mikasa has a mischievous smile.

TIGO

Did your father teach you to be
cruel?

MIKASA

I taught myself. He focused on
other things.

TIGO

Like what?

Mikasa ponders.

CUT TO

INT. MIKASA'S HOUSE FLASH BACK - DAY

Young Mikasa cries in the corner. She grips a potted plant.
The plant is withered. Mfather enters the house.

MFATHER

What is it? Training?

YOUNG MIKASA

No.

MFATHER

Let me see.

Mfather walks to Young Mikasa. Young Mikasa hides the plant
with her body.

Mikasa falls to her knees. She holds the plant out.
Mfather shows relief.

YOUNG MIKASA

I watered it every day!

MFATHER

It's okay...

YOUNG MIKASA

...You really cared about it!

MFATHER

Mikasa, It's...

YOUNG MIKASA

...I broke your trust! Do you still love me?

MFATHER

That's a silly...

YOUNG MIKASA

...are you going to leave like mom?

Mfather becomes stern.

MFATHER

Mikasa.

Young Mikasa snaps out of her tantrum. She stares at Mfather, her cheeks are red.

MFATHER

Remember, love has more than one part.

Young Mikasa nods.

MFATHER

The other part doesn't have a name.

Young Mikasa wipes her cheek.

MFATHER

When you are sad, I feel sad too. Even though something I liked is gone, I'm more worried about you.

YOUNG MIKASA

Why are you sad?

MFATHER

If you are sad, I am sad. When you are happy, I am happy. You control my heart.

YOUNG MIKASA

What about mom's heart?

Mfather is infected with a large smile. Young Mikasa catches the virus. Mfather sweeps Young Mikasa up into his arms.

MFATHER

She was under your spell angel!

Mfather swings Young Mikasa around. The two laugh.

TIGO V.0.

Hello!

CUT TO

EXT. NOONS PLAIN - DAY

Mikasa is thrown back into reality.

TIGO

How was your trip!

Mikasa threatens Tigo with her finger.

TIGO

Sorry! Sorry!

Mikasa slowly brings her hand back to her side.

TIGO

What did your father teach you?

MIKASA

Love.

Tigo is surprised, he gives a chipper smile.

CUT TO

EXT. ROCKY PATH - DAY

A dirt path weaves through hilly terrain. Boulders protrude from the hills that hug the path. Crow hikes down the rough trail. He has a solemn look. Shrubbery lines the path.

Crow turns the corner of a large stone, he sees Mikasa. Crow jogs to her.

CROW

What are you doing here?

Mikasa waits till Crow reaches her.

MIKASA

I could not stand this rat.

Mikasa tosses Tigo, he waves about. Crow reaches out to catch him, but fails. Mikasa laughs.

TIGO

Are you serious! She is two feet away!

CROW

I wasn't ready!

Tigo climbs up Crow's shoulder. A silence sets in.

A shrub moves unnaturally, it is to the side of a large boulder. Mikasa spots the movement, she keeps an eye fixated on the boulder.

A carriage kicks up dirt as the wooden wheels fight the rocky terrain. Crow watches the carriage speed toward him.

Garrison's carriage halts about a dozen yards from them. Garrison waits for the dirt to settle, he emerges from the wagon's cloth walls.

GARRISON

How precious.

Crow stares blankly at Garrison. Mikasa keeps an eye on the boulder, but addresses Garrison. He hops from the carriage, dirt covers his fancy boots.

GARRISON

Both War Borns having an afternoon chat. A cute little tale.

Crow senses Garrison's vile nature.

CROW

Who are you?

GARRISON

You don't know?

CROW

Should I?

MIKASA

He's Garrison, King of Triceles.

CROW

King?

GARRISON

Pleasure to meet you. Though I have already meet you.

Garrison holds his hand out to measure Crow's height as a child.

GARRISON

This tall, but hell, I thought you would turn out smarter.

CROW

What do you want?

Garrison grins.

GARRISON

Good, straight to the point. I'm going to count to ten. If one of you isn't watching your life flash before yours eyes, then I'll make it happen.

Garrison makes "air quotations" when he says "watching your life flash before your eyes".

Mikasa grips her katana, Crow tilts his head. He strains to understand Garrison's wit.

CROW

What?

Garrison is shocked by Crow's stupidity.

GARRISON

You have ten seconds to kill each other.

Crow unsheathes his blade, points it at Garrison.

CROW

Why do you care?

Mikasa stays silent, she looks back at the boulder.

GARRISON

You're bothering me kid. Ten seconds.

Garrison studies the two, he SIGHS.

GARRISON

One.

Crow watches Mikasa, she doesn't move.

GARRISON

Two.

Crow smiles.

GARRISON

Three.

Crow faces Garrison, his broad smile angers Garrison.

GARRISON

Ten.

Garrison places a foot on his carriage, he WHISTLES.

CROW

I thought you were going to kill us.

GARRISON

I misspoke. The False Born will have the pleasure.

A man whips the horses. The carriage wheels away.

GARRISON

Enjoy yourselves.

Garrison waves sarcastically. He swings himself into the carriage as it races off.

Crow looks to Mikasa.

CROW

Do you have any idea?

Mikasa readies her blades. A short spear flies above the boulder. It cannon balls toward Crow.

MIKASA

Get down Crow!

A wooden sheath slams into Mikasa's jaw. She fumbles to the side. Crow rolls under the spear. The three stand in a triangle formation, evenly spaced from each other.

FALSE BORN stands before them. She wears light Ninja robes, fur patches decorate the robes. A large hood covers her face. She has two katana, each sheathed on the sides of her hip.

The katana measure up to Crow's Claymore, but are thinner. Their sheathes are plain wood. Their brown shade matches her skin. They are loosely tied to her hip with thick rope.

Mikasa wipes blood from her lip. Her small katana hangs in her hand.

MIKASA

That was a mistake!

CROW

The False Born.

FALSE BORN

What a dumb name.

The False Born removes her hood. Her hair is chestnut brown. She is the same age as Mikasa and Crow. She has light freckles that fade into her brown complexion.

CROW

Why the name?

FALSE BORN

My mother is a Samurai and father is a Ninja. Opposite of you pure breeds.

The False Born yawns.

FALSE BORN

I'm his trump card or something.

Mikasa sneaks her hand down to snatch three Ninja stars from her side.

CROW
Why would you follow Garrison?

FALSE BORN
Not my choice.

The False Born dashes to Crow.

CROW
Wait!

Crow raises his sword. He charges the False Born, he plans to plow her to the dirt. Mikasa takes advantage of the moment. She releases three Ninja stars.

The False Born leaps upward. Two Ninja stars pass under her. One star curves upward. The False Born flips in the air while she catches the star. Crow is under the False Born, she sends the star at his open back.

MIKASA
Run!

Crow runs forward. He barely evades the star. When he hears the star hit the ground he spins to face the False Born.

FALSE BORN
You're clever, but cowards usually are.

Crow swings his sword wildly through the air. He rushes at the False Born. She smiles tactfully.

MIKASA
She is egging you on!

Crow ignores Mikasa. Mikasa bites her lip, her body fights the urge to stop Crow. She springs forward. Crow reaches the False Born. He delivers a wild horizontal swing.

The False Born slides under his swing. She stands behind Crow. She mule kicks Crow's back. Crow fights to maintain his balance as he stumbles forward.

The False Born has positioned herself a few feet from Mikasa.

FALSE BORN
I was egging you on.

Crow pivots sharply. He charges at the False Born's back. Mikasa draws her katanas in panic; she guards herself from the False Born.

The False Born grabs one of her sheathed katanas, Mikasa watches the False Born's hands.

Crow closes in on the False Born; Mikasa is inches away. The False Born eases part of her blade from its sheath. Mikasa crosses her blades downward; she expects the False Born to strike upward.

Instead the False Born squats below Crow's attack. Crow swings horizontally at Mikasa. Crow's eyes pop; he can't stop his sword.

Mikasa reacts quickly; she repositions her blades.

A TING sounds off as Mikasa blocks Crow's swing, but she loses her small katana in the process. The False Born hops up, still between them.

With each hand on one of her large katanas the False Born rotates. Her sheathed katanas rise up with the spin. Each katana smacks Crow and Mikasa across their heads.

Mikasa and Crow stumble back; they flee a safe distance from the False Born. The False Born is fine with this; she inspects her hand, as if to find something new.

CROW
(To Tigo)
She's playing us!

TIGO
You two are gonna kill each other!

MIKASA
She hasn't even drawn her swords!

Mikasa pants. She stands on the other side of the False Born.

MIKASA
(To herself)
Think of something.

Tigo spots a black carriage in the distance. It is Patton's.

CUT TO

EXT. DAMP CAMPSITE - DAY

Garrison marches through the grass, each step lets water out like a sponge. His boots quickly muddy and dampen. Knights wait for Garrison's orders.

Garrison foot slips in the mud.

GARRISON
Who picked this bloody campsite?

The Knights look about, they try their best not to convey any guilt.

Garrison digs up a handful of mud. He smears the mud across a Knight's face and eyes.

GARRISON

Pick up the bodies in half an hour.
You are all off for now, I'm not
going to pay you to watch them die.

KNIGHTS

Yes, Lord

GARRISON

We leave tomorrow morning.

EXT. ROCKY PATH - DAY

Mikasa and Crow pant. A slight pause, the False Born grows bored of her hand.

FALSE BORN

My turn?

Mikasa and Crow clench; anxiety contorts their faces. Tigo whispers to Crow.

The False Born reveals four sharpened metal boomerangs from under her robes. She throws two at Crow, with the intention to miss. Crow readies his stance but the two boomerangs veer to his right by a few feet.

MIKASA

Crow! They are coming back!

Crow turns to face the boomerangs that head back for him, then steps to the side to avoid them. The two boomerangs rush toward the False Born.

The False Born catches the boomerangs despite the way they spin wildly. She uses her thumb and index finger to pinch their flat sides. She rotates to redirect their motion. When the False Born lets go they target Mikasa.

Mikasa is thrown off guard. She sidesteps from them.

MIKASA

(To herself)

How?

Mikasa turns to watch the boomerangs which turn back, but because of the curve of the boomerang they do not head directly to Mikasa.

The False Born throws her other two boomerangs at Crow, but off to the side as before. Crow turns to track the boomerang behind him.

The two boomerangs that were thrown at Mikasa rush back to the False Born. The False Born is ready to catch the boomerangs.

Seconds before the boomerangs reach her, the False Born sidesteps.

The boomerangs rush Crow's back, while the other two fly toward Crow's front.

MIKASA

Crow!

Mikasa dashes forward in an attempt to save Crow. She throws Ninja stars at the boomerangs. The False Born strikes two of the stars from the air as they pass. One star reaches a boomerang, but bounces off ineffectively.

The False Born rushes Mikasa. Crow falls to his stomach, a clumsy way to dodge the four boomerangs. The False Born leaps over Mikasa to land behind her. The boomerangs fly over Crow.

Two boomerangs that Crow dodged head towards Mikasa. Mikasa is trapped between the False Born and two boomerangs that rush her front.

Mikasa angles her body to try to dodge the boomerangs. As she does this, she notices one of the boomerangs has a metal wire tied to it.

MIKASA

(to herself)

A wire!

The boomerangs make contact as they fly by Mikasa. One slices her tricep; the other cuts her hair and a piece of her ear.

The False Born lets the two boomerangs pass her. Crow rises then charges past Mikasa at the False Born.

CROW

Got you!

MIKASA

Crow! No!

The False Born pulls the hidden wire, she spins it back. The boomerang is forced to Crow. He is unable to react in time. The boomerang gashes Crow. The wound runs diagonally over his upper body.

MIKASA

Dammit Crow!

Crow falls to his knees, then to the ground motionless. The False Born studies his body.

FALSE BORN

It's that easy?

Mikasa unleashes a barrage of Ninja stars and needles at the False Born. The False Born squats. She spins her two sheaths around her body to deflect the barrage.

Mikasa keeps up the assault. She forces the False Born to take cover behind a large boulder.

Tigo quietly pops out of Mikasa's hood.

TIGO
(To Mikasa)
Mikasa, use your smoke bombs!

MIKASA
How'd you get here?

TIGO
Throw the bombs, trust me!

Mikasa begrudgingly obeys Tigo. She throws her smoke bombs at the rock where the False Born takes cover.

FALSE BORN
(to herself)
Smoke? Buying time?

The False Born has her back to the rock. She waits for the smoke to dissipate.

The smoke finally clears. The False Born scales the rock. She pans the field. Mikasa is gone.

FALSE BORN
Coward!

The False Born runs off in the direction where Mikasa last was. After the False Born is gone, Crow rises.

CROW
It's never that easy.

Crow runs to the black carriage.

CUT TO

INT. PATTON'S CARRIAGE - DAY

Crow bursts into the dark carriage. Patton jumps up, he reaches for his umbrella. Crow catches his neck, then slams his forehead into Patton's.

CROW
Who the hell are you!

Crow grips his neck.

PATTON
Calm down.

CROW
 Tell me everything. Why does
 Garrison want to kill us? Who is
 the False Born?

Patton glances at his umbrella. Crow headbutts him again.

CROW
 I'm not playing!

PATTON
 Unhand me, I'll tell you.

Crow shoves Patton forcing him to sit, Crow sits across from him.

PATTON
 On one condition, you use the
 information to stop Garrison.

CROW
 Not a fan?

PATTON
 Before you were born the War Born
 treaty was already in place.

INT. CASTLE DEN - DAY PAST

The den is decorated with gold and silver trim. The tile floor keeps the room cool, while the paintings that hang from the wall capture attention.

One painting is a Young women dressed in black. She stands in a field of daises holding a withered one close to her face.

Another painting is a gold scale. One end of the scale holds skulls. The skulls raise the other end of the scale, which holds gold coins.

PATTON
 The Samurai mother?

MCrow steps out form a small group of Samurai. Her child is a month from being born.

PATTON
 The Ninja...

KATSUMI
 ...Yes.

Katsumi strides to Patton. A group of elder Ninja wait behind.

Young Garrison watches across the room. He is eighteen and knows everything. Soon to be king his clothes shame everyone in the room.

Patton addresses Katsumi.

PATTON
The Ninja mother. Why you?

KATSUMI
Who else?

PATTON
Charming.

Patton swerves to MCrow.

PATTON
And?

MCROW
My son, Clay. Proved himself as a
Samurai.

PATTON
I'll take your word for it.

Patton chews on the inside of his mouth.

PATTON
At birth, our medic checks for
defects. Again at the age of five.
If both children are suitable,

Patton scans the room, Ninja and Samurai listen to each
word.

PATTON
They will hunt the other. Other
acts of war are forbidden, punished
by death.

Young Garrison silently makes his way to Patton.

PATTON
You can go home now.

MCrow glances at Katsumi. Katsumi strides to the Ninja
elders. Young Garrison pulls Patton to the side.

YOUNG GARRISON
What's next?

PATTON
Two years until you are king. Ask
yourself.

YOUNG GARRISON
We need a trump card.

PATTON
Explain.

YOUNG GARRISON

Worst case, both nations turn on us. With their art of war, we fall in a month.

PATTON

A week.

YOUNG GARRISON

One of their warriors, one from each. We need to learn their methods.

PATTON

Force them.

YOUNG GARRISON

Figure it out.

PATTON

A Ninja women and a Samurai ran off together. In love. We agreed to turn them over if they enter Triceles.

YOUNG GARRISON

Our spies know their location?

PATTON

Obviously.

YOUNG GARRISON

Perfect.

EXT. RAINY PATH - DAY PAST

A dirt path weaves through a forest.

Rain pours. A horse struggles to pull a carriage, mud weighs down the horses feet. Water rushes alongside the trail.

JOHN steers the horse. He wears his Samurai gear. The sky lights up, CRACK! CRACK, another lighting bolt cuts the sky. John peers up. He squints as rain strikes his eyes.

Lightning strikes a tree along the path, CRACK! The horse stands on its hind legs, it thrashes its front feet in the air. NEIGH!

The tree lights on fire. It CREAKS, then falls to the path. The tree crushes the horse, the wagon falls to its side.

John is flung to the mud.

JOHN

AKIA! ELIZABETH!

The horse WHINES under the tree. John stumbles through the mud to the carriage. He pets the horse.

JOHN
Sorry pal.

AKAI
(From inside the covered wagon)
We are fine!

John unties the ropes that cover the wagon.

SYDON
Turn around John!

SYDON aims an arrow at John's back. John's hands rise slowly.

Sydon's Ninja outfit covers everything but his eyes.

JOHN
Sydon, walk away.

SYDON
Give me that traitor, and her filthy cross breed. I'll walk far away.

JOHN
You have a death wish.

John tries to turn to Sydon. Sydon lets his arrow fly into John's lower back.

JOHN
ARGH!

AKAI
John!

A throwing knife flies through the white tarp of the wagon. It cuts deep into Sydon's shoulder. He falls to his back.

AKAI cuts through the tarp. She steps out. She is twenty, a Young Ninja woman. A baby CRIES from the tent. Akai drops to her knees to examine John.

JOHN
I'm fine, get ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH is a newborn. She is wrapped in a blanket set safely on the wagons side. Akai lifts her from the wagon. She holds Elizabeth close.

John feels for the arrow in his back. He CRACKS the arrow's wooden shaft, throws it to the side. He lifts one leg, then collapses to his knees.

Sydon's shaky hand clutches a thin whistle. He forces it to his mouth. The whistle screeches!

Akai whips her head to Sydon.

A group of Ninja search through a forest. The WHEE sound reaches them.

SEARCH NINJA 1

Over there!

The Ninja rush to the sound.

AKAI

John!

JOHN

Go! Run! I can't!

Akai's face is inches from John's.

AKAI

I can't without you!

PATTON

Trouble?

John and Akai jolt, Patton stands behind them.

His umbrella keeps him dry. The umbrella is dark black, with thin gold lines that run down the middle to the umbrella's end.

A lavish carriage waits behind Patton. Three horses are tied to it.

JOHN

You from Triceles?

PATTON

Correct.

JOHN

Please!

AKAI

John we don't know...

JOHN

...We have no other options!

PATTON

Hurry in.

Akai helps John stand while she holds Elizabeth in her other arm.

PATTON

We will talk about payment later.

JOHN

Bless you.

The deserters hobble into the carriage. Patton lets the rain trickle off his umbrella for a moment. He enters the carriage. A servant drives the horses; the carriage races off.

The Ninja search team arrives to find Sydon buried in mud and rain.

INT. STONE BASEMENT - DAY PAST

PATTON

Again.

Dim candles light the cobblestone walls. The roof and floor share the same cobblestone structure.

Patton sits on a wooden chair, his umbrella lays across his lap. Young Garrison stands beside him.

Young Elizabeth's mouth hangs open. She pants as sweat flows down from her hairline. Young Elizabeth is eight. Her hair is brown and she is tall with light freckles under her eyes. Her skin glows with a natural tan.

Young Elizabeth holds a knife; wooden dummies around her have multiple stab wounds.

YOUNG ELIZABETH

Please, I'm tired.

PATTON

Again.

Young Elizabeth feet buckle. She crashes to the ground. Her face is pale.

PATTON

Again!

John sits on a wooden bench along the wall. Akai stands beside him.

JOHN

That's enough!

PATTON

This is what we agreed on.

AKAI

You said she would have to work as Garrison's body guard. That you would observe both our teaching methods in order to train your own army.

JOHN

You are working her to death! We
are done!

Young Garrison leans into Patton's ear.

YOUNG GARRISON

(whisper)

Do it now.

Patton nods, then stands. He approaches John and Akai with his umbrella. He waves a hand through the air, he creates small circles. A Guard notices. He makes his way to the stairs and signals upward.

PATTON

When making an agreement, leverage
is key.

Knights hurry down the stairs.

PATTON

Without leverage, you lack
insurance.

Akai grabs her knife. Four Knights rush her.

JOHN

Our insurance is killing you.

PATTON

You're making my legs tremble. Oh,
you must not remember the feeling.

Akai flicks her wrist; her knife enters a Knight's throat.

YOUNG ELIZABETH

Mom!

Young Garrison kneels beside Elizabeth.

YOUNG GARRISON

Today is a special day, the day you
become a warrior.

Young Garrison hugs her tight; she fights to break free.

JOHN

Akia will kill all of you. Or get
close, I'll strangle you myself.

Akia dashes up the wall, she sprints across it. She leaps from the wall, her palm catches the chin of a Knight. As she whips her body around his back, his neck CRACKS.

YOUNG GARRISON
 (In Young Elizabeth's
 ear)

You'll look back at this as a
 learning experience.

Patton raises the end of his umbrella. He points it at John.

PATTON
 No, I won't need to.

Patton presses a hidden button on his umbrella's handle. A
 needle covered in yellow sap SPRINGS out. It burrows into
 John's bicep.

Two Knights circle Akia. Akia stands relaxed, she fiddles
 with her hair. Both Knights charge, one on each side of
 Akia. They bring their swords back, each one swings it at
 Akia's neck.

Akia ducks. She pivots on her toes with her fall. Her arms
 fly up; she presses against each sword's underside. She
 forces the blades higher.

The Knights swords pushed higher, cut into each other's
 jugular vein.

John COUGHS.

PATTON
 You're familiar with this, a
 sedative used by Ninja. More
 common before the war, now it's
 been replaced with the deadly white
 sap.

Young Garrison sits; he restrains Young Elizabeth in his
 lap.

YOUNG GARRISON
 Your mother's and father's safety
 is in my hands.

Young Elizabeth SCREAMS. Young Garrison forces his hand
 over her mouth.

Akia runs to John.

JOHN
 Akia, his umbre.

John can't finish his words.

Akia faces Patton, his umbrella SPRINGS out a needle covered
 in yellow sap.

The needle Pierces deep, just above Akia's knee. She falls
 to one knee.

AKIA
Elizabeth, stay strong.

Akia collapses. John topples over her.

Blood spreads from the Knight's bodies. One of them is still alive; he crawls from the pool of blood.

Young Garrison stands. He leaves Young Elizabeth to gape at her parents.

YOUNG GARRISON
Only napping.

Young Garrison tilts his head at Patton, Patton makes his way up stairs.

YOUNG GARRISON
In Triceles we operate as a complex business. Today you become a part of this.

Young Garrison smiles, happy to welcome her into the business.

YOUNG GARRISON
Our most valuable asset, you will kill the War Borns if they fail to kill each other. That is your job.

Young Garrison grabs the Knight who struggles to breath. He drags him over to Young Elizabeth.

YOUNG GARRISON
My job is to ensure Triceles is prosperous.

Young Garrison drops the Knight's body next to Elizabeth.

YOUNG GARRISON
Feeding workers is expensive.

Garrison slides a knife across the floor, it stops at Elizabeth's knee.

YOUNG GARRISON
Only so much money.

Garrison sits on the bench above her parents. He takes a knife from his side.

YOUNG GARRISON
I have been working the numbers all day. There's no choice, I have to make some cuts.

Garrison runs his hands through Akia's hair. He grasps the bulk of her hair, lifts her head up. His knife rests across her neck.

YOUNG GARRISON
You choose. We can cut him.

The Knight vomits blood.

YOUNG GARRISON
Or I'll.

Garrison shakes her mothers head. He grins.

Elizabeth cries uncontrollably. She convulses. The Knight
MOANS, blood oozes out of his neck.

YOUNG GARRISON
Focus, focus.

Elizabeth glares at Garrison.

He smiles at Elizabeth, confident in her.

Elizabeth grabs the knife.

INT. CASTLE OFFICE - DAY PAST

An oak desk dominates the room. Garrison shuffles through papers scattered about the desk. Patton observes near the rooms corner. The room has plenty of windows to let light in.

GARRISON
How old are they?

PATTON
Twelve.

GARRISON
It's been too peaceful.

PATTON
They will break the treaty. Sales will rise again.

GARRISON
No, the Ninja are signing out.

PATTON
Our spies report underground movements, preparations for battle.

GARRISON
Twelve years they have prepared. They need a nudge.

Garrison grabs a map of Evershore. He lays the map across his desk. Trading routes cover the map, it is practically illegible. Garrison marks the map; he draws circles and dashes lines.

PATTON

Lord, interfering increases risk.

GARRISON

No you won't lecture me.

Garrison addresses Patton with his pen.

GARRISON

They will see what they want to.
Unfortunately a hundred years of
war has created an urge for peace.

KNOCK. Patton opens the door.

Stern Knight bows to Garrison.

GARRISON

What's the story.

STERN KNIGHT

John and Akai aren't speaking.

PATTON

A protest.

GARRISON

They must know how strong their
daughter is.

PATTON

Don't want to reveal more than they
have to. Think she can defend
herself.

GARRISON

She can, okay. We have to make
their imagination run.

Garrison studies the Stern Knight, looks him up and down.

GARRISON

You have a scary face.

Garrison walks to the Knight.

GARRISON

Got something special for you.

STERN Knight nods. Garrison eases close to the Knights
face.

GARRISON

I want you to go to them, really
lean in close. So they can feel
your breath on their face.

Garrison leans close to the Knight, like he describes.

GARRISON

Look em in the eye, hate them.
Then say, as if they are a child
and you're teaching a lesson.

INT. CASTLE DUNGEON - NIGHT PAST

Akai and John are chained to the cold stone walls, their ribs poke against their sides.

Stern Knight leans in. He hovers over John's nose.

STERN KNIGHT

Talk, open your mouths. Or we will
open your daughter's.

John's eyes pop; his face burns red.

INT. CASTLE OFFICE - DAY PAST

The Stern Knight concentrates on Garrison's words.

GARRISON

Let it sink in, give him some time
to digest how vulnerable their
daughter is.

Garrison's hands dance with his words; they narrate to the deaf.

GARRISON

Then prance on over to his wife,
take a little off the top.

Garrison pats the top of his head.

GARRISON

I know someone who would appreciate
it.

INT. CASTLE DUNGEON 2 - NIGHT PAST

A twelve year old Elizabeth is locked in a dark cell.

Stern Knight paces to the cell. He throws a bundle of dark hair through the bars. Elizabeth's stomach turns at the sight of her mother's hair, with a thin layer of skin still attached.

Elizabeth crashes against the cage bars. Blood drips from the detached scalp.

ELIZABETH

I'll kill you!

STERN KNIGHT

Everyone needs a little
encouragement.

ELIZABETH

Please let me talk to them! I'll tell them!

Stern Knight paces away, his figure disappears in the dark.

ELIZABETH

Garrison!

INT. CASTLE OFFICE - DAY PAST

GARRISON

Off you go.

Stern Knight nods. He leaves the room. Garrison returns to his desk.

GARRISON

The War Borns need to see death.

PATTON

How? They aren't in a cage like her, it's impossible.

GARRISON

The treaty is their cage. We just have to paint the bars red.

PATTON

Fake a child's death?

GARRISON

It's desperate to tell the same joke twice. I'd be copying my great grandfather. He did that to start the war. We need to be subtle. The Ninja are on edge. Ship a few weapons to the Samurai.

PATTON

I don't follow.

GARRISON

Use the large crates. It will appear like a shipment fit for war.

PATTON

Suspicious, at most.

GARRISON

When the Ninja order weapons as a counter measure, we are sold out.

PATTON

They will be scared, irrational.

Garrison smiles.

GARRISON

Our economy suffers when our
weapons aren't needed. This will
create demand.

Garrison jots notes on the map.

PATTON

Of course, my Lord.

Garrison leans back in his chair.

GARRISON

I can already hear the

CUT TO:

INT. PATTON'S CARRIAGE - DAY

A high pitched scream rings out, the same one the night
Pierce died.

Crow fights the urge to tear apart the carriage.

Patton studies Crow, satisfied with his reaction.

CROW

That night, the whole time,
everything!

Patton nods, raises an eyebrow.

CROW

Ragnarock died for this lie! So
many have died! I will stop this!

EXT. FIREFLY FOREST- NIGHTFALL

Mikasa's leg trembles. She scans the forest.

TIGO

He should be here.

Mikasa runs her fingers through her hair with a force that
pulls at the root.

Mikasa jumps forward, peeks around the tall trees.

MIKASA

If night falls we won't be able to
find him.

The forest grows dark.

TIGO

Speak of the devil.

Mikasa bits her lip. She makes tense movements.

Mikasa looks down sharply. Something has landed on her finger.

A light, a firefly eases through the space between her fingers. It flies up into the air, hovers through the trees. Mikasa stalks it, follows every move with her eyes.

She walks where the firefly leads her. More lights appear, but Mikasa focuses on the single firefly.

Mikasa chases the firefly around a tree, Crow stands there.

CROW

You alright?

Mikasa hides her excitement.

MIKASA

I didn't try to kill myself.

Crow laughs slightly.

CROW

There was a carriage nearby, I broke in. One of Garrison's advisors was there.

Crow's emotions run. He grabs Mikasa's hand.

CROW

Garrison has been using both clans the whole time!

Mikasa lets Crow grip tighter.

CROW

The whole war was set up by Triceles so they could profit off us!

Crow leans in close.

CROW

All the blood for nothing! We can use this to end everything!

MIKASA

Slow down! How are you even alive?

Crow catches his breath and moves back. Mikasa regrets saying anything. Fireflies float around them, their light warms Mikasa's and Crow's face.

TIGO

I spotted the wire on the boomerang.

CROW

Tigo and I decided early on that we needed to retreat. I saw the carriage and thought we could find out what was going on.

MIKASA

You coward.

Crow ignores Mikasa

CROW

When I rushed past you Tigo jumped to you.

TIGO

It was the only way for us to communicate without her knowing.

A short flashback begins with Crow running past Mikasa to attack the False Born. Tigo jumps from Crow onto Mikasa in a stealthy manner.

MIKASA

You two thought of that?

CROW

We aren't as dumb as we look.

TIGO

I'm not as dumb as I look.

Mikasa chuckles.

MIKASA

I have been keeping a look out. Knights of Triceles are everywhere.

CROW

Searching for us?

MIKASA

Yes, also been stationed on the main roads.

TIGO

We are smarter than that.

CROW

We can sneak into my village. I can tell Clay everything. He will believe us.

MIKASA

Garrison will have Knights there.

CROW

I'm counting on it.

CUT TO

INT. GARRISON'S TENT - NIGHT

A small fire blazes in Garrison's tent.

GARRISON
How could you be so careless!

FALSE BORN
I wasn't expecting them to run.

The MESSENGER is outside the tent.

GARRISON
Get in here!

The Messenger enters.

GARRISON
Shut down all shipping and mail!
Put a guard at every stop! They
cannot get the chance to spread
word!

The Messenger nods then exits.

FALSE BORN
Wait! I get to send a letter this
month!

The False Born takes out a letter from her robes. She holds it out.

GARRISON
Not my problem.

In rage, the False Born grabs Garrison's neck. She chokes him. Garrison forces his words out.

GARRISON
Go ahead, do it. If I die, so will
they.

The False Born squeezes for a moment more, then lets go. Garrison wipes drool from his mouth. Garrison snatches the letter from her hand and throws it into the fire.

GARRISON
That outburst is going to cost you.

Garrison punches the False Born across the face. She falls face first.

GARRISON
Your mother would be ashamed.

Garrison stomps the False Born's cheek.

GARRISON

Treat others how you want to be treated. Let's treat Mommy the way you treat me.

FALSE BORN

No, I'm sorry!

Garrison kicks her in the gut while she is on her hands and knees. Blood gushes from her nose.

GARRISON

She's not important. There is still dear Daddy!

Garrison unleashes another brutal kick, this time to her face. The False Born tumbles to her side.

FALSE BORN

Please, no. I'm sorry.

The False Born cries, blood is smeared across her face.

GARRISON

You're a mess. Clean yourself up. Tomorrow you hunt them down.

Garrison exits the tent.

CUT TO

EXT. GARRISON'S CAMP - NIGHT

Garrison steps out to the small camp. Patton waits for him, he holds his umbrella. They walk away from the camp.

PATTON

Explain to me the rational behind beating your horse before race day.

GARRISON

You can join her, plenty of room.

PATTON

Threats. A past time of yours.

Garrison whirls his body. He slams his chest against Patton. Patton is thrown off balance, he scuffles in the dirt to sit up right.

GARRISON

You're past your time. You're at fault here too!

Patton positions his umbrella. He fires a needle oozed in a yellow sap. Garrison flinches, the needle sticks from his shin.

GARRISON
 Treason doesn't suit you.

PATTON
 I told that Boy everything.

Garrison pleads through his confusion. His eyes twitch,
 Garrison restrains the side effects of the poison.

PATTON
 Your reign will be over.

Garrison falls to a knee.

PATTON
 Crow will expose Triceles.

GARRISON
 I don't understand.

PATTON
 I could care less about them, but I
 couldn't care less about you.

Garrison bursts with uncontrollable laughter. He rolls to
 his side and wheezes. Patton stands.

GARRISON
 I hope.

Garrison pushes his words through his maniac laughter.

GARRISON
 Oh I pray, I am witness. I need to
 see the outcome of your scheme.

Patton struts from the fallen king.

PATTON
 Good bye, Lord.

Garrison chuckles till he falls asleep.

CUT TO

EXT. CROWS HOME VILLAGE- EARLY MORNING

A thick fog fills the air. Crow and Mikasa creep towards
 the village.

CROW
 Keep your eyes open.

Mikasa nods.

CROW
 He has to have guards here.

Mikasa pans intently, she notices dry blood on a tree.

CROW
Why can't I hear the village?

The two step into the village. Crow sees blood, bodies, and weapons scattered across the village.

A pit forms in Crow's stomach. He runs ahead, shifts around frantically.

CROW
Clay! Clay!

Mikasa trails Crow. Dead Ninja share the blood-soaked grass with the samurai.

CROW
Clay! Susan!

Crow dashes into the fog out of Mikasa's sight. Mikasa follows.

She finds Crow on his knees. He grips a stained raccoon hat. Crow's tears run down his face onto the hat.

CROW
Clay.

Mikasa's lips quiver. Tears well up.

Crow snaps his head at Mikasa, his eyes full of hate. His eyes resemble Ragnarock's.

CROW
You!

Mikasa grips her katana. Her arms shake.

CROW
I should have killed you that day!

Mikasa is petrified at Crow's rage. Crow's eyes pierce Mikasa for a while longer. Mikasa starts to unsheathe her katana. Crow's head falls.

CROW
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Crow lets tears flow. Mikasa releases her katana.

CROW
He was right. I'm the same.

Mikasa can't take her eyes off the defeated Crow. Crow wails in pain.

CROW
I'm no better!

Crow curls into a ball, as if he had the wind knocked from him.

Tears trickle down Mikasa's cheek.

MIKASA V.O.

(Her thoughts)

Why am I crying? I can't stomach this.

Mikasa has a vision of her father where Crow is. Mfather leans over; he speaks softly.

MFATHER

If you are sad I am sad. When you are happy I am happy. You control my heart.

Mikasa places one foot at a time as she walks to Crow.

MIKASA

How?

She trembles.

Mikasa is above Crow; she falls to her knees with him.

Mikasa puts her hand on his hand. The two embrace each other, Mikasa holds Crow under her. Crow buries his face into her chest, then digs his fingers into her back.

CROW

I'm sorry, Mikasa.

Suddenly Mikasa's eyes open wide. She draws her blade. The screen goes dark.

CUT TO

EXT. WALL OF TRICELES - DAY

It is a quiet day outside the city walls, a soft breeze brushes the earth. A Ninja approaches the city tugging a wooden wagon behind her. The Ninja is covered by a hood.

Knight 2 prepares his spear. He cuts off the Ninja.

KNIGHT 2

Halt!

The Ninja woman eases to a stop.

KNIGHT 2

No Ninja or Samurai are allowed into Triceles. You have to turn around.

The Ninja's eyes are cast down.

NINJA WOMAN

Give this to Garrison.

The Ninja woman gestures at the wagon. Knight 2 moves cautiously to inspect its contents. Something lays in the wagon, wrapped in cloth. It's a body bag.

KNIGHT 2

This some kind of stunt?

NINJA WOMEN

Open it.

Knight 2 leans over the wagon near the top of the bag. He takes out a knife, cuts a small slice through the top.

KNIGHT 2

My god!

Crow is in the body bag, dead.

CUT TO

EXT. WALL OF TRICELES - SUNSET

A carriage races to the stone walls as the sun sets. Red light shines onto the city walls.

The carriage reaches the entrance to Triceles. Knight 2 bows. Garrison steps out.

GARRISON

The body?

KNIGHT 2

Over there lord.

Garrison marches along the wall. Knight 2 follows. He approaches the wagon, then peers inside. Crow's dead face stares back.

GARRISON

Take it out.

Knight 2 mounts the wagon with another nearby Knight. They remove the body from the bag, then place it on the grass.

Garrison kneels over, he checks for a pulse.

GARRISON

Nothing.

Garrison runs his finger along a wound that runs diagonally across Crow's upper body.

GARRISON

This wound fits with what the False Born reported.

Garrison looks towards Knight 2. He gestures for a knife. Knight 2 hands his over. Garrison plunges the knife into Crow's heart.

GARRISON

Dead. No Ninja tricks about it.

Garrison stands.

GARRISON

Where is the Ninja Girl?

KNIGHT 2

Around the corner.

Garrison strolls to the corner. The light fades; a dim red shade hits the wall.

Garrison turns the corner to see the Ninja Girl tied to the wall. She is on her knees. Garrison walks to her. He bends down to her level.

GARRISON

Why the change of heart?

The Ninja Girl looks away from Garrison. Garrison pulls down on the Ninja's mask.

GARRISON

Mikasa?

Mikasa stares past Garrison.

MIKASA

A Samurai from his village attacked the Ninja. They retaliated, killing his whole village.

Her cheeks are pale.

MIKASA

He turned on me.

Garrison can't help but smile.

GARRISON

All that fuss for nothing. It worked itself out.

Garrison walks to his carriage as the sun disappears. He turns back to Mikasa.

GARRISON

This must be hard for you. I want you be as comfortable as possible. You will be staying with me, and I won't take no for an answer.

CUT TO:

INT. GARRISON'S DUNGEON - NIGHT.

A room is barred off from a stone hallway. The only sources of light are dim torches. A small window rests high in the cell, out of reach.

Two Knights enter the hallway. They carry Mikasa to the cell. She is bruised and beaten. The Knights toss her into the cell.

Mikasa hits the floor hard, she lies still. The Knights lock up the cell, then leave. Garrison enters with the False Born.

GARRISON

You two remember each other. Hell,
you two will never forget each
other.

Garrison sarcastically gestures at them. Neither Mikasa or the False Born pay it mind.

GARRISON

(To False Born)

Last playdate, Mikasa got away. I
had these bars installed because I
know you need the help.

The False Born holds her tongue as her temperature boils.

GARRISON

(To False Born)

Do you think you can handle it? I
could tie her down.

Garrison's hands talk with him.

GARRISON

(to False Born)

Put in a moat with alligators?

Garrison glares.

GARRISON

Do you need me to put in a moat
with alligators?

FALSE BORN

No.

GARRISON

Lord. Handle this.

FALSE BORN

Yes my Lord.

The False Born hates her words. Garrison smiles.

GARRISON

Peachy.

Garrison struts down the hallway, he exits. Mikasa lies with her back to the False Born. Silence fills the room.

MIKASA

How long?

FALSE BORN

What?

MIKASA

Till I'm out.

FALSE BORN

The ceremony is in a month.
Garrison won't let you run free
after, with all you know.

Mikasa curls her body into a fetal position.

FALSE BORN

You lost your will. You could have
gotten away. Those Knights are
nothing compared to Ninja.

Mikasa doesn't react.

CUT TO

INT. CASTLE ROOM - NIGHT

Elizabeth sits on her cot. The room resembles a prisoners cell, with only cell bars absent. A small window is cut from the stone wall.

Elizabeth tip toes to the window. She crouches in the window space. The wind howls against the high walls. Elizabeth studies the height.

A tree rattles from the wind. She ponders its distance.

ELIZABETH

Three. Two.

Elizabeth crouches; she prepares to spring out.

KNOCK. The door swings open. Elizabeth stumbles, she turns quickly.

GARRISON

Making the jump wouldn't be
impossible.

Elizabeth trembles. Garrison glides so close to her that she can feel his breath.

GARRISON

It would be the rescue. Spies watch your every move. The journey to Lake Taka, plus the small army that guards your parents.

ELIZABETH

I wasn't.

GARRISON

Don't insult me.

Garrison brushes her hair behind her ear.

GARRISON

You could kill all those Knights by yourself. But all it takes is one to kill your parents. All he has to do is press a button.

Garrison playfully pushes an imaginary button.

GARRISON

Click.

Elizabeth looks down.

GARRISON

The cell floor falls from under their feet. They plunge into a bed of spikes. Not even you are fast enough.

Garrison SIGHS. He puts his arm across her back.

GARRISON

Juvenile, I know. Yet still. I don't blame you for entertaining the idea.

Garrison stands, Elizabeth stands with him. He leads her to the cot.

GARRISON

You don't deserve the cruelty. But I need you. When this is over, when everything is behind us.

Garrison smiles.

GARRISON

It would be favorable to have a family reunion.

Garrison pats her back.

GARRISON

Get some sleep.

He closes the door behind him. Garrison strolls past the dim torches that light the narrow hallway.

Elizabeth sits on her cot, she clenches her fist.

A messenger approaches Garrison.

GARRISON

Tell Smith he is off for the night.
She isn't going anywhere.

MESSANGER

Yes Lord. King Garrison?

GARRISON

I'm listening.

MESSANGER

We haven't got any letters back
from Lake Taka.

GARRISON

Oh I forgot, Patton usually does
it. Tell Smith to write another
letter.

MESSANGER

Smith writes the letters?

Garrison SIGHS.

GARRISON

What is more cost effective?
Maintaining the safety of her
mother and father or paying a
halfway decent writer?

INT. PALACE OF TRICELES- DAY

Garrison lounges on his throne with the False Born behind him. The palace is empty. Garrison reads through letters.

GARRISON

All is in order. The ceremony will
be a breeze.

Garrison addresses the False Born.

GARRISON

The Ninja Girl?

FALSE BORN

Silent, not eating.

GARRISON

A tragedy for her, isn't it?

Garrison has a wicked smile.

GARRISON

Give me a letter.

The False Born brims with emotion.

FALSE BORN

Thank you, Lord. Please excuse me.

GARRISON

Sure, sure. Check on her first.

The False Born bows. She exits behind the throne.

CUT TO

INT. GARRISON'S DUNGEON - DAY

The False Born paces the hallway. The False Born halts abruptly. She focuses her ears. Hushed words come from Mikasa's cell. The False Born dashes to the cell.

FALSE BORN

Who's there!

A rat is heard as it scurries away. Mikasa sits with her back against the wall, the window above her. Mikasa is starved, her checks are sunken, her hair matted.

FALSE BORN

Talking to the rats?

The False Born smirks. She throws a bag to Mikasa.

FALSE BORN

Eat, or I'll make you. Understand?

The False Born scans the cell. Her face drops when she studies Mikasa. The False Born turns.

MIKASA

Wait.

The False Born listens.

MIKASA

Please stay. A little.

The False Born studies Mikasa. She sighs.

FALSE BORN

More interesting than rodents?

Mikasa nods.

FALSE BORN

I have to write. But then I'm gone.

MIKASA

Thank you.

CUT TO

INT. GARRISON'S DUNGEON - AFTERNOON

Mikasa hasn't moved. The False Born sits outside the cell, with a small wooden desk in front of her. She toils with her letter. A small candle illuminates the desk.

The False Born writes in silence.

MIKASA

Who are you writing to?

The False Born takes her time to answer Mikasa.

FALSE BORN

My parents.

MIKASA

Do you get to see them?

FALSE BORN

No. But I write.

MIKASA

Do they write back?

FALSE BORN

They live in a small town south of the eastern gate of Triceles. Near Lake Taka, takes them a week.

MIKASA

I have a letter from my mother. She can't write back. You miss them?

FALSE BORN

Yes.

MIKASA

Will you ever see them?

FALSE BORN

After the war starts again, I hope Garrison allows me.

A pause, then Mikasa continues.

MIKASA

What is your name?

FALSE BORN

Elizabeth.

MIKASA

Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH

Only my parents call me that.

Elizabeth stands up. She folds her letter, nods to Mikasa.

MIKASA

Thank you, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth is taken aback for a moment. She hides it from Mikasa.

CUT TO

EXT. CEREMONY GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON

Outside Garrison's grand palace are the ceremony grounds. The area is laid with marble. A raised stage addresses the grounds. Massive stone pillars hold up the stage's roof.

The stage is white, but has gold designs that outline the stage.

Garrison's palace sits across a grass lot from the stage. The palace balcony overlooks the grounds.

The grounds themselves are separated down the middle, split into two sections. On the right are the Samurai, and the left the Ninja.

There are a hundred people on each side. Elite members of each clan stand to the front of the stage. Knights stand guard.

Garrison is in the middle of the stage, he faces the crowd. Garrison begins his speech.

GARRISON

Twenty-one years ago the elites of Oneumi, Dounine, and Triceles met with the intention of ending the war. A treaty was created that would award a victor.

Garrison gestures to the crowd as his words boom.

GARRISON

It's my pleasure to announce that the conditions of the treaty have been met. We have a victor.

Garrison raises his hand to the palace balcony. The crowd turns.

GARRISON

From the land of Oneumi.

Mikasa stands on the balcony. Mikasa is sickly, but is too far from the crowd for any of them to notice.

Behind her, hidden from the crowd is Elizabeth. She holds her sword out to Mikasa threateningly.

ELIZABETH

Wave.

Mikasa waves to the crowd.

GARRISON

Mikasa Umi!

Mikasa hears the roars from the crowd. Garrison listens to the split reactions from the crowd, half protest and half celebrate.

ELIZABETH

Back in.

Mikasa steps back from the crowd's view. Elizabeth ties her to the inner part of the balcony. Elizabeth observes the crowd from the balcony.

The crowd quiets; faces turn to the stage.

GARRISON

I ask the leaders of Dounine and Oneumi to the stage. Please accept Steerforth and Takeshi.

STEERFORTH and TAKESHI climb the steps to the stage.

Steerforth is a brawny-sized man. Because of his good shape he looks younger than a sixty-four year-old.

Takeshi is older, seventy-seven. He wears noble cloth. Wrinkles sag his skin.

GARRISON

As stipulated, the winning country establishes laws that the losing clan must obey. If they fail to obey these mandates, war will break out, with Triceles aiding the winning clan.

Garrison pauses for effect, then gestures at Takeshi.

GARRISON

Takeshi, the first law against Dounine?

Takeshi is calm. He rubs his chin in thought. Garrison is anxious.

Takeshi steps forward.

TAKESHI

I have heard that the Samurai have a secret way of cooking venison. A way that gives a succulent taste to the deer.

Garrison stands confused.

TAKESHI

In Oneumi, we fish. But every once in a while I would like to have some venison.

Garrison steps back.

TAKESHI

The mandate we enforce upon Dounine is that they have to hand over their recipe for cooking venison.

Garrison's mouth hangs open.

TAKESHI

Is that allowed Garrison?

Garrison nods.

The crowd cheers. Garrison steps forward, he escapes from shock.

GARRISON

Why are you squandering your chance!

STEERFORTH

It will be hard to rebuild the bond between Samurai and Ninja. Over time we will eradicate the hate.

Garrison looks blankly at them.

TAKESHI

There was no way for us to set aside our hate until someone's courage forced us.

Garrison boils.

GARRISON

Who? Who was it!

?

Garrison!

Garrison turns to the voice. Amongst the crowd of Samurai is a man wearing a raccoon hat.

GARRISON

How?

The crowd clears a circle around Crow. He glares at Garrison with eyes sharper than steel.

GARRISON

You're dead! I burned your body!

CROW

You burned my brother's body.

Garrison's eyes open wide. He signals to the balcony, Elizabeth uses a metal wire to swiftly propel down the palace wall.

Crow steps out to face Elizabeth. Once Elizabeth reaches the ground, she draws both of her swords then charges Crow.

Knights move forward to apprehend Crow. The Ninja and Samurai draw their weapons; they threaten the Knights. The Knights cower back.

ELIZABETH

You're dead!

CROW

Elizabeth!

Elizabeth stops in her tracks. Crow holds out a pile of old, worn letters. Elizabeth inspects the letters.

ELIZABETH

Those are my letters! How did you get those?

Crow throws the letters to Elizabeth which she catches.

CROW

I paid a visit to your family near Lake Taka.

Elizabeth glares with the eyes of a predator.

ELIZABETH

What did you do to them!

CROW

I paid my respects.

ELIZABETH

What!

CROW

All your letters have been sent to an address that doesn't exist. Your parents are dead, I'm sorry.

ELIZABETH

How do you know this!

CROW
Mikasa saw the address on your
letter.

Tears flow from Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH
Wait! No! How do you know my name?
How did you know to go to Taka?

CROW
The rats Mikasa talks to are
actually pretty helpful.

Tigo pops out from under Crow's vest.

Tigo gives a playful wave to Elizabeth.

CROW
Mikasa thought of the whole plan
when she saw my brother's body.

Elizabeth takes a few seconds to process this. Her face
turns from denial to hate.

ELIZABETH
Garrison!

Elizabeth and the crowd turn to the stage. Garrison is
gone.

ELIZABETH
Hide from me all you want!

Elizabeth leaps to the stage, then runs off.

Crow squints at the balcony. He rushes into the palace.

CUT TO

INT. PALACE OF TRICELES- SUNSET

Crow rushes into the empty palace. He scales the stairs,
then dashes through rooms at a frantic rate.

Mikasa is on the balcony. She bites at the rope that binds
her.

Crow sprints up another flight of stairs.

Mikasa chews on the rope, it loosens.

CROW
Mikasa!

MIKASA
Crow!

Crow hears her voice as he turns a corner. He spots her tied to the balcony. Mikasa frees herself from the rope, she runs to Crow.

Crow enters so fast that he can't slow down. Mikasa jumps up into his arms. She wraps her legs around his hips. Crow stops at the edge of the balcony.

Mikasa and Crow share a powerful kiss. The crowd below gazes up.

As the two kiss on the balcony, cheers can be heard. The two separate for a moment to smile, then kiss again.

CUT TO

INT. SECRET PATH - NIGHT

Garrison hurries through a secret path dimly lit by his torch. He is alone.

Garrison reaches a wooden door. He opens it to enter a small circular room. Elizabeth sits at a table dimly lit by two candles.

She reads through books on the table, Garrison's books.

Garrison stops in shock with the door ajar. He stares at Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Been working the numbers for hours.
There's no choice. I have to make
some cuts.

Elizabeth shuts the book. She slowly unsheathes her sword.

CUT TO

EXT. SUMANA BEACH - DAY

Crow sits in the sand of the warm beach, bright from the sun's light. His sandals rest beside him. He digs his feet into the warm sand.

CROW

AHHH.

Tigo lounges under a tiny umbrella.

Crow turns to Mikasa.

Mikasa is restored to her former beauty. She glides to Crow, her feet are gentle against the sand. She has a blue sunhat.

Crow smiles with his heart; Mikasa returns the favor.

CREDITS ROLL.

EXT. SNOW TOP - DAY

Snow blankets the mountain. Clouds hide the sky. All is white.

A Ninja stands in the snow. She wears a dark blue jacket. Her black scarf wraps around her neck three times over.

Forty years have barely touched her soft skin.

She rustles through her jacket. Her mask falls slightly, it's Katsumi. She pulls out three pieces of paper. She stares at them.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEAD SHIP - DAY

A tall ship fights choppy water. The crew hurries to control the ship.

A pirate is behind the wheel. The pirate is an ex-Ninja. Tribal tattoos claw their way up his shaved head. The twenty-seven year-old is short, five-five

He takes three pieces of paper from his coat pocket. He holds them against the wheel.

TAO

Coming for ya Mika!

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The tavern has many open seats. Men drink in silence. Their heads turn to a women dressed in black.

This twenty-three year old stomps to the bar. Her clothes reveal her luscious body. She snatches three pieces of paper from her bra.

She holds them to the bartender.

WITCH

I'm terribly lost. Could you point me in their direction?

The bartender studies the papers.

Each paper is a sketch, a portrait.

Crow is on the left paper, Tigo in the middle, and Mikasa on the right.

WITCH

This one in particular.

The WITCH'S finger hovers over Tigo's sketch.