

Forever Noir

By

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FADE IN

EXT. STREET NEXT TO ALLEYWAY - AFTERNOON

NORA and CHARLIE stand on a sidewalk looking into an alleyway between two buildings. Charlie is dressed in plain clothes while Nora is wearing a skirt with a short sleeved shirt and a vest. Nora has a sword strapped to her back mostly covered by the vest, but still fairly obvious. Nora also has guns strapped to her thighs hidden by her skirt. The alleyway is dark and dirty. There is a man standing further in the alleyway in front of a metal door. The street and alleyway are otherwise empty. Charlie looks at a map on his tablet then points down the alley.

CHARLIE

That's the place.

NORA

If this is another Chinese restaurant you owe me dinner.

CHARLIE

That only happened once, and what kind of Chinese restaurant has a guard in the back.

NORA

Point taken.

CHARLIE

According to the client, we should find a lead in there. Are you sure you need me here? I could just help you over the phone.

NORA

Don't be a pussy. You just work your computer magic and I'll take care of the rest.

CHARLIE

Do think we'll find her brother in there?

NORA

(points to the guard)  
Let's ask him.

Nora and Charlie enter the alleyway.

EXT. ALLEYWAY IN FRONT OF METAL DOOR - AFTERNOON

Nora and Charlie approach the GUARD who is standing with his arms crossed in front of the metal door. He doesn't notice them at first.

NORA

Hey, you.

The guard looks at Nora with his arms still crossed.

GUARD

What do you want?

NORA

I'm looking for Dreslin. Heard of him?

The guard scans Nora up and down before replying.

GUARD

Doesn't ring a bell.

Nora sighs and pulls out her right pistol before pointing the muzzle towards the guard's face.

NORA

Oh, please...please try to remember.

The guard scowls and turns towards the door.

GUARD

Come in.

The guard opens the door and heads inside.

CHARLIE

So much for calm and quiet.

NORA

That's okay. I'm the type that likes to make noise.

Nora looks at Charlie and winks. Charlie blushes but pretends to ignore her taunt as he approaches the door.

EXT. IN FRONT OF DOOR IN ALLEYWAY - AFTERNOON

Charlie reaches the door but pauses before entering.

CHARLIE  
(stepping away from the door)  
After you.

Nora shrugs and enters while Charlie waits outside. All is quiet for a few seconds before a man's grunt is heard and Nora comes flying out and hits the ground.

EXT. ALLEYWAY IN FRONT OF METAL DOOR - AFTERNOON

An ENFORCER, a large man (like a pro wrestler, boxer, etc.) walks out the open door right after. He has body armor and carries a baseball bat. Eight grunts, including the door guard, exit after the enforcer. They all have blunt weapons like bats or crowbars and are standing side by side ready to attack. Charlie runs over to Nora.

CHARLIE  
Looks like we have a welcoming party?

Charlie helps Nora to her feet.

NORA  
(holding her face)  
God-damn it. Right in the face.

The grunts begin approaching to attack. Nora gets into a fighting stance.

CHARLIE  
(backing away)  
This one's all you.

NORA  
Oh, Charlie, please don't go. How will I manage without you.

Nora and the grunts fight while the enforcer hangs back. The grunts are tough, but Nora's acrobatics and fighting ability make quick work of them.

CLOSE IN ON NORA

After a few more seconds of fighting, the enforcer catches Nora off guard with his bat. Nora is knocked out of our view.

BACK TO SCENE

Nora lands on the ground holding her face, again.

ON NORA

NORA  
God-damn it. Again in the face. Why is  
it always the face.

WITH NORA AND CHARLIE IN VIEW

CHARLIE  
Maybe you should work on your landing.

Nora sits up and glares at Charlie. Charlie nervously gives  
Nora a thumbs up.

CHARLIE  
You're doing a great job.

NORA  
You just keep doing what your doing.

CHARLIE  
I wholeheartedly believe in your  
abilities.

NORA  
Someone has to carry us.

CHARLIE  
(quietly to himself, mockingly)  
"Someone has to carry us."

BACK ON SCENE

Nora stands up and draws her sword from her back. Many of the  
grunts have recovered and are back in the fight. The fighting  
continues, but this time Nora makes quick work of everyone  
with her sword in a flashy/bloody sequence. The enforcer puts  
up more of a fight but goes down as well. In the end, the  
enforcer is on his knees and Nora executes him brutally. Nora  
then flicks the blood off of her sword and re-sheathes it.  
Nora walks back towards the metal door.

EXT. IN FRONT OF DOOR IN ALLEYWAY - AFTERNOON

Nora stops in front of the open metal door.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
Nora!

We hear a loud GUNSHOT and see a bullet pierce through Nora's  
chest from the back. Nora stumbles forward a step from the  
pressure.

ON GRUNT

We see one of the grunts lying on the ground pointing his gun at Nora. He is breathing heavily and bleeding to death. After a few seconds he bleeds out and goes limp.

BACK TO SCENE

Nora grimaces in pain as she takes a snack out of her vest and begins eating it. We watch her eat as her wound closes itself. Charlie approaches Nora from out of our view.

CHARLIE  
Feel better?

NORA  
(between bites)  
I'm getting there.

We wait for Nora to finish before she begins to walk through the door.

NORA  
(gesturing towards the enforcer)  
Search him.

Nora walks through the door.

CHARLIE  
You're kidding.

Charlie stares through the doorway for a few seconds waiting for a reply.

CHARLIE  
You're kidding, right?

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE  
She's not kidding.

Charlie resigns himself to searching the enforcer.

EXT. ALLEYWAY IN FRONT OF METAL DOOR - AFTERNOON

Charlie approaches the enforcer's body.

CLOSE IN ON CHARLIE AND THE ENFORCER

Charlie reaches towards the enforcer's body but begins to gag

heavily. He covers his mouth with his hand to keep himself from throwing up. Charlie rustles through the enforcer's pockets before finding a key. Nora's loud LAUGHTER is heard. Charlie quickly places the key in his pocket.

BACK TO SCENE

Charlie hurries through the metal doorway into the building after Nora.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The kitchen is empty but shows signs of recent use. Nora is standing at an open doorway at the other side of the kitchen giggling. Charlie approaches Nora and peers through the doorway. Nora steps aside so Charlie can see.

NORA  
(laughing)  
This is totally another Chinese restaurant.

CHARLIE  
(scratching the back of his head with an amused smile)  
Imagine that.

NORA  
I'll be waiting for that date. Wear something sharp.

CHARLIE  
It's not a date.

Nora jabs Charlie in the side playfully.

NORA  
Always playing hard to get.

Charlie rubs his side and ignores Nora's comment.

CHARLIE  
I found a key on that guy.

Charlie shows Nora the key. Nora takes the key and places it into her pocket then begins rubbing the prior site of her wound.

NORA  
Someone probably heard the gunshot.

CHARLIE

Then let's hurry up and find the office so we can get out of here.

Nora and Charlie go through the doorway.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT DINING AREA - AFTERNOON

Nora and Charlie walk through the dining area towards a staircase on the right side of the room.

CHARLIE

Next time I come with you we're trying the stealthy approach.

NORA

I'll think about it.

Nora and Charlie arrive in front of the staircase. A sign next to the staircase reads, "Authorized Personnel Only." They ascend.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT STAIRCASE - AFTERNOON

Nora and Charlie walk up the empty staircase which leads to a single office door. Nora tries the door, but it is locked. Nora uses the key to unlock the office door and both enter.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Nora and Charlie enter from the office door and move towards the center of the room. The office is cramped with a lot of boxes that contain paperwork and bookshelves full of books. The wall opposite the office has a window that looks down into the restaurant dining area. There is a desk on the left wall from where they came in with an old looking computer.

NORA

All right, get to work.

Charlie immediately heads to the computer and sits down at the chair in front of it. Nora looks around the room occasionally scooting boxes out of the way. Charlie places a flash drive into the computer and begins typing. We see Charlie shooting quick glances at Nora and Nora takes notice.

NORA

What's up?

CHARLIE

Is your body okay? Does it still hurt?



NORA

You get used to it. Don't worry about me; get to work.

Charlie reluctantly listens and continues his work. We then follow Nora as she scoots a box with her foot to reveal a small safe.

CHARLIE

Done. We can sift through the contents when we get back.

Charlie notices the safe Nora is looking at as Nora tries the office key on it.

CHARLIE

Found the jackpot, huh?

NORA

(when the key doesn't work)  
Not yet. I need another key first.

Charlie searches the desk for a key while Nora walks a circle around the room examining things. Nora eventually comes to a stop in front of one of the book shelves. Nora grabs a seemingly random book and opens it, revealing a key.

CHARLIE

Whoa, good intuition.

NORA

Something like that.

CHARLIE

How did you know?

NORA

You just have to feel around until you find the right spot, Cherry Boy.

Charlie becomes a bit flustered but continues.

CHARLIE

Seriously, how did you know?

NORA

(handing Charlie the book)  
Unlike the other books, the top of its spine is heavily worn, showing that this book is likely pulled out and put back in a lot. Something you don't

have a lot of experience in.

Charlie rolls his eyes at the comment. He examines the spine of the book then places the book on the table. Nora takes the key and opens the safe.

ON SAFE

Inside the safe Nora finds a folder lying on top of a stack of money. Nora grabs the folder.

BACK TO SCENE

Nora opens the folder and sees recipes, receipts, the restaurant blueprint, shipping logs, and bank deposit slips all paper-clipped together along with a business card that says A. B. Enterprises (Anthony Barkley Enterprises). Nora closes the folder.

CHARLIE

Anything useful?

NORA

Who knows? For now let's just get out before any more friends come out to play. We'll head to my apartment to save time.

CHARLIE

No complaints here.

Nora and Charlie head out of the office.

EXT. IN FRONT OF DOOR IN ALLEYWAY - AFTERNOON

Nora and Charlie are exiting the restaurant. As soon as Nora comes out a GUNSHOT is heard and a bullet hits the door next to Nora.

NORA

Whoa!

Nora scrambles back inside.

EXT. ALLEYWAY IN FRONT OF METAL DOOR - AFTERNOON

A group of 7 thugs are outside the door in the direction of the street. The bodies of the other thugs and enforcer have been moved off to the side. The thugs are pointing their guns at the door. The LEAD THUG, standing in the front, speaks up.

LEAD THUG

Come on out and give yerself up. This can only end one other way.

NORA

All right. I'm coming out. Just don't shoot me.

We see Nora's empty hands extend out of the doorway first. Nora steps out and stands alone in front of the group of thugs with her hands up. Charlie is still hiding inside.

LEAD THUG

Are you tellin' me this little dame offed all our men?

NORA

You'd be surprised what you can do with a little enthusiasm.

LEAD THUG

Well, dame or not, we can't have you goin' around disturbin' the peace.

Nora puts her hands down and grabs her skirt.

NORA

Oh, come on. Can't we work something out?

LEAD THUG

Yeah, what you got in mind?

NORA

Like I said, you'd be surprised what you can do with a little enthusiasm.

Nora begins lifting up her skirt. The thugs begin to get excited with some hooting and hollering. Nora lifts her skirt until the bottom of her underwear is barely in view. Under Nora's skirt is a gun strapped to each thigh. Before the thugs realize it, Nora grabs her guns and points her guns at them. Nora shoots at the thugs before they have time to react. The lead thug and two others are killed instantly. The other thugs scramble to get to cover. Nora gets into a gun fight with the four remaining thugs. Nora's advanced marksmanship easily defeats the remaining thugs. After the battle is over, Charlie comes out of the restaurant and joins Nora.

CHARLIE

Let's get out of here.

NORA

Yeah, I'm bored of this place, anyway.

Nora and Charlie walk towards the street.

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nora's studio apartment is tidy save for the clutter around a desk that is facing a wall. Besides the desk, there are the standard furnishings such as a couch, table, television, bed, etc. The desk has some papers, tissues, and a small mirror on it. Charlie sits at the computer with a cup of coffee while Nora looks over his shoulder.

NORA

Just financial records and employee reports. What a waste of time.

CHARLIE

What are we looking for, anyway?

NORA

Anything that might lead us to our client's missing brother.

CHARLIE

That's a little vague.  
(after thinking for a bit)  
What was the name of the business that Dreslin worked at?

NORA

A. B. Enterprises. Why?

CHARLIE

I'm going to cross reference the employee list with A. B. Enterprises and the shipping logs.

NORA

Nerd.

Nora steps away from Charlie. Charlie swivels in his chair to face Nora.

CHARLIE

What are you doing?

NORA

I'm changing. I'm going to A. B.  
Enterprises.

Nora begins to undress in front of Charlie who quickly turns back towards his screen. Charlie takes a sip of his coffee but chokes on it when he realizes that he can see Nora's naked reflection in the mirror. Charlie scrambles to wipe the coffee off of his pants with a tissue. Charlie returns to his task heavily flustered and Nora finishes changing. Nora is wearing a black t-shirt and black jeans with a black jacket. Her hair is pulled through the hole in the back of a black baseball cap. Nora is unarmed.

NORA

Call me if you find anything.

Nora begins to leave.

CHARLIE

Hold on. I have something for you  
already.

Nora stops at the door and Charlie turns to face her.

CHARLIE

Really? Now you decide to be  
incognito.

NORA

Just trying to keep things fresh. I  
wouldn't want you to get bored of me.

CHARLIE

You suck.

INT. BAXTER'S OFFICE - EVENING

Baxter is sitting at a computer desk in a large office. Jazz is standing behind Baxter and at his side with her hand on his shoulder. Baxter is watching a video recording of the events that transpired in the alleyway outside of the Chinese restaurant earlier while Jazz looks over his shoulder. Baxter is holding a small crystal shard in his left hand.

FROM BEHIND BAXTER AND JAZZ LOOKING TOWARD THE COMPUTER  
SCREEN

NORA (V.O.)

So, what did you find?

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
I noticed that every time A. B.  
Enterprises shows up on the shipping  
logs the same person is always listed  
for receiving.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

NORA (V.O.)  
What's the name?

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
Somebody named, Terra...no last name.

VIEWING THE DOOR TO THE OFFICE FROM BAXTER'S POSITION

A man in a suit enters the room and approaches Baxter.

NORA (V.O.)  
I don't remember that name from the  
employee list.

ON BAXTER, JAZZ, AND THE MAN IN THE SUIT

The man in the suit hands Baxter a folder. We see them  
exchange a few words but they are unheard.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
Exactly, but there's more. The brother  
of the girl that gave us the request,  
Robert Dreslin, worked for the  
shipping department for A. B.  
Enterprises.

There is a very short pause in the dialog. Baxter opens the  
folder which contains files that we don't see.

PAN SLOWLY TOWARDS BAXTER'S FACE.

NORA (V.O.)  
I remember.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
Okay, but here's the kicker. Guess  
who's listed as the Shipping and  
Receiving Manager in A. B.  
Enterprises?

NORA (V.O.)  
Terra?

REST ON BAXTER'S FACE. BAXTER'S FACE IS HEAVILY OBSCURED BY SHADOW.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
Better. Your old friend, Baxter.

Baxter cracks a sinister smile.

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nora appears very surprised by the information.

CHARLIE  
Things are starting to fall into place.

Nora walks over to the table and grabs her two guns and her sword before heading for the door again.

CHARLIE  
Where are you going?

NORA  
Where do you think?

INT. NORA'S OFFICE - MORNING

A flashback to earlier in the day. Nora's private investigator office is spacious and filled with furniture and equipment. The office contains a desk with a computer and a bookshelf behind the desk. In front of the desk is two chairs. On the other side of the room is a sofa and two comfortable chairs surrounding a small table making a lounge area. There is a television against the opposite wall from the desk. There is also a small refrigerator and a counter with a microwave, coffee pot, and other such items against the wall. Charlie is making coffee while NATALIE DRESLIN, a college girl in her early 20s, is sitting quietly on the sofa. Nora is leaning against the wall across from Charlie and Natalie.

NORA  
Natalie, right?  
(Natalie nods)  
Why don't you start by telling us why you're here.

NATALIE  
My brother, Robert, has gone missing.

NORA

And?

NATALIE

I need you to find him.

NORA

You'll have to give us more than that.  
When did he go missing? Where was the  
last place you saw him? What was he  
doing when he went missing? Things  
like that.

Natalie takes some time to come up with a reply. Nora's patience appears to be wearing thin. Charlie offers Natalie a cup of coffee and she takes it. Charlie offers a cup to Nora but she quietly refuses. Charlie then takes a seat on the sofa next to Natalie.

NATALIE

I last saw him two days ago at home  
before he left for work.

NORA

Did he say anything to you?

NATALIE

My brother had been investigating some  
shipping documents from the company he  
works at. He said that there was a  
problem with their records.

NORA

And you think that him going missing  
has to do with him snooping on his  
company, right?

NATALIE

Yes.

(sobbing)

He told me that he spoke to his boss  
but he told him to leave it alone.

(crying)

Oh, God. What do you think they did to  
him?

Natalie starts crying and Charlie puts his arm around her to comfort her. Nora rolls her eyes when she sees Charlie comfort Natalie.



CHARLIE  
Did you try going to the police?

NATALIE  
(still sobbing)  
I was scared.

CHARLIE  
Of what?

NORA  
If the police get involved then she is  
jeopardizing her brother's life.  
They'll want to get rid of any  
evidence as soon as possible,  
including him.

Natalie cries again. Charlie continues comforting her,  
annoying Nora.

CHARLIE  
I see.

Natalie stops crying but Charlie keeps his arm around her.

NORA  
Your sob story is great and all, but  
you do realize that this is a place of  
business, right?

Charlie is bothered by Nora's cold attitude towards Natalie.

NATALIE  
Yes I do, and I'm prepared to pay you.  
How much do you want?

CHARLIE  
Two-hundred dollars per day is our  
usu...

NORA  
(interrupting Charlie)  
A thousand dollars a day.

Charlie is shocked and slightly angered. He stands up and  
approaches Nora.

CHARLIE  
That's five times the price.

NORA  
It's five times the work.

CHARLIE  
Still, you can't expect her to pay  
that much money.

NORA  
Then she's S.O.L. (Shit out of luck),  
buddy.

CHARLIE  
What's wrong with...

NATALIE  
(interjecting)  
I'll pay it.

Charlie faces Natalie.

CHARLIE  
You don't have to. She's just bullying  
you. That price is outrageous.

NATALIE  
It's okay. If these people are as bad  
as they seem, then this is the least I  
can do.

CHARLIE  
Are you sure?

NATALIE  
Yes.

NORA  
Good. I'll send you the bill when  
we're done.

NATALIE  
Of course.

Nora goes to her computer and starts typing.

NORA  
Where does your brother work?

NATALIE  
A. B. Enterprises.

NORA  
Any other details I should know?

NATALIE  
He was investigating shipping records  
between A. B. Enterprises and a client  
company.

NORA  
I see. What's the company?

NATALIE  
I don't know, but I have an address.

NORA  
I'll start there.

Nora walks to Natalie and Natalie gives Nora a piece of paper  
with an address.

NORA (CONT'D)  
We'll begin searching immediately.

CHARLIE  
I'll see Ms. Dreslin home.

NORA  
You're coming with me.

CHARLIE  
What?

NATALIE  
I'll be fine. Thank you.

Natalie sees herself out.

CHARLIE  
Why am I going?

NORA  
I might need you.

CHARLIE  
That's what this is for.

Charlie holds up a small communication device that looks like  
a watch battery. Nora ignores him and grabs her weapons,  
which were in her desk.

CHARLIE  
Is that necessary.

NORA  
Dreslin has already been missing for two days. If he's still alive, he's likely running out of time. So if your done bitching get ready to go.

Charlie doesn't respond but promptly starts getting ready to go by grabbing a tablet PC. Nora gives him the paper with the address.

NORA  
I'm sorry.

CHARLIE  
It's all right.

NORA  
I promise things will be calm and peaceful.

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Back to present time. Nora walks over to the table and grabs her two guns and her sword before heading for the door again.

CHARLIE  
Where are you going?

NORA  
Where do you think?

CHARLIE  
You can't go to an office building armed to the teeth. You'll cause mayhem.

Nora stops and faces Charlie.

NORA  
Dreslin is running out of time.

CHARLIE  
So you're willing to put hundreds of innocent people at risk to find him?

Nora pauses.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
He isn't worth it.

NORA  
Tell that to Natalie.

CHARLIE  
Not him...Baxter. He isn't worth it.

Nora returns to the table and removes her weapons.

NORA  
You're right.

Charlie gets up and walks over to Nora. He hands Nora the communication device.

CHARLIE  
Take this.

Nora places the communication device into her ear and heads for the door again.

NORA  
(as she is heading out the door)  
Okay then. I'm off, and don't forget.  
You owe me dinner.

CHARLIE  
Yeah, yeah. Try not to get shot this time.

Nora leaves and closes the door behind her.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF A. B. ENTERPRISES - EVENING

Nora is down the road from the A. B. Enterprises office building. The building is tall and at least 20 floors. There are people going in and out of the building regularly. Nora is watching the building from afar. Nora talks to Charlie by placing her hand on the device in her ear.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
So, what's the plan.

NORA  
I figured I'd go in and crack some skulls.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
Haven't you cracked enough skulls for

today?

NORA

Okay. What's your plan, then?

CHARLIE (O.S.)

You're a detective, right? Go in there and detect.

NORA

Fine. We'll do things your way. For now.

Nora enters the building.

INT. A. B. ENTERPRISES LOBBY - EVENING

The lobby is large and clean with a concierge desk at the other side of the room from the door and two elevators on the left. There is a waiting area with seats and tables on the right side. Many people populate the lobby, most in business suits. Nora approaches the CONCIERGE, a heavy African-American lady in a flashy dress sitting behind the desk in front of a computer.

NORA

Excuse me.

CONCIERGE

Yes, honey. How can I help you?

NORA

I'm trying to find my friend, Robert. Robert Dreslin. Do you know where he is?

CONCIERGE

How 'bout I look him up for you? Just a moment, dear.

NORA

Thank you.

The concierge looks Robert Dreslin up in the computer.

CONCIERGE

I'm sorry, sweetie. It says here that he went home for the day.

NORA

I see.

CONCIERGE

Is there anything else I can help you with today?

NORA

No. Thank you very much.

CONCIERGE

Any time, baby. You have a nice day.

Nora walks away from the desk and talks to Charlie.

NORA

Figures.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Dead-end, huh? The receptionist was nice, though.

NORA

Yeah. I like her. Maybe I should get a receptionist.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Maybe. Anyway, any ideas?

NORA

I still have one more lead.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

And if that doesn't work?

NORA

Then we do things my way.

Nora returns to the concierge.

NORA

Excuse me.

CONCIERGE

Yes, sweetie.

NORA

Could you tell me where I could find Mr. William Baxter?

CONCIERGE

Ohh, Mr. Baxter? He's up on the 17th floor, but he's not in right now. He left early today.

NORA

I se...

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)

(interjecting)

However, his assistant, Terra, is still in if you want to talk to her.

NORA

Really? That'd be great. Thank you very much...

Nora looks at the concierge's name tag. It reads, EVELYN.

NORA (CONT'D)

Evelyn.

EVELYN

Anytime, dear. Now go wait over there and I'll have Terra come down and meet you.

Nora starts walking away.

NORA

(to Charlie)

Better than nothing.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

I bet she knows where Baxter is.

NORA

Or Dreslin.

Nora goes over to the waiting area. After waiting for a while, Nora is approached by TERRA. Terra is a thin, blonde girl that looks around the same age or younger than Nora. Even though Terra is acting professional, her perpetual smile and upbeat mannerisms give off a childlike demeanor.

TERRA

Hello, my name is Terra. Nice to meet you.

Terra and Nora shake hands.

NORA

Likewise. I'm Nora and I'm looking for Robert Dreslin. Do you know where I might find him?



TERRA

I'm sorry. I just started working here so I don't know everyone, yet.

NORA

That's okay. Is there a way I could get in contact with your boss, Mr. Baxter?

TERRA

Yes. If you come back tomorrow morning around six he will meet with you then.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

(only Nora can hear)

A. B. Enterprises is closed on Sundays.

NORA

Sure. I'll come back tomorrow morning, then.

TERRA

Okay. Take care on your way home.

Nora begins walking away but turns back around to face Terra, who is still watching her with a smile. Nora has a serious look on her face.

NORA

I'll be coming prepared, tomorrow. Just so you know.

TERRA

(still smiling)

Don't worry. I'll tell everyone to expect you.

Nora walks away towards the door while Terra still watches her leave.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Your way, then?

NORA

I gave them a warning.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Sounded like she gave you one, too.

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nora enters through the front door and sees Charlie still sitting at the computer desk.

CHARLIE

Welcome back.

NORA

You're still here? I figured you would have gone home by now.

CHARLIE

I still owe you dinner, remember?

NORA

What are we having?

CHARLIE

Chinese.

NORA

You're funny.

Nora takes off her jacket and hat as she and Charlie speak.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry about Baxter.

NORA

What?

CHARLIE

If I would have let you do things your way, you might have had time to catch him. He's probably long gone by now.

NORA

Don't worry about it. He was long gone before I got there.

Nora undoes her hair from the ponytail. She approaches Charlie and places her hand on his shoulder.

NORA

You know I need you, right? To keep reminding me that I'm still human, despite everything.

CHARLIE

I wouldn't want you to get lonely.

NORA

Thank you for being here.

Charlie places his hand on Nora's.

CHARLIE

Always.

The doorbell rings and Nora checks the door. It is a Chinese food delivery.

INT. A. B. ENTERPRISES LOBBY - MORNING

Nora enters the lobby of A. B. Enterprises where Terra is waiting for her alone, unarmed, and wearing casual clothing. Nora is wearing a similar outfit to when she went to the Chinese restaurant only with jeans instead of a skirt. Nora's sword is on her back and two guns are strapped to her vest. She also has the communication device in her ear. The building is completely void of people besides Nora and Terra. Nora approaches Terra.

NORA

Where is Baxter?

TERRA

(smiling, almost giggling)

Baxter had to make an emergency trip. He regrets that he can't be joining us today. He gave me this to give to you, though.

Terra tosses Nora a folder. It is the same folder that Baxter had earlier. Nora opens it and sees some files and a flash drive before sticking it in the front of her vest. As Nora and Terra continue to talk, we witness Terra's professional demeanor begin to fade and see her truer, more happy-go-lucky personality come out.

NORA

Okay, then. Where is Robert Dreslin?

TERRA

Who?

NORA

Don't play games with me. Dreslin went missing three days ago while investigating this company.

TERRA  
Never heard of him.

Nora is infuriated by Terra's aloofness and having her time wasted. Terra is still all smiles and giggles.

NORA  
Where is Baxter? I know you know where he is.

TERRA  
Of course I do. I'm his assistant...sometimes.

NORA  
Then tell me.

TERRA  
No.

NORA  
We can do this peacefully or painfully, your choice. Either you tell me or I beat it out of you.

TERRA  
Baxter told me you would.

NORA  
And you still came here alone and unarmed. Do you have a death wish?

TERRA  
I don't know. I'm pretty awesome.

Nora removes her weapons and tosses them aside then removes the folder and slides it over to where her weapons are resting.

NORA  
Baxter didn't tell you? So am I.

Nora charges at Terra and they begin to fight. Terra is just as acrobatic and fast as Nora. Nora is serious and often cocky during the fight, but Nora and Terra appear to be completely even in ability. Throughout the fight Terra keeps her childlike personality and often makes jokes and friendly conversation. Both sides have trouble landing solid blows on the other and only manage to land minor attacks and trips, pushes, or throws on each other to little effect. Most of the attacks Nora manages to land on Terra are due to Terra

slipping or stumbling over random objects due to clumsiness. The lobby is being trashed in the battle.

After the fight has gone on for a while, Nora begins to realize that Terra may be a more skilled fighter and has the upper hand. Terra is fast and accurate and can quickly dodge almost anything Nora throws at her. Nora disengages for a bit to catch her breath. Terra waits patiently, still smiling, for Nora to reengage.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Having trouble.

NORA

A little bit, yeah. Who'd a thunk it.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

I didn't see this coming. Who is this girl?

NORA

A major pain in my ass.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Can you beat her?

NORA

Don't worry about me. I've got this handled.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

If you say so.

Nora gets into a fighting stance again.

TERRA

Ready?

NORA

Always.

Terra is standing withing a few feet of where Nora left her weapons. Nora runs and jump kicks Terra but Terra dodges. Nora lands from the jump kick and rolls straight to her weapons. Nora grabs her guns quickly and instantly turns with her guns to point at where Terra was standing. To Nora's surprise, Terra is not there. Nora cautiously looks around the room trying to find Terra.

NORA

Can't you just make things easy and

surrender!?

Nora hears Terra giggle from behind her. Nora turns in place. Nora shoots at where she heard Terra, which is the reception desk.

NORA

You're really pushing your luck!

Nora then hears Terra speak from her left, where the staircase is.

TERRA

Hey, no fair. Guns are cheating.

Terra runs into the staircase before Nora can react. The door to the staircase closes behind her.

NORA

Son of a...

Nora runs to the staircase and kicks open the door. Nora runs in.

INT. A. B. ENTERPRISES STAIRCASE - MORNING

As soon as Nora enters she is grabbed by Terra. Terra skillfully disarms Nora as she and Nora reengage in close quarters.

NORA

Fuck!

TERRA

Give up?

NORA

Not even close.

Nora runs away from Terra and up the stairs.

TERRA

A chase scene. How exciting.

Terra chases Nora. Nora runs up the stairs at full speed with Terra following behind. Nora leads Terra up to the 17th floor and exits the staircase.

INT. A. B. ENTERPRISES 17TH FLOOR - MORNING

Nora runs out of the staircase and into the hallway with

Terra following her. The hallway is lined with offices on one side and a glass wall on the other side facing the rear exterior of A. B. Enterprises. Nora stops around the halfway point of the hallway and faces Terra. Terra stops a few steps away from her.

TERRA  
Done running?

NORA  
Yeah.

Nora attacks Terra and they continue their fight. Even though Terra keeps her smile Nora now has the upper hand. The more confined fighting space allows Nora to keep Terra from moving too much making her stay face to face. This, along with Terra's natural clumsiness, gives Nora the advantage.

After fighting for a while, Terra stumbles after an attack and slams against a window. She is then hit hard by Nora accidentally sending her through the window. Nora frantically jumps and catches Terra's hand. Terra dangles out of the window with Nora lying on the floor trying to pull her up. Terra appears surprised that Nora bothered to save her. Terra notices that a piece of broken glass is cutting into Nora's arm and that Nora is bleeding profusely. Because of this, and their long and tiring fight, Nora doesn't have the strength to pull Terra up. Instead, Nora appears to be struggling just to keep herself from being pulled out with Terra. Terra smiles at Nora.

TERRA  
Thank you.

Terra lets go of Nora's hand and plummets to the ground below. Nora is shocked. Nora stands back up and heads for the elevator.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
What happened? Is it over?

NORA  
Yes. It's over.

INT. NORA'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Nora is back in her office. Charlie is sitting at the computer reviewing flash drive they received from Terra. Nora is sitting on the couch drinking a coffee.

CHARLIE

It's all here. Everything we need to prove that A. B. Enterprises was into some shady stuff.

NORA

What kind of stuff?

CHARLIE

Money laundering, bribery, tax evasion, illegal contraband. You name it.

NORA

What about Dreslin?

CHARLIE

That's the other thing. I've been doing a lot of digging, and I don't see any person by the name of Robert Dreslin. I even looked up the address Natalie gave us, and it doesn't exist.

NORA

Baxter played us.

CHARLIE

You think?

NORA

He wanted us to investigate A. B. Enterprises so he sent us a fake client.

CHARLIE

To what end? What's in it for him?

NORA

I don't know, but I'll ask him next time I see him.

CHARLIE

I can't believe I felt sorry for Natalie, if that's even her name. I would have never taken her side if I had known she was working for him.

NORA

And Terra wouldn't have died.



CHARLIE  
That's not your fault.

NORA  
I know. It's Baxter's.

INT. NORA'S OFFICE - EVENING

A few hours later, Nora and Charlie are still in the office. Charlie is at the desk organizing and Nora is sitting on the sofa looking through a folder. Nora's weapons are on the table in front of her.

CHARLIE  
Is that the one she gave you?

NORA  
No. It's something I picked up from  
Baxter's office.

CHARLIE  
Is that why you ran all the way to the  
17th floor?

NORA  
Actually, I was hoping Terra would get  
tired, but she kept coming. No  
innuendo intended.

CHARLIE  
That girl was something else. So  
what's in the folder?

NORA  
Your next job.

CHARLIE  
Me?

NORA  
Yes. I need you to investigate someone  
for me.

CHARLIE  
Who is it?

NORA  
Matt Bower. Here is his work address.

CHARLIE  
You want me to go over there alone?

NORA

Chicken.

CHARLIE

Not everyone can spit out bullets.  
What are you going to do?

NORA

We never got paid for our last job, so  
I'm going to take another one.  
Spitting doesn't pay bills. No  
innuendo intended.

CHARLIE

Do you have another job in mind?

NORA

This one.

Nora hands Charlie a file from the folder. Charlie skims the file. Nora sits back down and grabs one of her swords. She begins polishing it.

CHARLIE

A babysitter. That's a long way from  
katana wielding detective.

NORA

It's nice to wield something else  
every once in a while.

Nora is rubbing her sword suggestively.

CHARLIE

Let me guess, innuendo intended.

NORA

(winking)

You know it.

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nora has just gotten out of the shower and is getting dressed. The television is on and is showing a news broadcast. The news broadcast details an investigation into A. B. Enterprises due to evidence that was mailed to the police anonymously. Nora grabs the remote and turns off the television.

INT. NORA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Charlie is still in the office doing research on the computer. He has the television on displaying the news but is mostly using it as background noise. The news broadcast is the same that is showing at Nora's apartment.

EXT. BEHIND A. B. ENTERPRISES - MORNING

We are behind A. B. Enterprises where Terra fell out of the window. We are looking at the scene from a few days ago right after Nora and Terra's fight. We still hear the news broadcast that was playing in Nora's apartment.

FROM OUTSIDE TOWARDS THE 17TH FLOOR WINDOW WHERE TERRA FELL

AS THE BROADCAST SPEAKS, SLOWLY SHIFT FROM THE WINDOW TO THE FLOOR WHERE TERRA HIT THE GROUND

The broadcast starts to talk about the signs of a struggle found inside A. B. Enterprises and the broken window on the 17th floor. They say that blood found on the 17th floor and on the floor outside show that someone fell out of the window.

THE VIEW NOW RESTS ON ON THE FLOOR OUTSIDE

ZOOM IN ON A PUDDLE OF BLOOD

It appears that something was dragged through or from the puddle into a bay behind the building. The news broadcast states that even though there are signs that someone fell out of the window and hit the ground outside, no body was found.

INT. NORA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ZOOMED IN ON CHARLIE'S FACE

He is no longer typing away on the computer and is watching the news broadcast intently because he has just realized that Terra's body has gone missing.

FADE OUT