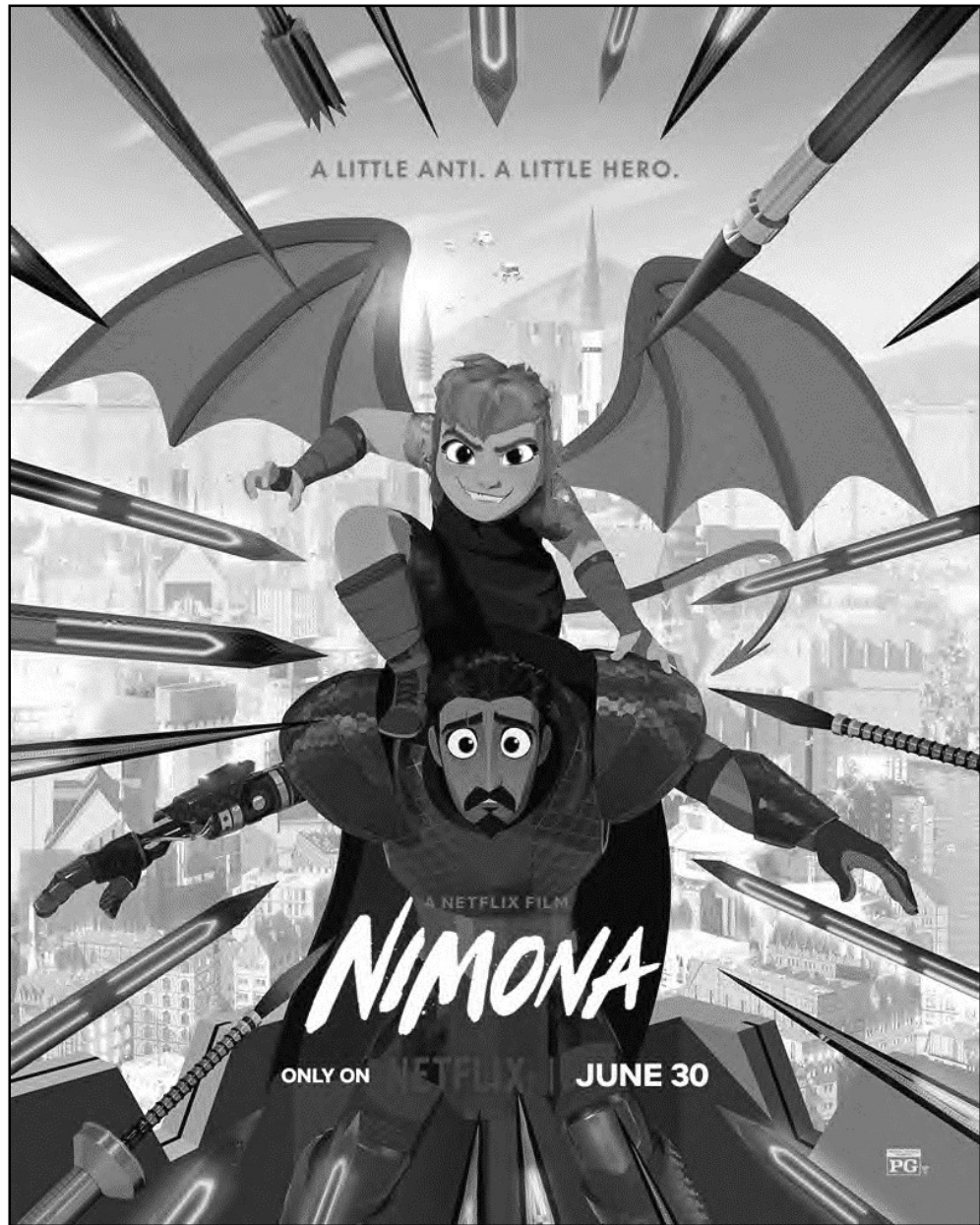


# NIMONA



Screenplay by  
Robert L. Baird  
Lloyd Taylor

FINAL VERSION  
February 8, 2023

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**NIMONA**

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February 8, 2023  
Final Conform

ANNAPURNA LOGO

**SEQUENCE 2013\_ ANCIENTHIST:**

ON BLACK:

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*A long, long time ago a Kingdom  
lived in peace.*

We hear a match being stuck. A warm light illuminates...

AN ANCIENT SCROLL an image of a peaceful medieval Kingdom.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*Believing they had nothing to fear.*

An image of the dark woods. Two molten eyes appear.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*But lurking in the shadows was a  
great and terrible evil.*

ON THE SCROLL An image of a giant monster breathing fire and decimating the kingdom and its people.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*The monster attacked without  
warning.*

WE HEAR the distant sound of a monstrous roar.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*Laying waste to everything and  
everyone in its path!*

As we pan past the images - fire fills the frame.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
*But in that darkest hour, a hero  
rose up. Her name was Gloreth.*

ON THE SCROLL A knight in golden armor, sword raised. Her voice is heard, echoing from the past:

GLORETH (O.S.)  
*Go back to shadows from whence you  
came!*

ON THE SCROLL Gloreth drives the monster back into the shadows.

ANOTHER SCROLL unfurls showing a great wall being built around the kingdom to keep the monsters out.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*Gloreth vowed that her people would never be vulnerable again.*

ON THE SCROLL an image of Gloreth standing guard. More knights appear by her side, pointing their swords into the darkness.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*So she trained an elite force of knights. And decreed that their descendants would protect the Kingdom for generations to come.*

We pan down the scroll to see monsters lurking outside the wall.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*But if you want a happily ever after, you can never let your guard down.*

Over the scrolls - a shadows swoops by - extinguishing the candle light.

GO TO BLACK:

NIMONA (V.O.)

*Because the monsters are always out there...*

**SEQUENCE 2055\_KINGDUMB:**

CHYRON - 1000 Years Later

GIANT WALL-MOUNTED GUN TURRETS fire PLASMA-POWERED ARTILLERY out into the night-darkened unknown beyond the wall like fireworks. An impressive display of firepower!

NATE KNIGHT (O.S.)

Good Evening folks! We are coming to you live from the Glorodome. I'm Nate Knight.

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (O.S.)

I'm Alamzapam Davis.

REVEAL we are in a TECHNO-MEDIEVAL WORLD. A vibrant mashup of old and new: Taverns and blacksmiths and cobblestone streets coexist with ATMs and skyscrapers and cell phones and... you get the idea.

EXT. GLORODOME

BIG GAME VIBE: Sports night music! Sweeping helicopter shots of the stadium.

The anchors tonight, ALAMZAPAM DAVIS and NATE KNIGHT, are all super positive smiles and energy.

NATE KNIGHT (ON BLIMP TV)  
And tonight's the night we knight  
the knights! Ain't that right, Pam?

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (ON BLIMP TV)  
It sure is, Nate.

People of all ages buzz with excitement on this big night - buying snacks and souvenirs on their way into the stadium.

Alamzapam and Nate broadcast from outside the Glorodome.

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (CONT'D)  
But this is also the most  
controversial knighting ceremony in  
a thousand years.

NATE KNIGHT  
You can feel the excitement AND the  
tension.

EXT. KINGDOM

The camera drops down to a grittier neighborhood.

DANKS KID  
Come on, it's started.

PEASANTS hang out around a flickering screen to watch The Knighting Ceremony.

NATE KNIGHT  
Because tonight tradition will be  
cast aside and the Kingdom will  
change forever because of one man:

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS  
Ballister.

-- B-ROLL FOOTAGE. THE INSTITUTE. Massive estate, sprawling grounds.

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
The street kid with the impossible  
dream of being a knight.

Scrappy-looking YOUNG BALLISTER, 10. Kind eyes. Armed with a wooden sword, he hops the wrought-iron fence and attacks the training monster dummy. He's a bit wild but shows skill and passion.

The other cadets react to Ballister- shocked, disgusted.

Out of breath, he stands tall, full of pride and purpose.

YOUNG BALLISTER  
I'm here to slay monsters and  
protect our Kingdom!

The Institute guards tackle him. End of clip.

EXT. GLORETH SQUARE

Citizens watch the footage playing on the giant screens around the square.

NATE KNIGHT (O.S.)  
Impossible, that is, until the  
Queen herself made a shocking  
decision.

-- PRESS CONFERENCE FOOTAGE: QUEEN VALERIN addresses a gathering of YOUNG CADETS, KNIGHT TRAINERS, THE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE and the Press.

The Director hands Young Ballister a real sword with a distinct red glow.

YOUNG BALLISTER  
(in awe)  
Whooooa.

QUEEN VALERIN  
No, he doesn't come from a noble.  
bloodline.

She smiles at him.

QUEEN VALERIN (CONT'D)  
But he might just have the heart of  
a hero.

He stares back, with wonder and gratitude. Biggest smile ever. He's being *seen* by the Queen!

The crowd erupts.

EXT. KINGDOM

We see on various screens as we travel thru the city--

-- FOOTAGE - Ballister, now grown, puts on an impressive display of his knight skills.

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (O.S.)  
And Ballister made the most of that  
chance, graduating top of his  
Institute class. A class that  
includes none other than AMBROSIUS  
GOLDENLOIN!

--PROMOTIONAL SHOT of GOLDENLOIN, 20s - all charm.

GOLDENLOIN (ON SCREEN)  
Hey!

NATE KNIGHT  
Direct descendant of Gloreth  
herself and the most anticipated  
knight of a generation!

Holographic billboards advertise the latest fast food menu item from "Monster Burger" and "SlayerAide", the kingdom's #1 sports drink, endorsed by Ambrosius Goldenloin.

-- FOOTAGE of Goldenloin exiting the locker room to CHEERS from the crowd.

GOLDENLOIN (ON SCREEN)  
(working the crowd)  
Wooooo!

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (O.S.)  
But with Ballister joining the  
ranks, for the first time in  
history, our safety will be put in  
the hands of a commoner.

MAN ON THE STREET INTERVIEWS from a decade ago.

CONCERNED CITIZEN #1 (ON SCREEN)  
I don't feel safe.

CONCERNED CITIZEN #2 (ON SCREEN)  
It's not what Gloreth wanted.

People watch the promo package on screens through out the kingdom.

CONCERNED CITIZEN #3  
I really hope the Queen knows what  
she's doing.

BACK ON THE NEWSCASTERS at the Glorodome.

NATE KNIGHT

So tonight, only one question  
remains.

**SEQUENCE 2060\_SELFDOUBT:**

EXT. GLORODOME - RAFTERS - DAY

ON BALLISTER, watching the footage on the Jumbotron. Staring  
at an image of himself with the word "Worthy?" underneath.  
Will he always be seen this way?

NATE KNIGHT (O.S.)

Will the Kingdom accept this knight  
who might not be right?

Some people in the crowd below scream "NO!"

Ambrosius Goldenloin climbs up on the catwalk.

GOLDENLOIN

*Will the Kingdom accept this knight  
who might not be right?*

BALLISTER

(chuckling)  
Alright, alright.

GOLDENLOIN

*And will Ballister be broody on the  
biggest day of his life?*

Goldenloin sits close to Ballister.

BALLISTER

I'm not brooding, I'm just--I'm  
thinking. This is my thinking face.

GOLDENLOIN

Hey, Thinky-face. Look at me. You  
were better and worked harder than  
all of us. You're gonna be a  
knight, Bal!

He grabs Ballister's shoulders and gives him a playful shake.

BALLISTER

(chuckles)  
Okay, okay, okay.

Ballister still seems concerned. He sighs, looking down at  
the crowd.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
But what if they still hate me?

GOLDENLOIN  
No one hates a hero of the realm.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)  
They're gonna love you.

Goldenloin takes Ballister's hand.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)  
Like I do.

Ballister squeezes his hand.

Together, they look out over the Glorodome. Ballister leans his head on Goldenloin's shoulder.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
*My Lords and Ladies, the Knighting  
Ceremony is just moments away.*

**SEQUENCE 2067\_LOCKERROOM:**

INT. GLORODOME - BACKSTAGE - LATER

Backstage the knights-to-be are getting ready for the ceremony.

The crowd's roar crests. A SQUIRE brings the knights their swords, which have been polished for the big night.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
(to a knight)  
Your sword.  
(to another knight)  
Your sword.

A FEMALE KNIGHT tries to take a sword from the Squire's cart. The Squire slaps her hand.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (CONT'D)  
And do-do-Don't touch the cart!

FEMALE KNIGHT  
Okay, relax.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
(calmly)  
Your sword.

He calmly hands the knight her sword.

Goldenloin helps Ballister make some final adjustments to his armor.

THODDEUS SUREBLADE, (aka TODD), approaches Ballister, and for once, he seems sincere.

TODD

(sincere)

Hey, Ballister. Listen man, I just wanted to say, I know I've always been tough on you and I never thought you belonged here...

Beat.

BALLISTER

And?

TODD

And what? Oh, did you think I was gonna keep going? Or like...did you think I was going to apologize for how I treated you? OH MY GOD. That's hilarious! You're so stupid. I love it. It's so funny.

He shoulder checks Ballister as he struts away.

TODD (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Hey everybody! Ballister thought I was going to apologize for treating him like the trash that he is!

Some of the other knights laugh.

The Squire hands Ballister his sword.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Uhh, your sword.

BALLISTER

Ah, thanks.

Something about it feels off, but he can't quite put his finger on it.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Ummm. Uhhh, Mr. Ballister, uhh --

The Squire holds up his phone.

TODD (O.S.)

Hey, Squire --

Todd poses, flexes.

TODD (CONT'D)  
Come take a picture with a real  
knight, not some charity case.  
(turns to his friends)  
High five!  
(laughing)  
Smack that hard! Slap it!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
Can I just--

DIRECTOR (O.S.)  
Cadets!

The Squire tucks his phone away nervously.

Goldenloin grabs his sword as the Squire scurries away with  
the cart.

Ballister and the rest of the cadets stand at attention as  
the Director walks in.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
There's no greater calling than  
protecting this Kingdom from evil.

The Director smiles, remembering the day of her knighting.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Never let your guard down. Never  
weaken. And always be the will of  
Gloreth.

KNIGHTS  
(as one)  
YES DIRECTOR!

The Director makes her way down the line.

KNIGHTS (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Director.

TODD  
Thank you, Director.

She stops in front of Ballister.

DIRECTOR  
Ballister, today the kingdom will  
see you for who you really are.

She smiles. He smiles back.

BALLISTER  
Thank you, Director.

GOLDENLOIN  
Director.

She walks on. Goldenloin looks at Ballister and gives him a playful nudge in the shoulder.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)  
Teacher's pet.

The STABLEHANDS bring out the horses.

Ballister chuckles.

BALLISTER  
Wait, what do you mean? You think  
I'm her favorite?

Goldenloin laughs as he mounts his horse.

The FANFARE rings out. The crowd roars from the stadium.

**SEQUENCE 2070\_CEREMONY:**

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
*And now, THE NEWEST HEROES OF THE  
REALM!*

INT. GLORODOME - TUNNEL

Ballister rides out of the tunnel, holding his head high with pride even though he's totally nervous.

He's floored when the crowd erupts.

CROWD  
(cheering)  
GOLDENLOIN! GOLDENLOIN!

Ballister looks at the crowd in the stands. Some street kids peeking out from below the bleachers where they're hiding. They wave to him. He smiles back.

**SEQUENCE 2080\_REGICIDE:**

EXT. GLORODOME - FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Goldenloin leads the procession of knights onto the field, forming a semi-circle around the stage.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
*My Lords and Ladies, Her Majesty,  
The Queen!*

The crowd applauds as Queen Valerin steps out onto the stage. Goldenloin is first in line to approach the Queen.

GOLDENLOIN  
(to Ballister)  
Here comes the woo!

Goldenloin knows how to work the crowd.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)  
Wooo!!!

He throws his arms in the air and the crowd ROARS.

CROWD  
WOOOOO!!!!

On stage, Goldenloin kneels in front of the Queen. He withdraws his sword hilt-first and hands it to her. She uses it to lightly tap Goldenloin on each shoulder.

QUEEN VALERIN  
I hereby pronounce you Sir  
Ambrosius Goldenloin, Hero of the  
Realm. Stand, Sir Knight!

The crowd cheers as the Queen hands Goldenloin his sword. He accepts and steps aside.

BALLISTER  
(to himself)  
Here we go.

Ballister takes a deep breath, it's his turn. He climbs the stairs to the stage and stands before the Queen.

QUEEN VALERIN  
I've been looking forward to this  
moment.

Ballister kneels.

BALLISTER  
(awed, humble)  
Thank you, your Majesty.

The Queen addresses the crowd.

QUEEN VALERIN

My people. Starting today, any of you should be able to hold the sword, if you want it. If you earn it.

People in the crowd and those watching around the kingdom react to the Queen's words - some are excited and hopeful for this change.

QUEEN VALERIN (CONT'D)

I've watched this young man earn it many times over.

Ballister is excited, but nervous. He had to work his ass off and persevere against all odds to get here. As a result, he's about to get everything he's ever wanted. The Queen smiles at Ballister.

QUEEN VALERIN (CONT'D)

Your sword.

Ballister pulls his sword from its scabbard and hands it to the Queen hilt-first.

QUEEN VALERIN (CONT'D)

I hereby pronounce you, Sir Ballister Boldheart, Hero of the Realm.

Ballister is truly touched. He couldn't have chosen a more perfect name himself. He looks around at the crowd.

The Glorodome is completely silent until --

A couple people start to applaud. Then a few more. Finally the whole Glorodome joins in.

GOLDENLOIN

BOLDHEART! Yeaaaahhhh!

Goldenloin is whooping and clapping.

The audience cheers, chanting his name. BOLDHEART! BOLDHEART! BOLDHEART!

The applause turns into a DEAFENING ROAR.

Ballister is overwhelmed. Acceptance. At last.

The Queen smiles at Ballister.

QUEEN VALERIN  
Congratulations, Sir Boldheart. Let  
a new era of heroes begin with you.

He takes his sword from the Queen, but something goes wrong.

Time seems to slow as A BOLT OF ENERGY explodes from the sword's hilt and smashes into the Queen, knocking her off her feet.

Goldenloin reacts instinctively, swinging his sword to disarm Ballister. The sword SHOOTs again, hitting the Jumbotron.

Ballister is stunned. *His arm. Why can't he feel his arm?*

He looks down to see his shattered sword on the ground next to him, his hand still firmly wrapped around its hilt.

Goldenloin, horrified, drops his sword.

The Director kneels over the Queen and cries out in horror.

Ballister and Goldenloin are staring at each other in shock. *What just happened, and how is any of this real?*

From above, a horrible CREAKING sound. The Jumbotron has become unmoored and starts to fall between Ballister and the knights who were coming for him, swords drawn.

Ballister and Goldenloin lock eyes-- their relationship will never be the same.

BOOM! The Jumbotron hits the ground. The dust clears to reveal an ENORMOUS CRATER in the ground.

TODD  
Arrest him! He killed the Queen!

KNIGHTS (O.S.)  
Let's get him!/He killed the Queen!

Ballister drops down into the crater and disappears down a sewer tunnel.

**SEQUENCE 2090\_DISGRACED:**

NIMONA (V.O.)  
Some of us don't get the "Happily-  
ever-after" we're looking for.

EXT. KINGDOM - ALLEY

Lining the walls are Institute propaganda posters -  
"Protecting the Kingdom."

NIMONA (V.O.)  
Cuz it ain't that kind of kingdom.  
And this ain't that kind of story.

A spray-paint can comes into frame changing "Kingdom" in a poster's slogan to "KingDUMB."

Pull back to see a BADASS, PINK-HAIRED 15-YEAR-OLD PUNK GIRL - This is **NIMONA**. A touch of fang in her smile.

A news report about Ballister projected on a nearby HOLOGRAPHIC "TOWN CRIER" NEWSSTAND catches her attention.

VOICES (V.O., ON TV)  
The Queen Killer is still out there./Everyone is scared.

She moves against the flow of foot traffic as she makes her way thru the crowd to the newsstand. She stands out- there's no one else in the crowd who carries herself like this punk kid.

PASSERBY  
(re: Nimona)  
Freak.

On Nimona as she takes in the images of Ballister on the news-screen:

VOICE (V.O., ON TV)  
Not since Gloreth's monster has anything been so hated.

-Ballister as an adult looking dark and sinister.

-Ballister as a kid, looking wild.

-Ballister labeled 'VILLAIN'.

VARIOUS VOICES (V.O., ON TV)  
He never should have been a knight./ Because he wasn't one of us, and he hated us for it./He's a commoner./He's vile!

Nimona's reactions progress from curiosity, to compassion, to mischievous glee.

TODD (V.O., ON TV)  
He's got no place in this kingdom.

VARIOUS VOICES (V.O., ON TV)  
He's a murderer!/He's a monster!

She stares at Ballister's picture on the news and FLASHES a DEVILISH GRIN.

NIMONA  
*He's perfect.*

TITLE CARD: NIMONA

**SEQUENCE 2100\_SIDEKICK:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR

Ballister builds something with metal scrap and circuit boards.

On one of the walls, bits of string form a web of connections between newspaper clippings, photos of those tied in some way to either the Queen or Ballister, and hand-scribbled notes. Ballister has been busy.

As he steps into the light, we see that he's made a makeshift ROBOTIC ARM.

KNOCK KNOCK!

Ballister reacts. *What?! That's impossible! No one knows he's here!* He grabs an broken bottle and cautiously approaches the door.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

He takes a deep breath, raises the bottle into striking position...

KNOCK KNOCK KNO--

...and throws open the door to reveal...

...Nothing.

*What the hell?* He closes the door, noticeably confused.

BALLISTER  
(muttering)  
That was weird-

Ballister turns to discover that same badass, pink-haired 15-year-old punk from the alley - now somehow in his lair!

He brandishes the broken bottle threateningly.

NIMONA  
Hey, Boss!

Before Ballister can respond, Nimona checks the place out.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

I love the secret lair.

(big sniff)

The garbage and the smell of sadness really pull the whole thing together.

Ballister stares, open-mouthed. WTF.

BALLISTER

Wait, wait, wait... Who are you?!

NIMONA

The name's Nimona.

BALLISTER

And how did you--?

She grabs his robot arm and shakes it vigorously.

NIMONA

Whoa, yeah, sick arm! Did it bleed a lot?

BALLISTER

Huh--

NIMONA

--Did they let you keep the old one?!

BALLISTER

No. Let GO!

He yanks his arm away from her.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you?

Nimona's suddenly over at his work bench, rummaging around and touching everything.

NIMONA

Ooh!

She picks up a BLOW TORCH and flicks it on.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Can I have it?

BALLISTER

What? Put that down! That is not  
for little girls.

NIMONA

Little girls?  
(offended scoff)  
Okay, how old do you think I am?

BALLISTER

I don't know -- ten?  
(re: Nimona's stare)  
Alright, help me out. More or less  
than ten?

NIMONA

Not a lot of kids in your life,  
huh?

BALLISTER

You know what, no. And I'd like it  
to stay that way! You have to go.

Nimona plops down into a chair, picks up a knife from the  
table. Studies it - nice - then tucks it away in her belt.

NIMONA

But I'm here about the job.

BALLISTER

Job? What job?

NIMONA

Oh, it's all here in my  
application.

She hands him some crumpled papers.

BALLISTER

This is just a bunch of drawings.  
Very disturbing drawings.

We see crayon drawings of Ballister and Nimona and animals  
causing mayhem.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Oh, look it's me. On a rhinoceros.  
(growing outrage)  
Skewering several guards like a  
human kebab!

NIMONA

Yeah! Do you like it?! I thought a visual aid would make my resume really *pop*.

She's out of the chair...

BALLISTER

Wha--

NIMONA

Up here.

...and now sitting in an old car suspended from the ceiling.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

So about the job--

BALLISTER

WHAT JOB?!

NIMONA

To be your sidekick. You know, to help you do whatever it takes to get revenge on the cold, cruel world that rejected you. Shall we pillage a village? Lay low until they don't remember you and then we rise like a fiery phoenix from the ashes to overthrow the government?  
(sincere)  
Or we could just talk.

Ballister just stares at her, totally unamused.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

The point is...whatever your dark heart desires, Boss. Your sidekick has arrived.

BALLISTER

I don't need a side--

NIMONA

(dismissive)  
--Every villain needs a sidekick.

BALLISTER

Wait. I am *not* a --

Nimona gets distracted by the wall covered with photos and articles related to "the attack." She goes to check it out.

NIMONA  
Whooooaa, sweet Murder Wall!

BALLISTER  
Murder Wall?

NIMONA  
Are these your next targets?

BALLISTER  
That's not--

NIMONA  
Who do you want to kill first?!

BALLISTER  
I'm not killing *anybody*!

She points to a photo of TODD off the wall excitedly.

NIMONA  
Ohhh, this one. This guy looks  
extremely punchable.

BALLISTER  
You're right, he is actually  
extremely punchable.  
(exasperated)  
No, wait. That is not a Murder  
Wall. It's an... Innocence Wall?

NIMONA  
Innocence Wall.  
(dismissive chuckle)  
Wait.  
(realizing)  
Are you saying you're not a  
villain?

BALLISTER  
YES!

NIMONA  
Yes you are??

BALLISTER  
No! No, no, I am not a villain. No!

NIMONA  
(disappointed)  
Oh.

BALLISTER

Are you... *disappointed* that I'm  
not a murderer?!

She plunks down into a chair. Bummed.

NIMONA

I mean, a lil'.

BALLISTER

You know what? We're done here.

NIMONA

Why?

BALLISTER

The real villain is still out there  
and I do need help.

Nimona is about to say something --

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

NOT FROM YOU!

Ballister heads for the door.

NIMONA

Ugh. Fine.  
(under her breath)  
Then from who? The guy who cut off  
your arm?

Ballister pauses.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

SERIOUSLY?!

BALLISTER

IT'S COMPLICATED, OK?

As he leaves, Nimona kicks back, filing her nails with a  
knife.

NIMONA

Have fun getting arrested.

BALLISTER

I am *not* going to get arrested!

The door SLAMS behind him.

**SEQUENCE 2120\_FRAMED:**

INT. INSTITUTE DUNGEON - DAY

Ballister is thrown into a cell. His robot arm has been removed.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE  
Murderer!

The cell door slams closed and the knights leave.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE (CONT'D)  
Wanna get some lunch?

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN  
Yeah. I love lunch.

Things clearly didn't turn out like Ballister hoped.

BALLISTER  
(angry)  
You had to take the arm, huh?

The sound of a heavy door CREAKING open, footfalls.

The Director steps into view.

DIRECTOR  
Ballister.

BALLISTER  
Director. I'm innocent, I swear on  
Gloreth's name.

Ballister runs up to the bars.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
I don't know how it --

The Director takes a step back. Putting more distance between them.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
--How it happened.

DIRECTOR  
We all saw how it happened. I feel  
so foolish and... I trusted you.  
The Queen believed in you.

Ballister drops his head.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

She thought someone like you could be a hero. And it cost her her life.

BALLISTER

Director, please. You know I loved the Queen. I love the Institute. Talk to Goldenloin. Can I speak to Goldenloin?

DIRECTOR

He is as heartbroken as the rest of this kingdom. You won't be talking to anyone anymore, Ballister.

BALLISTER

(angry)  
Please!  
(checks himself)  
Please...just listen to me.

DIRECTOR

No, I won't make that mistake again.

BALLISTER

Director, give me a chance.

She stops, and looks back--

DIRECTOR

We gave you a chance.

--then leaves the dungeon.

BALLISTER

(angry; calling after her)  
But I didn't DO this!

Ballister is left pissed off and frustrated. He slams into the cell bars before sliding to the floor.

NIMONA (O.S.)

I told you.

BALLISTER

AH! Good Gloreth!

Ballister jumps in fright. He turns to see Nimona inside the cell, holding his robot arm.

NIMONA

Hey, Boss.

BALLISTER

What! How...?!!

NIMONA

...Did I know this was gonna happen? Because once everyone sees you as a villain, that's what you are. They only see you one way, no matter how hard you try. You gave it a good shot though, I gotta hand it to you.

She gives Ballister's arm to him.

BALLISTER

Thank you.

He attaches it.

NIMONA

Don't thank me yet.

Nimona is suddenly on the other side of the bars.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

I still gotta get you outta here.

BALLISTER

Wait, whoa, wait...How did you get out?!

NIMONA

I know the code.

She taps some numbers into the keypad--

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Beep bop boop beep BOP!

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)

Invalid passwor--

--then PUNCHES THE SECURITY PANEL, destroying it in an explosion of SPARKS. The door slides open.

NIMONA

After you.

Ballister doesn't move. He contemplates his situation.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

No? Well, I guess you could sit here for the rest of eternity, slowly watching your muscles atrophy, your skin turning to rot, your nails growing into long, curly-fry-looking talons. You know there's no toilet in there--  
(makes a drip sound)

Finally, he steps over the threshold - there's no turning back now.

BALLISTER

Okay, okay. But I lead. If you see anyone--

NIMONA

-- Murder 'em.

BALLISTER

Hide! If you see anyone, *hide*.

NIMONA

Fine. Because we're still gonna break stuff.  
(humming her own badass theme music)

BALLISTER (O.S.)

That's a hard no.

NIMONA

(disgusted)  
Ugh.

**SEQUENCE 2130\_PRISONBREAK:**

INT. INSTITUTE - MOMENTS LATER

Ballister sneaks through the empty halls of the Institute, taking care not to be seen.

Nimona casually breaks stuff and knocks shit over as she goes.

BALLISTER

(quiet)  
This place should be crawling with guards. How exactly did you get past...

They pass a break room and see a half dozen Institute guards unconscious, moaning, stuffed into cupboards, hanging from lights.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

...them.

NIMONA

They were like this when I got here.

An ALARM SOUNDS.

INSTITUTE GUARDS (O.S.)

I found them!/Found them!/Over here!

A group of Institute guards races down the hall.

INSTITUTE GUARDS (CONT'D)

Charge!

Nimona grabs a fire axe from the wall, ready to F some shit up.

NIMONA

The one-arm club is about to get some new members!

(then)

Get it?

Ballister, exasperated, turns and takes off.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

What? Too soon?

Nimona is frustrated - this is no fun.

SIR GOTTEM LILMUSH (O.S.)

Murderer!

Ballister and Nimona race down the hallway as Institute Knights pour out of the woodwork.

A knight shoots at them from across the open atrium.

NIMONA

(calling out)

He is a murderer.

(to Ballister)

Of fun.

Nimona tosses the ax - takes the shooter out.

BALLISTER

Did you even have a plan?!

NIMONA

Uhhhh, this is the plan! I break you out, CHAOS, DESTRUCTION, something something something, we win.

BALLISTER

Oh, of course! The old "something, something, something, we win." That's a terrible plan.

NIMONA

It's better than your plan of "I'm going to sit in the dark and mope in a room with no toilet"!

BALLISTER

I was not moping!

Ballister and Nimona bust through some doors and duck into a dark alcove as the group of knights chasing them race past.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

(quiet)

Knights don't mope. We brood. I was brooding.

NIMONA

Ohhhhhhhhh.  
(big ol' raspberry)

BALLISTER

Okay fine, do you know what? Why don't we just go around doing it your way, yeah?! Murder him! Murder her! Murder everyone!

Goldenloin is standing right in front of them.

GOLDENLOIN

Bal?

BALLISTER

(careful)

Ambrosius.

NIMONA

Gesundheit.

A long, tortured look from Goldenloin. He eyes Ballister's robotic arm - emotion runs across his face. Guilt?

NIMONA (CONT'D)  
Ooooooh...Nemesisssssssss.

GOLDENLOIN  
Nemesis?

INSTITUTE GUARD (O.S.)  
Queen Killer!

Ballister looks at Nimona then back to Goldenloin, who clearly looks hurt and confused.

Ballister takes a step towards him, but Goldenloin reaches for his sword. Ballister can't even process this.

NIMONA  
Oh look! It's Gloreth!

Nimona points offscreen.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE/SIR NICHOLAS BRUN  
(looking around)  
Where?!

Nimona grabs a dazed Ballister and pulls him through a door.

She slams it shut behind them and latches it with a wooden beam.

INT. INSTITUTE PANTRY - CONTINUOUS

They're locked in a room with no exits. Dead end.

NIMONA  
Not an exit. That's on me.

BALLISTER  
(dazed)  
Did you see the way he looked at me?

Goldenloin and the knights start to BATTER THE DOOR WITH THEIR AXES. It's only a matter of time before it buckles.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
He really thinks I killed the Queen.

NIMONA  
Everyone thinks you killed the Queen. Snap out of it, boss.

Nimona SLAPS him.

BALLISTER

Ow! What was that for?

Nimona grabs his face in her hands.

NIMONA

Look, I can get us out of here. But things are about to get weird.

BALLISTER

(squished face)

About to get weird?!

NIMONA

Promise me you won't freak out.

BANG! BANG! The door splinters and cracks.

BALLISTER

(squished face)

How can I promise if I don't know what's going to happen?

NIMONA

Well, I guess you'll just have to trust me!

Ballister pulls away.

BALLISTER

(frustrated)

Why would I trust you?!

NIMONA

BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T YOU'RE GONNA DIE IN THIS CLOSET.

BALLISTER

Die?

NIMONA

So PROMISE!

BAM. Another hit on the door. Ballister jumps.

BALLISTER

I promise!

NIMONA

(aggressive)

Promise promise?!

BALLISTER

On my life!

NIMONA  
Then say it again.

BALLISTER  
I PROMISE!

NIMONA  
(down-shift)  
Oh wow, even when you see the horn?

BALLISTER  
Horn? What do you mean? Like a  
trumpet?

BANG! BANG! The door is about to buckle. It's now or never.

NIMONA  
JUST PROMISE!

BALLISTER  
I promise, promise, promise I will  
NOT freak ou---uuuuuuhhhhhhhhh!

NIMONA SHAPE-SHIFTS INTO A RHINO!

INT. INSTITUTE HALLWAYS - MOMENTS LATER

Knights scatter as a RHINO breaks down the door.

NIMONA RHINO  
This is the part where you run.

Ballister watches as she tramples over the knights.

NIMONA RHINO (CONT'D)  
Woo! Yeah!

Nimona Rhino turns and heads straight for Ballister.

BALLISTER  
Oh no! No, no, no. Stay away! Get  
back!

She scoops him up.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
No, no, no! No! This is not  
happening!

They hurtle down the corridor.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
Oh no. No, no, no. Oh Good Gloreth!

Goldenloin dives out of the way.

GOLDENLOIN  
Rhinoceros?

**SEQUENCE 2140\_BUSTOUT:**

Nimona Rhino charges down the stairs, taking guards out as she goes.

BALLISTER  
Leave that guy alone!

NIMONA RHINO  
Take that!

BALLISTER  
No, no, no. Not the stairs.

NIMONA RHINO  
Ooooh! Stairs!

BALLISTER  
No stairs.

NIMONA RHINO  
Wooooo!

They bash through a set of closed doors.

BALLISTER  
What are you?!

NIMONA RHINO  
I'm Nimona!

BALLISTER  
So you're a girl? And a rhino?

NIMONA RHINO  
I'm a lot of things!

Nimona quickly shape-shifts into an ARMADILLO, then a BEAR, a BIRD, an OTTER, then a GORILLA.

BALLISTER  
What is happening?!

Nimona Gorilla, with Ballister tucked under her arm, leaps off a balcony, swings on a chandelier and slides down a column to the floor.

She shifts into an OSTRICH. Ballister hangs off her back and she runs.

NIMONA OSTRICH  
Are you gonna be okay?

BALLISTER  
No.

Ostrich Nimona turns her head around again to look at him. She smiles at him hopefully. Will he accept her?

NIMONA OSTRICH  
You promised.

BALLISTER  
Right!

NIMONA OSTRICH  
Right. You promised not to freak out.

She's not looking where she's going. Ballister points ahead.

BALLISTER  
No. TURN RIGHT!!

NIMONA OSTRICH  
Oh!

Ostrich Nimona whips her head back around and makes the right turn just in the nick of time.

A group of knights block their path ahead.

KNIGHTS  
Halt!

Nimona shifts into a huge WHALE and skids to a stop, knocking the knights down like bowling pins.

NIMONA WHALE  
This floor is surprisingly stable.

CRACK....The floor sags under the weight of Whale Nimona...

NIMONA WHALE (CONT'D)  
Ahhh, there we go.

...and they FALL through! Floor after floor...

They pass by Todd in the bathroom. He's checking himself out in the mirror post shower.

NIMONA WHALE (CONT'D)  
Cold in here?

Todd looks down at himself, mortified.

BALLISTER  
Whoa! Help me! Help me!

Until finally landing in--

INT. INSTITUTE - HALL OF HEROES - CONTINUOUS

A grand atrium ringed with STATUES OF PAST HEROES OF THE REALM.

Whale Nimona lands with a SMASH!

BALLISTER  
You. You did that on purpose.

NIMONA WHALE  
You catch on quick, Boss.

Suits of armor and dismembered statue heads begin to topple all around them!

NIMONA WHALE (CONT'D)  
Euh-oh.

Nimona shifts back into a Rhino and tosses Ballister on her back.

BALLISTER  
No, no, no. We gotta get out of here!

She runs and dodges huge statues and columns that are crashing down like dominos.

Rhino Nimona looks around. Every exit is blocked. There's only one way out...

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
No, not the window! Not the window!  
There's a staircase!

Ballister holds on for dear life as they burst through a stained glass window depicting Gloreth--

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
Not the window!

--They sail thru the air and drop into a bunch of trees.

**SEQUENCE 2150\_FREE:**

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Ballister falls off Nimona's back. Nimona shape-shifts into an ARMADILLO, bouncing down the hill.

NIMONA ARMADILLO  
(stoked)  
Woo! Yeah! HA!

Nimona changes back into teenage punk girl form as she effortlessly slides to a stop at the edge of the forest.

Ballister rolls to a stop nearby.

NIMONA  
Something, something, something. We  
win.

Ballister pulling himself to his feet when...

BOOM! One of the towers of the Institute explodes. Nimona watches with excitement.

NIMONA (CONT'D)  
(sinister laugh)  
Metal.

Ballister looks at Nimona in horror. And then gets knocked out by a piece of flying debris.

**SEQUENCE 2160\_SHAPESHIFTER:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR - DAY

Ballister wakes up slowly. He rubs his eyes. Is he back in the lair? Is that fresh coffee?

He hears CLANGING and someone ROCKING OUT.

He blinks. Sits up. Teenage punk Nimona, cooking breakfast, listening to her headphones, comes into focus.

NIMONA  
(yelling)  
Oh! Hey Boss!

Nimona takes her headphones off.

BALLISTER  
How long was I out for?

She doesn't know how to break it to him.

NIMONA

15 years.

BALLISTER

15 YEARS!

Ballister gasps. Nimona flashes an impish smile.

NIMONA

Don't be so gullible. It was just a couple hours. Breakfast tacos?

Unsure what else to do, Ballister takes the plate of tacos from her.

BALLISTER

Wait, wait. Last thing I remember we were in a supply closet... and now...how did I get here?

NIMONA

Oh, I dragged you for like 7 miles.

BALLISTER

What happened?

NIMONA

Your head bounced on the sidewalk a few times.

BALLISTER

It's all so foggy...

NIMONA

Really? Well, you thanked me and said you'd be forever in my debt and that we'd always be best friends.

She holds up a selfie of the two of them. She's smiling. He's clearly unconscious. "BEST FRIENDS!"

BALLISTER

Uhhh....

Ballister stares at the photo then at Nimona.

NIMONA

Totally happened.

(changing the subject)

Hey, I spruced up the lair. I arranged all the weapons here in order of deadline.

Ballister pushes himself to his feet and looks around at the lair. Nimona has cleaned it up and organized it.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Un-childproofed the place. Opened all the poisons laying around. And pulled some rusty nails one centimeter out of the floorboards. Overall just made it much more evil-lair-y in here.

(thinking; then)

Evil Larry! That's a great villain name! You should totally change your name--

BALLISTER

Never going to happen.

NIMONA

Whatever, Larry.

She grabs onto a chain hanging from the ceiling and swings herself over to the other side of the room to the "Murder Wall."

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Annnnnnnd...I updated your Murder Wall!

One of the papers flutters off the wall.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Oops.

She tapes back up a picture of Goldenlorn, labeled "Nemesis."

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Plus I drew some up some plans for revenge and torment and good old general malfeasance.

Ballister stares at the "Murder Wall." Drawings of Ballister laughing as a pink octopus strangles knights unconscious. Ballister riding on a pink rhino, crushing and impaling guards... It all rushes back to him.

BALLISTER

Rhinoceros...

Nimona sees Ballister staring at her, in shock. Some of the joy leaves her face.

NIMONA

You look freaked. You promised  
you'd hold it together.

BALLISTER

You're not human.

Ballister reaches for his sword that isn't there.

NIMONA

You looking for something?

BALLISTER

My sword...

NIMONA

It exploded. Remember?

BALLISTER

You're a... Mmm... a monnnn...

NIMONA

What? Marsupial? Mariachi?  
Meatball?

BALLISTER

You're a monster!

It's like a switch has been flipped. Nimona goes from lovable  
punk to a being of PURE RAGE. For just a moment her face  
seems distorted, her teeth a little more sharp.

NIMONA

DO NOT call me that.

Ballister tries to talk himself into something he can wrap  
his head around--

BALLISTER

No. No, no, no, of course not.  
You're obviously not a massive,  
fire-breathing... you know, but you  
do do the shifty-shift shifting-  
shape thing--  
And you're a girl... who can turn  
into...

(brain broken; giving up)

What are you?

NIMONA

I'm Nimona.

BALLISTER

No, no, that's not an answer.  
People don't just turn into things.

NIMONA

I do.

BALLISTER

(mind racing)  
Okay fine. Well, then I have a  
million questions--

NIMONA

You get one.

Nimona snags a taco off the plate and turns away.

BALLISTER

Why are you helping me?

NIMONA

Because I'm bored.

Nimona plays it confident but Ballister looks at her very intently and she drops the facade for a split second.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

And everybody hates you, too.

Ballister takes this in. It's clear to him that Nimona is concealing a great wound, very similar to his own. So he can't help but feel a kinship with her.

He looks at the "Murder Wall" with all its photos and notes. Goldenloin's picture at the center. Then he shifts his focus to a picture of the Squire.

BALLISTER

The Squire...has to know something.  
He's the one that gave me the  
sword. The sword that...that...

Ballister looks at a picture of the Queen.

NIMONA

You need the Squire. Then let's  
kill-get 'em. Let's go get him. You  
and me.

BALLISTER

No. Absolutely not. And the thing  
you do...It's too much. No.

NIMONA

I think what you're trying to say is: "Thanks for saving my life". Three times! If you're keeping score.

She turns for the door.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

But you're right, I'm sure you can do this alone with every knight in the entire kingdom gunning for you. Good luck!

Ballister thinks for a moment. He really has no other options.

BALLISTER

Wait!

NIMONA

Yessss, Evil Larry?

BALLISTER

(sighs)

I...

NIMONA

I'm in!

Suddenly, she's right back in front of him.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

But here's the thing- when we clear your name, then I am your official sidekick forever and ever, no take-backsies. Deal?

Nimona extends her hand.

BALLISTER

I'm not sure I'm comfortable with these--

NIMONA

--Don't overthink it.

Just as he's about to shake...he finds himself standing in front of a SHARK grinning with mischievous delight.

BALLISTER

Can you just be you, please?

NIMONA SHARK

I don't follow.

BALLISTER

Girl you.

NIMONA SHARK

But I'm not a girl. I'm a shark.

Ballister sighs - *What did I just get myself into?* - He shakes her fin.

BALLISTER

Ugghh.

NIMONA SHARK

Hey, you ever put your head in the mouth of one of these?

BALLISTER

Shoulda just stayed in jail.

He walks away. Nimona opens her jaws even wider and follows him.

NIMONA SHARK

Come on.....you know you want to.

**SEQUENCE 2170\_LEADTHEHUNT:**

INT. INSTITUTE - HALL OF HEROES

The knights survey the destroyed Hall of Heroes. Todd can't believe what he's seeing.

TODD

Awww man. Look at this place. A thousand years of history, destroyed.

(then)

Hey Mansley!

SIR MANSLEY GIRTHROD

What?

TODD

(points to the broken statues)

Your uncle's head fell on my grandma's butt!

Todd and Mansley snicker.

TODD (CONT'D)  
Oh that's hilarious.

SIR MANSLEY GIRTHROD  
Nice.

TODD (O.S.)  
(switching gears)  
So sad though.

Goldenloin is still in shock by Ballister's escape, and feeling the pressure.

He can hear the other knights talking amongst themselves.

KNIGHTS  
I knew we never should have trusted Ballister./If Goldenloin hadn't trusted him.../Well, if Goldenloin hadn't helped him.../I never liked Ballister.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)  
Let me get this straight.

The Director enters, assesses the damage.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
The murderer of the Queen escaped with the help of a girl, an ostrich, and... a whale.

She looks up, where indeed there is a whale-shaped hole in the ceiling.

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN  
(calling down thru the hole)  
It destroyed our showers!

TODD (O.S.)  
This is his fault!

KNIGHTS  
(in agreement)  
Yeah!/Tell him, Todd!

Goldenloin realizes all eyes are on him.

GOLDENLOIN  
Me?!

Todd gets in Goldenloin's face.

TODD

Why didn't you tell us Ballister was working with whales?!

GOLDENLOIN

Whales? Really, Todd?

TODD

Oh whale really --Yeah! You knew him better than anyone, bro.

GOLDENLOIN

I tried to stop him, BRO!

TODD

Really? Like this?

(mocking)

"Oh hi, Ballister, come right in. And of course, you can bring your whale, ostrich, and big, fat unicorn."

GOLDENLOIN

Fat unicorn?

TODD

Yeah, you saw it. The thing with the horn that broke everything.

GOLDENLOIN

You mean rhinoceros?

TODD

If I meant rhinoperus, I would've said rhinoperus!

Goldenloin pushes Todd and they start to scuffle.

DIRECTOR

Enough!

All the knights immediately snap to attention.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

There is a villain on the loose in our Kingdom. And look at you, acting like common children.

The Director rallies her knights - reminding them of their purpose.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Remember your training.  
Remember who you are. We are *born*  
to protect this kingdom.

TODD (O.S.)

I was born!

Everyone turns to look at Todd.

TODD (CONT'D)

Let me take the lead, Director.  
There's only two things I want  
right now. A - to have a really big  
sword.

He pulls out his sword and lights it up.

TODD (CONT'D)

Check.  
And three - to treat Ballister like  
the Queen-killing monster he is.

The other knights chime in agreeing with Todd.

KNIGHTS (O.S.)

Yeah!

TODD

I'll hunt him down. I'll make it  
hurt. I'll make sure--

Goldenloin doesn't like where this is going at all. He steps  
forward.

GOLDENLOIN

I'll do it.

Everyone stops and looks at Goldenloin, confused.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

If anyone can find Bal--find  
Ballister - before someone else  
gets hurt, it's me.

Now he has the group's attention. What will the Director  
decide?

DIRECTOR

This is the greatest threat we've  
faced in generations.

(smiles)

Thankfully, we have a Descendant of  
Gloreth to lead us.

TODD  
(pissed)  
What?!

The light of Todd's sword fades.

Goldenloin, the new Captain of the Guard, addresses the troops.

GOLDENLOIN  
Knights of the Realm!

Dozens of Institute hover-cars, hover-bikes, etc, race out into the Kingdom to hunt down their fugitive.

GOLDENLOIN (V.O.)  
Search every street, every shadow.  
Find Ballister and bring him to me.

The Captain's golden pauldrons are placed on Goldenloin's shoulders. Along with the weight of his new position.

**SEQUENCE 2180\_PLAN:**

EXT. KINGDOM STREETS - ALLEY

Institute hover-cars, hover-bikes, etc, fly thru the city, on the hunt.

Every TV, every newspaper, every conversation is about Ballister and his attack on the Institute.

CAMERA comes down - passing some open windows in the building - the news is on.

NATE KNIGHT (O.S.)  
After yesterday's vicious attack on the Institute, our knights have redoubled their efforts in the manhunt for the villain Ballister...

Ballister steps out of the shadows. He watches the army of Institute vehicles zoom overhead.

BALLISTER  
Okay. We just have to get to the market and find the squire without drawing attention.

CRASH! Nimona, in CAT form, drops on top of an aluminum trash can.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
(re: the junk being  
knocked over)  
AH! Will you be quiet!

She hops from one to another, knocking them over as she goes. The trash can lids and empty bottles clatter across the alley.

NIMONA CAT  
(scoffs)  
Counterpoint: your plan sucks and  
it's boring.

She spots a mouse and pounces across a bunch of boxes into a junk pile. This is the opposite of keeping a low profile.

NIMONA CAT (CONT'D)  
Where's the drama!

Nimona Cat dangles the mouse over her mouth full of fangs.

NIMONA CAT (CONT'D)  
The screams of terror!  
(faux shriek)

BALLISTER  
Shhh!

The mouse wriggles itself free and scurries away.

NIMONA CAT  
WE'RE VILLAINS!! Embrace it!!!

BALLISTER  
No. We're doing things *my* way this  
time.  
(then)  
No one gets hurt.

Nimona Cat stalks the mouse through the trash.

NIMONA CAT  
Oh. I was going for the hurting  
people version.

Ballister takes the picture of the Squire from the "Murder Wall" out of his pocket and shows Nimona.

BALLISTER  
We just find the squire and  
question him.

NIMONA CAT  
And *then* hurt him.

BALLISTER  
No, no. And then find the proof.

NIMONA CAT  
By hurting him.

BALLISTER  
No! Can we just get to the market,  
please?

Nimona shifts back to punk girl form --

NIMONA  
Roger that.

--and GROWS GIANT BAT WINGS.

BALLISTER  
WHOA! Whoa. Whoa. What are you  
doing?

NIMONA  
Next flight to the market leaves in  
3...2--

BALLISTER  
What--No!

Ballister blocks the view of Nimona from a passerby, by  
raising his cape.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
BOOOOOO! I'm a ghost.

The passerby scurries away.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
(embarrassed chuckle)  
Heh. Sorry.

Ballister turns to Nimona.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
(re: wings)  
I can't be seen with ...that.

Nimona slaps him.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
Ow!

NIMONA

This is quality side-kicking stuff!

BALLISTER

It's too much.

NIMONA

Ugh, unclench your mustache. What's the worst that can happen?

An ALARM BLARES!

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATTACK!

The citizens out in the streets react - panicked, confused. This is new.

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER.

PLEASANT CHIMES cut off the siren.

Suddenly, the DIRECTOR is broadcast across all formats - on the big screens on the sides of buildings, on citizens' cellphones and computer screens, etc.

DIRECTOR

Citizens of the Realm, hello. In light of yesterday's horrific attack on the Institute, we are taking every precaution to keep you safe.

Knights conduct a test of the cannons on the wall - repositioning and powering them up.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Please do not be alarmed. This is only a test. Go about your normal lives and rest assured that the Institute has this situation well in hand. Good day and may Gloreth guide you always.

Despite the Director's words of comfort, the crowd is now on edge.

A battalion of armed knights march around the corner, doing crowd control.

SIR KAHREN REEHYAN

Do not be alarmed. Please remain calm. This is only a test.

Nimona smirks.

NIMONA

Ohhhh, a "Don't Be Alarmed" alarm.  
Effective.

BALLISTER

Don't you get it? The second we let  
our guard down something terrible  
comes over that wall.

NIMONA

Have you ever even been outside the  
wall?

BALLISTER

Uh yeah, because I have a death  
wish. No! No one has.

NIMONA

(knowing)

So maaaybe there's nothing there.

Frustrated, Ballister doesn't even know how to respond. He  
eyes a SUBWAY entrance not too far away.

BALLISTER

You know what? We're going  
underground.

(re: her bat wings)

Without the wings.

Nimona rolls her eyes as she retracts her wings.

NIMONA

You're gonna want them later.

On the way to the subway, they pass a kid on a kiddie ride  
pretending to be a knight.

The kid stabs at holographic monsters.

KIDDIE RIDE KID

Die! Die! Die! Die! Die!

Go back to the shadows from whence  
you--

Nimona can't help herself and rips the power cord out as she  
passes. The ride jolts to a stop.

KIDDIE RIDE KID (CONT'D)

Hey!

(whiny)

Moooooooooom.

**SEQUENCE 2190\_DISTRACTION:**

INT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE

                                  SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
Next train arriving in three  
minutes.

Citizens wait on the platform. A BUSKER plays smooth jazz.

                                  SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
Remember: If you see something,  
slay something.

As Ballister and Nimona move down on the escalator, something catches Nimona's eye.

                                  NIMONA  
(gasp)  
So cool! We're famous!

They pass by HUGE DIGITAL WANTED posters of Ballister and Nimona. 'WANTED FOR VILLAINY' printed underneath.

Ballister stares up at the picture of them. Mortified.

                                  BALLISTER  
You've gotta be kidding me.

He pulls his hood down farther over his face, trying to hide.

Nimona runs back up a couple steps for one more look.

                                  NIMONA  
(contented sigh)  
I love us.

Ballister and Nimona see the subway station is crawling with knights. There's one directly in front of them, at the bottom of the escalator, checking each person that passes.

                                  SIR JULE ZAKARIA  
Excuse me. I need to see your face.

                                  ESCALATOR PASSENGER  
Of course.

Nimona and Ballister glance over their shoulders to see a couple of knights on the escalator behind them. One of them has a cast on his arm.

                                  SIR NICHOLAS BRUN  
...So then an OTTER comes around  
the corner. And it bit me!

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Was it a sea otter or a river  
otter?

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

Are you kidding me? Does it even  
matter?!

(holds up casted arm)

It bit me.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Well, there's some significant  
anatomical differences between the  
two.

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

I don't know. It was mostly on my  
face.

What the hell are they going to do?

BALLISTER

We're never gonna make it on that  
train without them seeing us. We  
need a distraction.

The knights continue to banter in the background.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Did it have soft fur? Webbed feet?

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

Why are you asking these questions?

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Well this is going to drive me  
crazy.

Luckily it's the longest escalator ride in the world.

NIMONA

Who has four thumbs and is great at  
distractions?

Nimona grows an extra set of thumbs - points all four at  
herself.

BALLISTER

Fine. But dial it down. Something  
inconspicuous and discreet, like--

Ballister realizes he's talking to himself.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

--And she's gone.

Then he hears--

NIMONA BALLISTER (O.S.)

Mwaaahahahahahaha!

PEOPLE SCREAMING as the run for the exits.

BYSTANDER (O.S.)

The Queen Killer!

NIMONA BALLISTER

If you see something, slay  
something! It's BALLISTER  
BOLDHEART!

His jaw drops as he turns to see... himself making a show of being out in the open. Except this Ballister's hair has very distinct salmon pink highlights.

Nimona Ballister snaps at another bystander trying to sneak by.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Boo!

He is enjoying taking this to the most ridiculous extreme.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

I'm evil and I hate everybody!

The real Ballister, totally unamused, slides right into the distracted knight at the bottom of the escalator.

Nimona Ballister catches the real Ballister's eye.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

But not as much as I hate myself.  
Can somebody give me a hug?

Nimona Ballister continues the rant, clearly having a blast.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

I hate smiles!

The knights take the bait.

SIR GOTTEM LILMUSH

(into comms)  
Got him!

As the knights rush Nimona Ballister, the real Ballister is able to move behind a column, unseen.

NIMONA BALLISTER

I hate cupcakes! And I think babies are ugly!!

Nimona Ballister leans under a sign that says, 'No Loitering, No Littering'.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Look at this! I'm loitering AND I'm littering.

He grabs a garbage can, using it as a shield, before dumping it onto one of the knights' head. Spilling junk all over the platform.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Mwaaahhahahahahahaha!

Nimona Ballister grabs the saxophone from the busker.

NIMONA BALLISTER (CONT'D)

I hope you all like freestyle jazz!

He plays terribly as he tears ass out of there - running right UP the DOWN escalator.

The knights pursue him.

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Will you hurry up?

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

Will you stop pushing me! I'm trying!

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

I'm not pushing you! I'm encouraging you forward!

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

Well, do it without hands!

The real Ballister can't believe his eyes. It worked. The platform is empty.

As the subway train pulls up, a suspiciously pink RAT, slides down the banister.

The subway doors open right in front of them.

NIMONA RAT

Our chariot awaits.

She pulls out a slice of pizza out of the spilled garbage.

BALLISTER

What the heck was that? You never  
said you could turn into me!

Nimona Rat, dragging the pizza, and Ballister step into the subway car.

NIMONA RAT

Oh by the way, I can turn into you.

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)

Mind the gap. Doors closing.

BALLISTER

Well, for the record--  
(hit by the subway door)  
--that is nothing like me!

NIMONA RAT (O.S.)

You're right. You're never that  
much fun.

The doors close and the train takes off.

**SEQUENCE 2200 FOOTAGE:**

INT. INSTITUTE - SITUATION ROOM

Goldenloin supervises the manhunt. Institute analysts scan CCTV camera footage from around the kingdom.

INSTITUTE ANALYST

FOUND HIM! WE FOUND HIM!  
(to Goldenloin)  
Look!

The analyst points to a monitor with SECURITY FOOTAGE of Ballister on the subway platform creating a scene.

They watch the chaos unfold on screen, knights chasing Ballister, people running in all directions leaving the platform empty.

Instantly, Todd tries to take the lead.

TODD

Alright, let's go! Let's get this  
gutter punk!

He makes a move for the exit...

KNIGHTS

Yes sir!

GOLDENLOIN

Wait!

...but Goldenloin doesn't move.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

(re: video)

Let it run.

He feels the pressure of being the one with a differing opinion. All this under the Director's watchful eye.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Something doesn't feel right.

Goldenloin studies the footage.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

He hates freestyle jazz.

TODD

You're letting him get away, bro.

GOLDENLOIN

(ignoring Todd)

Keep playing.

TODD

Clock's ticking.

Goldenloin points as a blurry hooded figure steps out from behind a pillar on the empty platform.

GOLDENLOIN

There!

The footage continues - the hooded figure ducks into the train. Along with a pink rat.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

That's him. Where's that train headed?

INSTITUTE ANALYST

That's the express to the market, sir. Arrives in six minutes.

GOLDENLOIN

And we'll be there to meet him.  
(to Todd)  
Now we go.

Goldenloin addresses the troops.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Everyone to the market!

KNIGHTS

Yes sir!

He leads the knights out of the room, including Todd, who follows reluctantly.

TODD

(bad Goldenloin  
impression)  
*"Everyone to the market! I'm a  
dork. And my hair smells like  
lavender."*

The Director stays fixated on the monitor with the paused image of Ballister and the PINK RAT.

**SEQUENCE 2205\_DRAGONFLAKES:**

INT. KITCHEN

A GIRL and BOY sit at a kitchen table looking miserable.

CEREAL COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Starving?

We hear RUMBLING. Then --

The KWISPY DWAGON - THE DRAGON KRISPS CEREAL MASCOT -  
EXPLODES OUT OF THE BOWL! Cereal flies everywhere.

KWISPY

RAWRG! RAWRG! RAWRG!

CEREAL COMMERCIAL KIDS

Kwispy!

CEREAL COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Then slay your hunger with DRAGON  
KRISPS!

The kids each take a bite of the cereal.

CEREAL COMMERCIAL KID #2

Crunch!!

CEREAL COMMERCIAL KID #1

Munch!!

Now transformed into knights, they attack Kwispy.

KWISPY

RAWRG!!!

CEREAL COMMERCIAL KID #1

Take that!

The girl stabs the dragon in the heart with her giant spoon. Both kids laugh as they are splashed with cereal and milk. They raise their "weapons" in the air.

CEREAL COMMERCIAL KIDS

Alright! Yeah!

**SEQUENCE 2210\_MADEUPSTORY:**

CEREAL COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

DRAGON KRISPS! Part of your heroic breakfast!

Pull out from a monitor to...

INT. SUBWAY - CONTINUOUS

Nimona, now a gorilla, rolls her eyes at the grossness of the Dragon Krisps commercial - kids killing monsters in cereal ads.

NIMONA GORILLA

Ugh.

As Nimona chomps on her slice of pizza, Ballister stares at her. He still can't wrap his head around the... strangeness of it all.

NIMONA GORILLA (CONT'D)

You've been staring. Did somebody want pizza?

Ballister sits opposite her.

BALLISTER

Can you please just be... *normal*, for a second?

NIMONA GORILLA

(annoyed)

*Normal.*

BALLISTER

I just think it'd be easier if you were a girl.

NIMONA GORILLA

Easier to be a girl. You're hilarious.

BALLISTER

I mean easier if you looked human.

NIMONA

Easier for who?

BALLISTER

For you. A lot of people aren't as accepting as me.

Gorilla Nimona stares at him.

NIMONA GORILLA

Mmmmm-hmmmm.

BALLISTER

How did you get like this?

NIMONA GORILLA

What? You mean awesome?

BALLISTER

No. How do you?...I'm just trying to understand what I'm working with here.

NIMONA GORILLA

I'm Nimona.

BALLISTER

That explains literally nothing.

NIMONA GORILLA

(big sigh)

No. You're right.

Nimona SHIFTS into her punk girl form again.

NIMONA

You deserve a better explanation than that.

**SEQUENCE 2215\_WISHINGWELL:**

TRANSITION INTO STORYBOOK ANIMATION STYLE. Little Girl Nimona appears.

NIMONA (V.O.)

I was just a kid. Cute, little,  
innocent me.

Little Girl Nimona starts skipping through a forest.

NIMONA (V.O.)

I was playing in the woods.  
Following the birds flying, and the  
fish swimming, and the deer  
bounding. They all looked so happy  
together. But I...

I was alone.

(beat)

That's when I heard it. A song.  
Calling me. Leading me to...  
A wishing well.

She stops next to a well.

BALLISTER (V.O.)

(leaning in)

A wishing well? How did you know it  
wasn't just a regular well?

Little Girl Nimona shoots Ballister a look.

NIMONA (V.O.)

Do you want to tell my story for  
me?

BALLISTER (V.O.)

(wanting to hear more)

Right. Sorry. Go on.

NIMONA (V.O.)

As I slowly approached the well...

A coin appears and drops into Little Girl Nimona's hand.

NIMONA (V.O.)

...A coin appeared in the palm of  
my hand as if by magic. And I knew  
what I had to do.

She closes her eyes, squeezes the coin in her hand...

NIMONA (V.O.)

I summoned my courage, held the  
coin tight, threw it into the well  
and made a wish.

...then tosses the coin into the well and waits excitedly.

NIMONA (V.O.)  
A wish... to one day...be trapped  
on a subway...

**SEQUENCE 2220\_LASTSTOP:**

SNAP BACK to Nimona and Ballister on the subway. He is leaning in, listening intently.

NIMONA  
...with an uptight knight asking me  
small-minded questions.

Nimona smiles a shit-eating grin at Ballister who gives her the world's longest slow burn.

BALLISTER  
Do you still have that pizza?

She hands him the leftover crust. Ballister throws it back at her. He's annoyed at her messing with him.

Then -- BING BONG!

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
Now arriving at Market Station.

NIMONA  
(chipper)  
Cool, we're here!

Nimona looks out the window.

NIMONA (CONT'D)  
Ohhhh and so are your friends!

The train begins to slow down. They both look out the window.

Reveal Goldenloin and the knights are waiting on the platform. Locked and loaded.

Ballister lamely tries to hide, ducking out of view.

BALLISTER  
Do you think he saw us?

Nimona looks out the window again. Red spots dot Nimona's face as she's targeted by laser sights.

She causally drops down next to Ballister.

NIMONA  
Yes.

A canister of tear gas crashes thru the window onto the subway car filling it with smoke, just as the train's power goes out.

SAME - MOMENTS LATER

As the smoke clears, Goldenloin and the knights enter to discover that a giant hole has been ripped clear thru the ceiling of the subway car. WTF?

GOLDENLOIN

What in the name of Gloreth?

Todd slides in next to Goldenloin.

TODD

(re: the hole in the  
ceiling)

Tiny whale.

**SEQUENCE 2230\_KIDNAP:**

EXT/INT. MARKETPLACE

BAM! A manhole cover explodes into the air. Nimona Gorilla leaps out, reaches back for Ballister and pulls him up.

BALLISTER

(concerned)

Did Goldenloin see you... you  
know... do the thing?

Her eyes BLAZE.

NIMONA GORILLA

Seriously. That guy cut off your  
arm, and you're worried about being  
seen with ME!?!??

Ballister takes out the picture of the Squire and takes a quick look.

BALLISTER

I told you. It's--

NIMONA GORILLA

--Complicated. Yeah, I know.

Ballister points out into the crowd.

BALLISTER

Look! The Squire!

The marketplace is packed with people shopping for everything from artisan pineapple pizza and craft-brewed mead to the latest styles in armor and luxury vehicles.

The Squire is at one of the stalls picking out some groceries and obnoxiously trying to get the vendor's attention.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Hi. Hi. Uhhh, excuse me.

BALLISTER

We gotta get him out of here.  
Quietly!

NIMONA GORILLA

On it.

Nimona Gorilla charges forward but Ballister stops her.

BALLISTER

Wait, wait, wait! Not like that!

Nimona shifts to her punk form.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Not like that either.

"Wanted" signs with Nimona and Ballister's faces on them are everywhere. Knights are an ever present threat.

Nimona frowns.

NIMONA

You want me to shift, you don't  
want me to shift. Pick a lane!

Nimona shape-shifts into an adorable LITTLE BOY (AKA DEMON BABY).

BALLISTER

And now you're a boy.

NIMONA LITTLE BOY

I am today.

She's off. Ballister pulls his hood down over his face.

BALLISTER

Wait, no--!

He tries to keep a low profile as he weaves through shoppers.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
(clears throat; mutters)  
Excuse me.

Did those people recognize him?

Ballister hears the sound of clanging armor. Goldenloin and the knights run into the market.

GOLDENLOIN  
I know he's here. Find him!

CROWD WALLA  
Look! It's Goldenloin!/  
Goldenloin!/It's him!

Instantly, Goldenloin is mobbed by a crowd of fans. No escaping his celebrity.

GOLDENLOIN  
Please. Move aside. Guys...

GOLDENLOIN FAN #1  
Can I get your autograph, please?

GOLDENLOIN  
(gives in)  
Okay, just one...one signature. Who am I signing it to?

GOLDENLOIN FAN #2  
Can you sign skin?

Ballister ducks behind a car on display. Ok. Just take a breath and --

The car is on a rotating platform. Ballister is going to rotate right into view.

Split-second thinking. He opens the driver side door and dives in.

He adjusts the rearview mirror to keep Goldenloin in sight. Goldenloin is completely surrounded by excited fans.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Don't move.

Ballister freezes.

CORIANDER CADAVERISH, A SALES PERSON, is leaning in the passenger side window.

CORIANDER CADAVERISH  
'Cuz if you do, you're gonna miss  
out on a great deal today.

F\*ck. Not now. Ballister turns away.

DOWN ON THE LOWER LEVEL of the marketplace - Demon Baby  
Nimona corners the Squire.

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
Excuse me, Mister Squire Sir? I  
can't find my mommy. She went into  
that scary alley over there. Can  
you help me find her?

Demon Baby Nimona gives the Squire the big, sad, puppy eyes.

NIMONA DEMON BABY (CONT'D)  
Pleeeeeeeaaaaaase?

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
Ohhh noo. Let me go ahead and pass  
this problem onto someone else.

Her little boy eyes are glowing like a demon's.

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
(demon voice)  
There's no time!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
(screams)  
No! NO!

ON BALLISTER IN THE CAR

The sales person is now in the car with him, really working  
the pitch. She demos the convertible top and cranks the  
radio.

CORIANDER CADAVERISH  
This baby's fully loaded. State of  
the art sound system.

Trying to stay out of sight, Ballister fully reclines the  
seat.

Goldenloin is half-heartedly signing autographs as he scans  
the market for Ballister.

GOLDENLOIN  
(handing back an  
autograph)  
There.

He hears the commotion. What is that?

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Can you just part the waters? Thank you. Move aside, guys.

A little girl jumps up and down, clutching her autograph.

GOLDENLOIN FAN #3

Thank you thank you thank you!

Goldenloin slips out of the cluster of fans and heads for the car.

ON THE SQUIRE pushing through the crowd.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Please help me! Help me please!

RANDOM SHOPPER

Hey!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Please help me! A little demon baby is after me!

Demon Baby Nimona stalks the Squire, hunting him like a shark.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (CONT'D)

Please help me-- ahhhhh.

Suddenly Demon Baby Nimona is right in front of him!

The Squire throws a punch. Demon Baby Nimona catches his fist in his teeth.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (CONT'D)

Ahhhhh!!!!!!

IN THE CAR

The Sales Person demonstrates more fancy features.

CORIANDER CADAVERISH (V.O.)

And check this out! With three hundred and sixty degree dash cams you'll always see what's coming.

ON THE DASHCAM SCREEN, Ballister sees Goldenloin approaching the car.

He fiddles with the buttons, trying to get another view - sees Demon Baby Nimona accosting the Squire on the lower level.

Then screen flips to another feature...

CORIANDEr CADAVERISH (V.O.)  
And our news feature will keep you  
up to date with the kingdom's top  
headlines.

Ballister and Nimona's MUGSHOTS appear on screen.

Ballister reacts- oh shit. The Sales Person stares at him.

CORIANDEr CADAVERISH  
Uhh...you look a lot like...

Ballister rises up in the driver's seat like Dracula.

BALLISTER  
(really pissed)  
I'm innocent!

She panics. CLICK! The doors lock.

CORIANDEr CADAVERISH  
Ahhhh!

Ballister puts the car into gear.

ON THE SQUIRE

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
AHHHHHH!

With preternatural strength, Demon Baby Nimona drags the Squire through the crowd, causing a huge scene.

The Squire grabs anything he can to throw at Demon Baby Nimona.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (CONT'D)  
No! No! No!

Pots and Pans. A live chicken. A slice of pizza from a bystander.

The slice hits him dead in the face.

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
Pineapple on pizza--  
(gags)

GOLDENLOIN

There!

The clanking of armor catches Demon Baby Nimona's attention.

Goldenloin and the knights shoulder their way thru the people on the escalator.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Excuse me. Move aside. We need to get through. MOVE!

They're headed straight for Nimona and the Squire. DAMN.

The distraction was just long enough for the Squire to escape.

NIMONA DEMON BABY

Uh-oh.

The Squire laughs maniacally as he runs away.

BAM! A car slams into the Squire.

Ballister jumps out.

NIMONA DEMON BABY (CONT'D)

(disappointed)

Awww. Why do you get to kill him?!

Nimona kicks the Squire's unconscious body.

BALLISTER

He's not dead! I hope.

BYSTANDER

(gasp)

Is that...Ballister?

BALLISTER

Get him in the car!

The crowd stands around watching as Demon Baby Nimona and Ballister stuff the unconscious Squire into the trunk.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Come on, come on, come on.

BYSTANDERS (O.S.)

It's the Queen Killer!/He's working with a demon- baby!/I thought he ate babies!

Goldenloin charges through the crowd.

GOLDENLOIN  
(calling out)  
Ballister stop!

Ballister, looking like a crazed maniac, glances back at Goldenlorn in his shiny gold hero armor, crossbow drawn, running straight for the car.

A kid rides on one of those kiddie rides, playing knight. Completely oblivious to the pure chaos in the market as people scream and run in all directions.

KIDDIE RIDE KID  
Yay!

Demon Baby Nimona is bouncing on the trunk.

BALLISTER  
Get in!

Goldenlorn aims the crossbow at Ballister.

GOLDENLOIN  
BAL!

TODD (O.S.)  
Shoot him in the face!

Ballister and Goldenlorn lock eyes. Unwilling to shoot, Goldenlorn lowers the crossbow and Ballister ducks back into the car and throws it in gear.

BALLISTER  
(calling to Nimona)  
What are you doing?!

The Sales Person whimpers in the passenger seat. Demon Baby Nimona rips open the door.

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
We'll take it!!

Nimona tosses her out of the car and jumps in.

As the car hovers into the air, Todd and the Knights unleash a torrent of arrows.

The car takes heavy fire, but manages to zoom off, leaving utter chaos and mayhem behind.

Out of breath, Goldenlorn watches them fly away. Todd throws down his crossbow, pissed.

TODD

Dang it!

INT. CAR

Demon Baby Nimona and Ballister sit in silence.

Ballister is furious and refuses to look at him.

LONG AWKWARD BEAT --

NIMONA DEMON BABY

I hate to say it, but you're an  
excellent villain.

Ballister slowly turns and shoots him a deadly look.

Completely unfazed, Demon Baby Nimona gives Ballister a  
satisfied smile back.

CLANG! CLUNK!

**SEQUENCE 2250\_ARROW:**

EXT. UNDERPASS

The badly damaged car, riddled with arrows, sputters down  
landing beneath an overpass, in a sketchy part of town. Right  
up against the wall, next to where the sewer pipes drain.

Punk Nimona and Ballister climb out of the car.

NIMONA

Yup, I like it. We're gonna shake  
this dude down in a sketchy part of  
town.

BALLISTER

Look, let's just question the  
squire and get out of-- YOUR LEG!

NIMONA

Huh?

Ballister points to AN ARROW sticking out of her leg.

BALLISTER

THERE'S AN ARROW IN YOUR LEG.

NIMONA

Oh.

Only now does Nimona realize that she's been shot with an  
arrow.

BALLISTER

Okay, you really need to sit down.

NIMONA

No. No, it's fine. It's totally --

BALLISTER

No, look at you. You're not fine.  
You're bleeding.

NIMONA

It's just a splinter. It'll work  
itself out.

She dodges him -- he tries to make her sit down.

BALLISTER

Just. Sit.

Nimona takes a seat and allows him to tend to her leg.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

We're just gonna take a look, okay.

He moves the arrow slightly. Squirt of blood.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

(reacts to the blood)

Ahhh. Okay! Okay, okay.

That's...that's in..that's in  
there. Everything's fine.

(then)

We're just gonna...

(takes a breath)

...we're gonna do this on three.

He takes hold of the arrow.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

You ready?

(off Nimona's nod)

One... two... three!

Ballister yanks the arrow out of Nimona's leg. He WINCES.  
Nimona doesn't move.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Okay. Most people scream at that  
part.

NIMONA

I'm not a people.

BALLISTER

Right.  
(thinking)  
Right...  
(then)  
Does it hurt at all?

NIMONA

It does.  
(beat)  
But I've been through worse.

Ballister rips a strip of material from his cloak, starts wrapping her leg.

BALLISTER

What does it *feel* like?

NIMONA

Pretty stabby. In my leg region.

BALLISTER

No, no, the shape...shifting. Does it hurt? Or does it -- Sorry. Small-minded question.  
(then)  
Hold still.

Nimona watches as Ballister goes back to bandaging her leg. It's different, seeing someone take care of her. And she knows he's trying.

NIMONA

Honestly, I feel worse when I don't do it. Like my insides are itchy. You know like that second right before you sneeze? That's close to it. Then I shape-shift and I'm free.

BALLISTER

What if you held it in? If you didn't shape-shift?

NIMONA

I'd die.

BALLISTER

Good Gloreth! That's horrible!

NIMONA

Don't be so gullible. I wouldn't die die. I just sure wouldn't be living.

They share a smile. There's some bonding happening here, which is pretty quickly interrupted by--

BANGING from the inside of the car's trunk!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (O.S.)  
So nice to hear you guys bonding.  
Ahhh such a shame I have to go.  
Let me go.

NIMONA  
Oh yeah, the punk in the trunk.  
Let's go dunk on the punk in the trunk.

**SEQUENCE 2260\_QUESTIONS:**

INT. TRUNK - CONTINUOUS

Nimona opens the trunk.

BALLISTER  
Start talking.

She flashes her fanged smile at the Squire.

NIMONA  
He wants blood.

The Squire shrinks back.

SQUIRE  
Blood?

NIMONA  
Your blood.

BALLISTER  
I don't want blood.

NIMONA  
Buckets of blood!

BALLISTER  
What I want is answers! So start talking.

Ballister leans down into the trunk. Nimona steps back, crosses her arms. Muscle at the ready.

NIMONA  
Or we start stabbing.

BALLISTER

No stabbing.

NIMONA

Slapping.

BALLISTER

No!

(to Squire)

Why'd you set me up?

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

I - I didn't.

BALLISTER

Then who?

NIMONA

YOU!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

NO!

BALLISTER

WHO?!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Let me explain--

BALLISTER

Was it Blanche? Chad? Todd?

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Todd?

NIMONA

Punchable face guy?!

BALLISTER

Of course! Todd! Todd swapped my sword, didn't he?!

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

What?! No...

BALLISTER

Why are you protecting him?

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

Who would protect Todd?!

NIMONA

Guess we're gonna have to do things the hard way.

Nimona steps off-screen...

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
(freaked out)  
Hard way? Hold on a second. Wait!  
Just wait--

The Squire frantically searches his pockets.

And then the Demon Baby Nimona steps on-screen, all flashy eyes and sharp-toothed smile.

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
Peekaboo.

The Squire freaks out! He pulls his phone out of his pocket and hits play on a video.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE  
Here! Look!

Nimona and Ballister exchange a look.

ON THE VIDEO: The Squire is in the Knights' Locker Room before the Knighting Ceremony.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
Check it out! I'm in the locker  
room.  
(pointing over his  
shoulder)  
And you are looking at history in  
the making. Ballister's armor.

It's all a very big deal to this kid.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
It's speaking. It's saying "Respect  
me. Protect me. Put me on, no one's  
watching."

The Squire puts on Ballister's helmet.

ON DEMON BABY NIMONA and BALLISTER:

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
Awkward.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (O.S.)  
(embarrassed)  
Oh...we could just fast-forward.

He scrubs forward through the video, including where he puts on the rest of armor and strikes some "heroic" poses.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay. This is the part you have to see.

Finding the spot in the video he was looking for, he let's it play.

On the video, the Squire suddenly stops. He hears something and scrambles to hide.

Hiding in play sight, inside Ballister's armor in the locker, the Squire stands perfectly still --

-- The Director enters. She doesn't notice the phone still recording as she swaps Ballister's sword with one she brought with her. She hides Ballister's real sword under her cloak as she leaves.

Not quite sure what he just witnessed, the Squire makes sure the Director is gone.

He shrugs off the armor, grabs his phone and takes off.

Ballister lets go of the Squire and takes the phone. His world rocked.

BALLISTER

The Director set me up. She killed the Queen.

DIEGO THE SQUIRE

I didn't know what to do. I tried to show you, before...

Ballister is still stunned by all this.

BALLISTER

None of this makes sense.

He puts his hood up and starts walking away with the phone.

Demon Baby Nimona jumps down to go after Ballister.

The Squire climbs out of the trunk.

NIMONA DEMON BABY

Oh hey, buddy. Sorry for kidnapping you.

SQUIRE

It's okay--

NIMONA DEMON BABY  
(demon voice)  
OR AM I?

The Squire screaming, runs off into the shadows.

Demon Baby Nimona giggles, turns back into punk Nimona and trots after Ballister.

**SEQUENCE 2265\_WALKNTALK:**

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The pair are walking through a dark street in a gritty neighborhood.

NIMONA  
Look, boss, you got betrayed by someone you trusted, okay. I get it. It sucks. But we did it! You're innocent and we have the proof! Once we upload that video--

BALLISTER  
We're not uploading this.

NIMONA  
WHAT?! Everybody needs to know the truth! The system is jacked! The Institute needs a shutdown.

BALLISTER  
Can you be quiet?

He pulls her back into the shadows as an Institute vehicle drives by.

NIMONA  
I will not be quiet about this.

Once it's gone, they continue on.

BALLISTER  
This video could damage people's faith in the Institute.

NIMONA  
(exactly!)  
Uh, no duh.

BALLISTER  
Look, I don't know why she framed me.

(MORE)

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

But the Institute is not the problem. The Director is. That's why I'm taking this to Ambrosius.

NIMONA

Who?

BALLISTER

Ambro--

NIMONA

--CARES! This is the man WHO CUT OFF YOUR ARM. Arm chopping is not a love language!

BALLISTER

He didn't cut off my arm, he disarmed a weapon. It's how we were trained.

NIMONA

Wow. They brainwashed you good.

Ballister looks through the crowded buildings and criss-crossed pipes at the Statue of Gloreth and the Institute.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

You think this stops with the Director? You should be questioning everything right now -- the will of Gloreth, the Institute, the wall-- what's it all really for?

BALLISTER

For protecting the realm.

NIMONA

Oh you mean from villains like you? Or monsters like me?

BALLISTER

(calms himself)

Look, if we get this to Ambrosius, everything is going to be okay. For both of us.

Nimona knows she's screaming into the wind.

NIMONA

(frustrated sigh)

Okay. Fine. But when things goes south, I'm breaking stuff.

(humming her badass theme song)

BALLISTER

That won't be necessary.

Ballister holds up the phone, confident they have the necessary proof.

She breaks into a devilish grin.

**SEQUENCE 2270\_EVIDENCE:**

EXT. SHOTS OF THE KINGDOM - MORNING

A maintenance worker paints over Young Ballister on an Institute Propaganda Mural promoting "A New Era of Heroes."

INT. HOVER-CAR - DAY

Goldenloin rides with the Director to the Institute. She's busy, studying reports and updates on her tablet. Goldenloin, however is lost in thought. He stares out the hover-car window.

The Director notices Goldenloin's state of mind. She turns off her tablet.

DIRECTOR

Is something on your mind,  
Ambrosius?

(beat)

You can talk to me.

He turns to look at her.

GOLDENLOIN

My mind? I've lost my mind.  
I've lost everything. The man I  
love, my best friend -- although,  
now, apparently, he's got a new  
best friend. What's that about?  
What else is he hiding?  
Who's the real him?

(then)

Who am I?! A Goldenloin? A Direct  
Descendent of Gloreth?!

I never asked for that.

Now everyone expects me to arrest  
Ballister. And if I don't, I'm  
traitor to you, and if I do I'm a  
traitor to him.

(and then)

And on top of that I chopped off  
his arm. His ARM! Who chops off an  
arm?!

Because I was trained to?!

(MORE)

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Arm chopping is not a love  
language?!

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOVER-CAR - JUST BEFORE THIS CONFESSION

GOLDENLOIN

I'm fine, Director.

Goldenloin looks back out the window, deep in thought, as the car descends.

EXT. INSTITUTE - DAY

The hover-car lands at the Institute.

GOLDENLOIN

Ma'am.

Goldenloin helps the Director out.

DIRECTOR

Stay strong, Ambrosius. The blood  
of Gloreth runs through your veins.

The hover-car moves off, REVEALING Ballister standing there like a total badass.

BALLISTER

Ambrosius.

GOLDENLOIN

(calling out)

Knights!

When Goldenloin looks behind him, there's Nimona, looking even more badass. She heaves an unconscious Institute guard off her shoulder onto a pile of knocked out knights.

NIMONA

They were like this when I got  
here.

DIRECTOR

(deadly)

You.

NIMONA

(deadly)

Me.

Goldenloin steps between Ballister and the Director.

BALLISTER

Ambrosius. The Director killed the Queen.

GOLDENLOIN

What?

The Director stays calm over Goldenloin's shoulder.

DIRECTOR

Another desperate lie.

NIMONA

He's not a liar.

The Director looks over at Nimona and stares her down.

DIRECTOR

Says the miscreant whispering in his ear.

NIMONA

Awww. Thank you.

Ballister steps toward Goldenloin, confident, stalwart.

BALLISTER

I'm innocent. And I have proof.

Ballister reaches for the Squire's phone in his pocket. The Director takes advantage of the situation.

DIRECTOR

He's got a weapon!

As Ballister holds up the phone, the video ready to go - ZAP! A laser bolt shoots it out of his hand. That's the end of that - proof destroyed.

BALLISTER

No!

TODD

Not anymore! Todd RULES!

Todd, on an INSTITUTE HOVER BIKE, grins down at them. MORE INSTITUTE HOVER CRUISERS cruise into view.

Knights move in, surrounding Ballister and Nimona.

They're outnumbered 100 to 1.

BALLISTER

It doesn't matter. You shouldn't need proof. You know I'm not a murderer.

DIRECTOR

What are you waiting for, Captain?

TODD (O.S.)

Hurry before the whale gets here!

Goldenloin is struggling.

NIMONA

(to Goldenloin)

Come on man, do the right thing.

GOLDENLOIN

Who is she, Bal?

The knights push in. Ballister looks from Nimona back to Goldenloin. It's tough to explain. The search lights make her eyes GLOW unnaturally.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

What is she?

The pressure builds.

BALLISTER

Ambrosius, I am begging you to trust me--

Goldenloin looks at Ballister... then at this strange punk girl by his side...

He draws his sword and points it at Ballister.

GOLDENLOIN

(to the knights)

Arrest them.

Ballister's heart shatters.

The guards are closing in, Ballister's world has collapsed. Ballister darkens.

BALLISTER

(to Goldenloin)

You want to know who the kid is?

NIMONA

Ohhhh I like where this is going...

BALLISTER  
You wanna show 'em?

NIMONA  
I'd love to.

BALLISTER  
Let's break stuff.

NIMONA  
Metal!

**SEQUENCE 2280\_FIGHT:**

Nimona SHAPE-SHIFTS into a GORILLA.

Goldenloin, the Director and the Knights are gobsmacked. They can't believe their eyes. The girl can change her form.

TODD  
(shocked)  
HeyOh....

Nimona Gorilla roars and slams her fists into the ground. The power of her roar blows Goldenloin's hair back.

She could kill Goldenloin instantly, but instead reaches over and boops his nose, before running off to fight with Ballister.

NIMONA GORILLA  
Boop.

DIRECTOR  
Give me a sword!

GOLDENLOIN  
(to Director)  
We need to get you to safety.

Ballister kicks a nearby knight to the ground and grabs the guy's sword out of mid-air.

He and Nimona charge into the fray, taking the fight to the knights for the first time.

Goldenloin ushers the Director into a waiting INSTITUTE HOVER CRUISER.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)  
(to the driver)  
Get this thing in the air now!

Nimona and Ballister are a tight, devastatingly efficient team as he returns to his scrappy roots and Nimona shape-shifts fluidly from GORILLA to RAT to WOLF to OSTRICH.

NIMONA OSTRICH

Yeah!

They finish each other's sentences as it were, "tag-teaming," "one-two-ing" and "alley-ooing" their way through the great knight horde, trying to escape.

Ballister throws Armadillo Nimona like a basketball of badness at a knight, knocking him down.

NIMONA ARMADILLO

(excited; laughing)

Sorry not sorry.

They are getting shot at from all sides.

BALLISTER

You see a way out of here?

Nimona turns into a HORSE...

NIMONA HORSE

Of horse I do.

...Ballister swings up onto her back.

BALLISTER

Okay, that was terrible.

Goldenloin locks his gaze on Ballister, eyes narrowing with fury.

GOLDENLOIN

Stop that...horse?!

Todd and knights on hover bikes swoop in, cutting off their escape route.

Horse Nimona doesn't slow down. She charges towards the end of the platform.

BALLISTER

We're going over, aren't we?

NIMONA HORSE

Yup! Only way out is down.

TODD

Horse! Horse! Horse! Horse!

She jumps over the bikes and over the edge. They fall.

BALLISTER

Why are we always falling?!?

Nimona fluidly shifts back into her punk form and catches Ballister.

NIMONA

Toldja you'd want the wings!

Then she sprouts her bat wings to slow their fall.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Wooohoo!

Nimona, now a gorilla, grabs onto the building and they slide down the outside of the Institute.

Ballister's adrenaline is pumping. She tosses him onto one of the passing hover bikes.

Then Nimona turns into a whale and swallows a group of knights and their hover bikes whole.

Whale Nimona lands hard on the street. She shoots the knights and bikes out of her blowhole.

Ballister crash lands next to her. Nimona shifts back to her punk form.

BALLISTER

(laughing)

Okay, that was super gross!

NIMONA

(laughing)

I know!

Nimona and Ballister have dispatched almost half of the knights and are continuing to kick ass.

Ballister swings around and is suddenly intercepted by Goldenloin.

BALLISTER

Well, if it isn't the Golden Boy.

The two knights from the subway run towards Ballister. They are stopped in their tracks by OTTER NIMONA.

SIR NICHOLAS BRUN

AHHH! That's the otter that bit me!

SIR TROY QUARTERMANE

Oh yeah. I can see your confusion.  
It has the tail of a river otter,  
but the webbed back feet of a--  
aaaaaAAAHAAAAH!

Otter Nimona leaps on his face and tackles him out of frame.

Neither knows what to say. So the two master swordsmen face off, swords slashing and clashing so fast they're a blur.

BALLISTER

Did I ever mean anything to you? Or  
was it all just a lie?

GOLDENLOIN

A lie?! Says the guy running around  
with a monster.

BALLISTER

Don't call her that! She's smart,  
kind, and quite sophisticated--

Nimona Otter runs past in the background chasing the two  
knights --

NIMONA OTTER

That guy just peed his armor!!  
He peed his armor!!!!

BALLISTER

And she has my back! Unlike you!

GOLDENLOIN

You lied to me about everything.

BALLISTER

The only one lying to you is the  
Director.

Ballister knocks him to the ground.

He disarms Goldenloin with a badass move and holds the tip of  
his sword above Goldenloin's exposed throat.

GOLDENLOIN

What? You're gonna kill me now too.

Ballister SCOFFS in pained disbelief.

BALLISTER

If you believe that.

Ballister could end it all right now with a flick of his wrist. Instead --

He STABS THE GROUND.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Then you never knew me at all.

Goldenloin is trying to make sense of this, when--

WHAM! Ballister is yanked away by Todd on a hover-bike. He drags Ballister through a wrought-iron gate, and slams him into a wall. (There is a Dragon Krisps ad prominently featured on a sidewalk kiosk behind him.)

That hurt. Ballister tries to get up as Todd approaches.

TODD

Yeah. Now I'm gonna punch you in the face.

Todd punches him in the face.

ON NIMONA OTTER grabbing the knight's casted arm.

NIMONA OTTER

I'm no doctor but this cast looks delicious.

Nimona's sharp otter teeth spin like a buzzsaw as she chomps down on the cast.

A distressed YELL from Ballister catches her attention.

NIMONA OTTER (CONT'D)

Boss?

Nimona's head pops up, bits of cast hang from her teeth.

Her eyes flash with MOLTEN ENERGY. She runs for Ballister, turning from otter, to wolf and then into a rhino, smashing thru what's left of the gate.

Meanwhile Todd lays a beating on Ballister.

TODD

You think *this* hurts, wait 'til you see what we do to your pet monster!

The knights shoot an ELECTRIFIED NET around Rhino Nimona, immobilizing her. Nimona shifts from rhino to gorilla to horse to bear. Her forms blur together as they tase her with everything they've got.

BALLISTER  
No! Leave her alone!

Ballister is on the ground, surrounded by knights.

Nimona breaks free by SHAPE-SHIFTING INTO...

KWISPY THE DRAGON KRISPS DRAGON....

TODD  
(excited)  
Kwispy!!  
(then confused)  
Wait - what?

She rears up and gives a FURIOUS ROAR. IT AIN'T THE DRAGON KRISPS DRAGON YOU KNOW ANYMORE.

NIMONA DRAGON  
Hope you brought milk!

TODD  
(get the F outta here)  
Go go go go!

Everyone stares in shock.

Even Ballister's wide-eyed. He's never seen her quite like this before.

Dragon Nimona breathes a JET OF DRAGON KRISPS CEREAL. *She's having fun with this.*

She surrounds Ballister in a protective RING OF CEREAL, separating him from the attacking knights.

ON THE DIRECTOR

She watches from the safety of her hover-car. This is everything she's feared. Everything she's been preparing for her whole life. A monster in the kingdom.

ON GOLDENLOIN in complete disbelief.

GOLDENLOIN  
What?!

In the chaos, an out-of-control car heads straight for a LITTLE GIRL, PATIENCE, standing frozen in the street.

Nimona Dragon acts quickly and uses her tail to stop the car. She saves the little girl.

The Monster Alarm BLARES.

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATTACK!  
SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER!

Seeing the little girl's eyes are wide with fear, Nimona transforms into a tiny 6 YEAR-OLD GIRL, putting herself on the little girl's level.

NIMONA LITTLE GIRL  
It's okay.

The little girl holds up a sword.

PATIENCE  
(trying to be brave)  
Monster.

The girl's look penetrates Nimona to her core, triggering some deep emotional wound. This all-powerful being, suddenly all too vulnerable.

The little girl's MOTHER gathers her in her arms and runs off.

The alarm grows louder.

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATTACK!  
SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER!

The knights close in on Nimona. But she doesn't move, still traumatized by the little girl's reaction.

And just as the knights are about to grab her--

Ballister speeds in on a hover-bike and scoops Nimona up!

BALLISTER  
I gotcha, kid!

They zoom off into the distance.

Goldenloin is in shock - what the hell just happened.

ON THE DIRECTOR watching from her hover cruiser, wheels spinning furiously.

**SEQUENCE 2290\_NOTALONE:**

Nimona bursts into the lair, teen punk form, furious.  
Ballister on her heels, concerned.

BALLISTER  
Are you okay?

NIMONA

I don't want to talk about it.

BALLISTER

I know something's wrong.

NIMONA

I said I don't want to talk about it!

BALLISTER

Hey, hey. I'm just trying to help.

NIMONA

*I don't need your help!!*

She flips over the coffee table. A whirl of intense emotions.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Did you see the way that little girl looked at me?

Ballister just listens.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Kids... Little kids. They grow up believing that they can be a hero if they drive a sword into the heart of anything different...And I'M the monster???

She looks at him, her fist clenched over her heaving chest.

All the fight drains out of her. She's completely vulnerable, her wounded soul laid bare.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

I don't know what's scarier.

(a quiet beat)

The fact that everyone in this kingdom wants to run a sword through my heart...Or that sometimes, I just want to let them.

Her eyes well with tears.

Ballister is devastated for her.

BALLISTER

We have to get you out of here.

He starts throwing a travel bag together.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

We'll go over the wall. We won't stop until we find someplace safe. Okay? We'll go. Together.

NIMONA

Together?

As she watches him pack, Nimona realizes Ballister's only concern is for... her.

BALLISTER

Listen, you were right about everything. The Institute. The wall. Ambrosius.

(beat)

No matter what we do, we can't change the way people see us.

NIMONA

You changed the way you see me.

(hoping)

Didn't you?

He looks at her and smiles. Nimona beams. Then quickly steels her resolve.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

We can't let the Director get away with this. We shouldn't have to run.

(beat)

And you made a deal, right? We clear your name, you make me your sidekick. And you can't back out on a deal because you believe in truth and honor and, blah, blah, blah, all that stupid stuff.

They share a little laugh.

BALLISTER

Truth and honor aren't stupid. But alright.

NIMONA

So you got a plan?

BALLISTER

Of course I've got a plan. Something something something...

NIMONA

We win.

Nimona and Ballister smile, then look over at the "MURDER WALL", focusing in on a picture of THE DIRECTOR.

**SEQUENCE 2300\_IMPOSTER:**

INT. INSTITUTE - DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Director is at her desk, intensely looking at different images of Nimona and pink animals on holographic screens. She's disturbed, trying to puzzle all this together.

SIR RANDALL EDITUS (O.S.)

Excuse me, but the Director is not  
avail--

The Director looks up as Goldenloin BURSTS into the office. The GUARDS at her door aim their weapons, then stand down when they see it's Goldenloin.

GOLDENLOIN

--We need to talk. Alone.

The Director dismisses the guards. As the door shuts--

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Was Ballister telling the truth?

(then)

He could have said anybody killed  
the Queen. But he said you. Why  
you?

DIRECTOR

Sir Goldenloin, is your loyalty to  
this Kingdom or to a knight who  
consorts with a monster?

A lot rides on how Goldenloin answers.

GOLDENLOIN

Did you swap his sword? Did you set  
him up? Tell me the truth.

Wrong answer.

The Director stands up.

DIRECTOR

Ever since I was young, I've had  
the same nightmare.

She crosses the room.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

I find a crack in the wall.  
I yell out. But no one listens.  
And the crack grows bigger and  
bigger until the wall crumbles  
and the monsters pour in...

The Director stops in front of a display cabinet, her back to Goldenloin.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

I begged the Queen not to question  
the word of Gloreth. Not to  
question what's kept us safe for a  
thousand years.  
But she wouldn't listen.

She opens a secret panel and pulls out Ballister's ORIGINAL SWORD, the one she took from his locker.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Allowing Ballister to hold the  
sword was the first crack in the  
wall. And now, we have a monster in  
our kingdom.

She turns to Goldenloin. His eyes go wide. Ballister's sword!

GOLDENLOIN

Is that--

Their eyes meet.

DIRECTOR

(genuine)  
I'm sorry, Ambrosius.

The Director **RUNS THE SWORD THROUGH GOLDENLOIN'S STOMACH!**

Goldenloin STUMBLES BACK, holding the sword to his stomach, but unable to pull it out. He WOBBLER into the Director's desk, knocking over things.

He reaches out as if to steady himself, but instead SMASHES into a diorama of the kingdom.

He clutches the GLORETH statue in the center of the diorama, SNAPPING it in his hand as he falls to the ground.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

So yes...I framed Ballister. I  
killed the Queen.

The Director bends down, takes the statue from his hand.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Gloreth did whatever it took to  
keep the monsters out.

She places the statue back in the diorama.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
And so will I.

Turning back to Goldenloin as he crawls away to the far wall,  
just near the balcony.

He goes still. Dead.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
May Gloreth forgive you.

Then --

DIRECTOR (V.O.)  
So yes, I framed Ballister. I  
killed the Queen.

Just outside the doors in front of them, Ballister is  
standing on the balcony, holding a TINY RECORDING DEVICE.

BALLISTER  
I can't wait for the kingdom to see  
this.

The Director's eyes go wide.

DIRECTOR  
You...

BALLISTER  
Uh, and my sidekick. Round of  
applause, ladies and gents.

The Director is confused. Goldenloin springs back to life.

NIMONA GOLDENLOIN  
Was my acting ok? I was a little  
worried that last BLARGHHHHHHH was  
too over-the-top.

He pulls the sword out of his stomach and stabs it into the  
floor, then SHIFTS INTO PUNK NIMONA.

BALLISTER  
Well, if you're really looking for  
some feedback...it was a little  
dramatic.

(MORE)

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

I mean, you're not gonna win any awards or anything. But it was good.

NIMONA

(proud)

I've never even taken a class!

BALLISTER

Really? That's a surprise.

NIMONA

Not a one.

(then)

Oh, don't forget your sword, Boss.

Ballister looks back at the Director.

BALLISTER

Ah, she can keep it. I don't fight for her anymore.

The Director is speechless.

NIMONA

You called me your sidekick.

BALLISTER

I did, didn't I?

NIMONA

(sing-songy)

You called me your sidekick.

BALLISTER

And I regret it already.

They dive off the balcony. Nimona sprouts her giant bat/devil wings and fly away.

NIMONA

(sing-songy)

You called me your sidekick. You called me your sidekick.

(fading in the distance)

He called me his sidekick. This guy called me his sidekick.

The doors fly open as the real Goldenloin enters the office.

GOLDENLOIN

We need to talk.

The Director is furious. She screams as she storms out past him and leaves him behind totally confused.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Bad time?

And that's when Goldenloin sees Ballister's sword stuck in the floor of the Director's office.

**SEQUENCE 2310\_GOVIRAL:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR - EVENING

Ballister uploads the video of the Director to the internet.

They're celebrating! Ballister and Nimona play a Monopoly-type game called "World Domination" while eating pizza.

NIMONA

Come on, come on!

(blows on a set of dice)

Woohoo!

Nimona rolls the dice.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Yes! Let's take that pooch for a walk.

Nimona moves her SCOTTIE DOG game-piece on the board.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Eight... nine... ten.

BALLISTER

Oooh. Landing you in the Enchanted Forest, which is MY domain. Cha-ching! 600 gold, please.

NIMONA

My scottie dog will not pay your tyrannical toll!

Nimona uses her scottie dog and other game-pieces to act out the following on the game-board:

NIMONA (CONT'D)

He rallies the oppressed woodland creatures and starts a rebellion!  
(trumpet sound)

She shifts into an otter...

NIMONA OTTER  
Squirrels scale the castle walls!  
(scratching sounds)

Then a bear...

NIMONA BEAR  
BEARS batter down the gates! Bloody  
chaos ensues!  
(bear growls)  
Rawr! Rawr! Rawr!  
(victim dying scream)  
AHHHHHHH!  
(throat slit and blood  
squirt sounds)

Nimona Bear grabs a juice box off the table and squirts  
"blood" for dramatic effect as she drops to the ground.  
Ballister watches, not saying a word.

BALLISTER  
I'm still taking the 600 gold.

She gets back up as punk Nimona.

NIMONA  
What?!

FWOOSH! Nimona fire-breathes the board-game, leaving it a  
smoldering pile of ash.

BALLISTER  
You didn't tell me you can breathe  
fire?

Oops. Maybe she's taken it too far.

NIMONA  
Oh.

But Ballister just laughs and shakes his head.

BALLISTER  
Metal. Best two out of three?

Nimona smiles wide.

It's funny how something so mundane could mean so much.

Her gamble has paid off. She's finally found a true friend.

Ballister feels her watching him.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

What?

NIMONA

(covering)

Nothing.

Just then, DING! DING DING DING! DING!

They look at each other, then rush over to the computer to see that the video is getting massive hits.

BALLISTER

Hey check it out!

They watch in awe as the view counter climbs exponentially.

NIMONA

Whoa...a hundred...five hund--  
Three thousand! Seventy-five thou--  
The whole kingdom is seeing this  
thing!!

BALLISTER

Well, I guess there's only one  
question left.

Ballister turns to her.

NIMONA

What's that?

BALLISTER

Can a shark dance?

NIMONA

Can a shark dance? Watch me.  
(snaps shark teeth)

CUT TO:

Nimona and Ballister happy-dance around the lair.

They rip down articles implicating Ballister as "The Queen Killer" off the "Murder Wall."

EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS AROUND THE KINGDOM

The video footage of the Director's confession plays everywhere: in taverns, in the Institute, on billboards, etc.

NATE KNIGHT (ON TV)  
*Still reeling from the monster  
attack, the Kingdom is rocked by  
new footage of the Director making  
a truly shocking confession.*

INTERCUT FUN MOMENTS of NIMONA and BALLISTER partying, taking silly pictures - with REACTIONS from the CITIZENS around the kingdom to the news.

DIRECTOR (ON TV)  
*I framed Ballister. I killed the  
Queen.*

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR

A KNOCK at the door. Ballister answers. It's the Director! Holding a pizza box? Ballister stumbles backwards and falls. The Director turns back into Nimona. She cracks up as she digs into the pizza.

ON TV - A picture of the Director side by side with Nimona and Ballister's "Wanted" poster.

NATE KNIGHT (ON TV)  
One question remains: Who's the  
real villain?

EXT. KINGDOM

People start to assemble outside the Institute.

CROWD  
(yelling)  
We want answers!/Get us the  
Director!/We want the truth!

The Director shuts herself in her office. She seethes at the images of her labeled with "TRUE VILLAIN" on the giant screens all over the kingdom.

**SEQUENCE 2320\_FALLOUT:**

INT. INSTITUTE - GOLDENLOIN'S QUARTERS

Goldenloin sees the Director's confession on the news. He is pissed.

He looks at Ballister's sword in hands and sets his brow, knowing what he needs to do.

INT. INSTITUTE - HALLWAY

He calls to other shocked/outraged knights.

GOLDENLOIN

With me.

Goldenloin leads them through the halls of the Institute, on a mission.

INT. INSTITUTE - DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Goldenloin slams open the office door.

GOLDENLOIN

Director!

Books are scattered across her desk. Images of Nimona in her various forms pulled up on screens. But no Director.

A SECRET DOOR stands open revealing an--

ANCIENT STAIRWELL

Goldenloin and the knights descend a stone stairwell that winds down, down, down into--

INT. INSTITUTE - VAULT

A dank, cavernous library of the Institute's most ancient possessions. This is all medieval- no modern.

Goldenloin and the knights search the antiquated stacks. Books and scrolls are in piles on the floor.

They stop dead in their tracks as they come across--

--The Director, searching for something through old parchment scrolls. She finds the one she's looking for.

GOLDENLOIN

You're under arrest. For the murder of the Queen. And for--

DIRECTOR

Ambrosius!

She shows him a scroll.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

This explains everything.

Goldenloin's eyes go wide in horror.

**SEQUENCE 2330\_RELAXED:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR - NIGHT

Board games and pizza clutter the coffee table. Looks like there was a bit of a party.

ZOMBIE MOVIE VOICE #1 (O.S.)  
...zombies are immortal eternal  
beings. There is no way to kill  
them.

ZOMBIE MOVIE VOICE #2 (O.S.)  
But what if they come for us?

Ballister and Nimona are on the couch, watching a ZOMBIE MOVIE on TV.

BALLISTER  
Alright, I can't believe I'm about  
to say this, but I actually feel  
bad for the zombies.

He looks over to see that Nimona has fallen fast asleep. She looks so peaceful, so innocent. He can't help chuckling.

Suddenly she begins to WHIMPER and GROWL, SHIFTING FORMS in her sleep. A wolf, a cat, etc.

NIMONA  
No! Don't go...No...Stop...Don't..

BALLISTER  
(softly)  
Hey, hey, hey...It's okay.

Ballister reaches out to gently shakes her awake, but hesitates. She SHIFTS back into her punk girl form with a small YELP wakes up.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)  
You're safe. We're home.

Nimona relaxes.

NIMONA  
Home?

A sleepy smile from Nimona as her drowsy eyes settle on the board game and leftover pizza.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

(sleepy)

I like it here. Let's live here  
forever.

She drifts back to sleep.

Ballister drapes her in a blanket. In her sleep, Nimona wraps herself further in it.

Ballister smiles gently.

DING! A message icon pops up on the computer screen.

Ballister sees a coded email message from Goldenloin - he wants to meet.

**SEQUENCE 2340\_WARNING:**

INT. THE ANTLERED SERPENT PUB - NIGHT

A traditional English Pub. Dive-y. A mysterious figure sitting at an out-of-the way booth, his identity concealed under a hooded cloak.

Ballister slides into the booth, across the table.

BALLISTER

You've got thirty seconds.

The figure lifts his hood.

GOLDENLOIN

Thirty seconds!

BALLISTER

It's a lot more time than you've given me.

GOLDENLOIN

I'm here to save you.

BALLISTER

(scoffs)

You know what you are so full of--

A server comes by.

PUB SERVER

Hey! Can I get you guys something?

BALLISTER/GOLDENLOIN

Nachos!

GOLDENLOIN

Please.

As the server steps away...

BALLISTER

(calling after him)

And hold the olives. He's allergic.

GOLDENLOIN

Bal, I wouldn't be here if it  
wasn't important.

BALLISTER

And I wouldn't be here if you'd  
stood up for me.

GOLDENLOIN

That is not fair.

BALLISTER

We're done.

ALAMZAPAM DAVIS (OS/ON TV)

We now go live to the Institute.

BALLISTER

And so is she.

Ballister points to the TV above the bar. There's the footage  
of the Director playing on the news.

DIRECTOR (ON TV)

*I killed the Queen.*

GOLDENLOIN

There is something I need to tell  
you--

PUB PATRON (O.S.)

(British accent)

Hey, turn that up!

The news cuts to the Institute where the Director is giving  
an ad hoc press conference to a swarm of reporters.

DIRECTOR (ON TV)

*Citizens of the Realm, that is not  
me in the recording. I know it  
looks like me and sounds like me.  
But it is NOT me.*

Footage of the fight at Institute and Nimona shifting forms  
plays over the Director's statement.

DIRECTOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)

*That was the monster working with  
the real Queen killer. Ballister.  
They are trying to trick you.*

Ballister's face falls.

BALLISTER

That's a lie.

BACK to the NEWS.

The footage stops on Nimona in her little girl form.

DIRECTOR (ON TV)

*We are under attack by something  
that can take any form.*

*(looks into camera)*

*It could be anyone- your spouse,  
your child, your best friend, the  
person sitting next to you.*

Patrons in the bar look at each other warily.

DIRECTOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)

*None of us are safe, so long as the  
villain and that monster are still  
out there.*

Ballister quickly puts his hood back up. All sense of victory gone.

BALLISTER

She's twisting everything.  
Ambrosius, I'm not the villain  
here.

GOLDENLOIN

I know! I know. I believe you.

Goldenloin takes Ballister's hand.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

I --I'm sorry. For everything...  
For your arm.

Ballister breathes a sigh of relief.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

She manipulated you. She  
manipulated both of us. But  
together, we'll take her down.

Goldenloin pulls out Ballister's sword.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

And prove it to the Kingdom.

He places the sword on the table in front of Ballister.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

You'll be a knight again.

Ballister swells with conviction.

BALLISTER

Thank you. The Director can't get away with-

GOLDENLOIN

The Director? Bal... I'm talking about your sidekick. Your sidekick set you up.

BALLISTER

What?

GOLDENLOIN

This was all her plan. All of it. She's evil, Bal.

BALLISTER

Evil? No, you're wrong. We've been wrong about everything!

GOLDENLOIN

Wrong about everything? Then explain this.

With that, Goldenloin SLAMS the SCROLL in front of Ballister.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

This scroll has been in the Institute vaults for a thousand years.

It shows a familiar image of GLORETH'S MONSTER laying waste to an entire village. Over the monster's heart, is an image of pink-haired little girl Nimona. They are one in the same.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Look at it. It's her, Bal. She's Gloreth's monster.

Ballister is shocked. Goldenloin points to the scroll to hammer home the point.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

She's come back to finish what she started. And she's using you to do it.

BALLISTER

But she's my friend.

GOLDENLOIN

Aren't I more than that? We can slay this monster. We can back to the way things were.

Stunned, Ballister looks at his sword, Goldenloin's gesture suddenly taking on a much darker context.

BALLISTER

This was a mistake.

He stands to leave.

GOLDENLOIN

Bal, please!

BALLISTER

No. I can't do this. I'm done.

Goldenloin grabs for him to stop him.

GOLDENLOIN

Listen to me!

Their server approaches, nachos in hand. Ballister storms past him and out of the pub.

Goldenloin takes the sword and the scroll and runs after him.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

She's using you to destroy the kingdom!

EXT. THE ANTLERED SERPENT PUB - CONTINUOUS

Ballister bursts out of the tavern. Goldenloin on his heels.

BALLISTER

Stop.

GOLDENLOIN

You know what she is. Why won't you admit it?

BALLISTER

Just stop!

GOLDENLOIN

You're in danger, Bal!

Goldenloin grabs Ballister by the shoulder. Ballister whirls around to face him. Goldenloin drops the sword and the scroll.

BALLISTER

Why can't you just leave me alone?

GOLDENLOIN

Because I love you.

They look at each other for an emotionally charged beat. Not like this. This is all too much.

Ballister picks up the sword and the scroll and storms off.

Todd steps out from the shadows, eyes locked on Ballister, and follows him.

**SEQUENCE 2350\_BREAKUP:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR - LATER

Nimona is still asleep on the couch.

She senses a presence and wakes up to see Ballister standing there, watching her. Silent.

NIMONA

(waking up)

Oh, I have not slept like that in forever.

(realizing)

Why do you have your cloak on?

He puts the scroll on the table in front of her. Shows her what he now knows.

BALLISTER

Is this you?

Nimona stares at the drawing of her little girl form inside the massive beast laying waste to the Kingdom. Then she looks up at him, wounded.

NIMONA

Where did you get that? Who have you been talking--

BALLISTER

Tell me this isn't you.

NIMONA

You think that I would do that?  
That that's who I am?

BALLISTER

I don't know. You're the one who  
told me not to trust anybody, to  
question everything--

NIMONA

That's right. Even now. With this.  
Think about everything that we've  
been through together--

BALLISTER

--I'm thinking about *everything*  
we've done together-- broken out of  
jail, stolen cars, kidnapped  
people. Manipulated people.

NIMONA

--I was helping you--

BALLISTER

You were using me! You wanted them  
to see a villain, someone else to  
hate so you wouldn't be alone.  
(beat)  
Because you're not a sidekick.  
You're a--

NIMONA

--What? I'm a what?

BALLISTER

You know what you are--

NIMONA

No. I wanna hear you say it.  
(no response)  
Come on, say it. *SAY IT!*  
(smashes the table)  
*SAY THAT I'M A MON--*  
(EYES FLASH)

Ballister unconsciously reaches for his sword.

Nimona sees the FLASH OF THE BLADE.

Her face falls. Wounded to her core.

BALLISTER

I--

Just then, flashlights streak through the windows.

TODD (O.S.)  
Surround the place. You two, with  
me.

BOOM! The door is kicked in.

Nimona is gone. Vanished into thin air.

Ballister turns around, confused. It's Todd, with the knights  
behind him.

TODD (CONT'D)  
(with a sneering grin)  
Your door's broken.

**SEQUENCE 2360\_BROKEN:**

EXT. WOODS

Angry. Nimona runs frantically through the woods. The knights  
are somewhere behind her, giving chase. Branches and crossbow  
bolts whip past her, she changes shape to a WOLF as she goes.

She's overcome with emotion, doesn't know where she's going.  
She loses the knights chasing her.

She runs out into to a clearing and stops dead in her tracks.

She can barely breathe as she looks around to reveal she's at  
the site of an OLD, ABANDONED WELL.

As she realizes where she is, she shifts into her little girl  
self.

We move back into her mind and memory, and we see...

EXT. WOODS (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A blurry sea of colors is blinked away into a a beautiful  
blue sky. It's a thousand years ago.

Woodland sounds hum in the background. Crickets chirping,  
wind rustling though the trees. It's peaceful, innocent.

We're in the POV of someone or something. Nimona's earliest  
memory. We can't see what form she is in.

We see A BIRD land on a branch.

We pull out of Nimona's POV to see her SHAPE-SHIFT into a  
PINK BIRD and land on the branch too. The real bird gets  
startled and flies away, leaving Nimona alone.

Time passes...

We see Nimona SHIFT into A FISH and attempt to join a school of fish in the river...but they all swim away, knowing she's not one of them.

Nimona is a DEER prancing after a couple other deer, mimicking their every move.

The deer leap into a clearing and bound off, leaving her alone again.

Deer Nimona perks up when she hears HUMMING. She follows the sound, stops in her tracks when she sees --

EXT. OLD WELL (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A little BLONDE GIRL climbing up onto the old well.

GLORETH.

From the shadows in the forest, Nimona watches Gloreth play. She tosses stones into the empty bucket.

One of the stones bounces off the rim of the bucket and lands near Nimona's feet. Gloreth runs over, as she reaches for the stone...

...Nimona emerges from the forest as a 6 YEAR-OLD GIRL. Gloreth smiles at her. She smiles back at Gloreth.

As Gloreth offers Nimona the stone to join in the game...

**SEQUENCE 2370\_FLASHBACK:**

...we jump quickly ahead in time via flashes of memory, HAPPY MEMORIES.

Nimona has found a friend in Gloreth! A friend who accepts her magical ability to change forms.

That is until...

**SEQUENCE 2375\_MOBATTACK:**

Gloreth's parents see Gloreth with a BEAR and cry out with fear. They PULL Gloreth away from the bear.

VILLAGER (O.S.)

A bear! There's a bear in the village!

Quickly Nimona SHIFTS from the bear back into her LITTLE GIRL FORM. Nothing to be afraid of.

VILLAGERS (O.S.)  
What is that?/Get the kids  
inside!/Stay back!

YOUNG GLORETH  
No. Stop. Stop! She's my friend!

GLORETH'S MOTHER  
(to Gloreth)  
She's a monster.

Gloreth is visibly shaken by her parents' reaction. Her apprehension grows as...

More ADULTS show up. Afraid and angry, with pitchforks and torches.

VILLAGER  
Surround it!

They poke at Nimona with sticks.

Nimona tries to run, to explain, but they are relentless.

INTERCUT with present time - Nimona in the empty clearing reliving the trauma of the mob attack.

NIMONA LITTLE GIRL  
No!

Nimona, afraid, shifts from shape to shape to shape in a flurry. As the shapes blend into one another, we see what could be interpreted as the monster of myth - multiple eyes, multiple arms and claws.

The more Nimona gets pushed around and poked at, the more scared and defensive she becomes. Her eyes burn with fear and anger as she lets out a piercing *ROAR!*

Nimona slashes her claws through the air! It's raw and scary.

The crowd lurches back in fear! One of the villagers throws a torch at Nimona. It singes Nimona's fur as it bounces off her and into the grass, starting the fire.

**NIMONA DOESN'T HURT ANYONE**

**SHE DOESN'T BURN ANYTHING DOWN**

As Nimona searches the crowd's scared faces, one sticks out: Gloreth, who stares at Nimona, paralyzed with fear.

Like she's seeing Nimona for the first time as a monster.

The sight of Gloreth jolts Nimona into becoming aware of what she's doing, what she looks like, how scared the crowd is.

Nimona shifts from her animal forms back into 6-year-old LITTLE GIRL form. She steps towards Gloreth...

NIMONA LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)  
Gloreth? Gloreth, it--

But Gloreth musters all the courage she can and holds up her sharp wooden sword at Nimona.

YOUNG GLORETH  
Go back to the shadows from whence  
you came.

Heartbroken, Nimona backs away from Gloreth.

DISSOLVE from Young Gloreth holding that sword to the Statue of Gloreth. The heroic knight always standing protectively over the kingdom.

The kingdom's entire belief system a lie. A legend fabricated by a group of closed-minded, scared villagers built a culture of fear.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD WELL

Little Girl Nimona kneels in the dirt, all alone near the old well, turning all these memories over and over in her mind, with a furious loneliness.

Tears stream down her face as she holds her heart.

Nimona hears Ballister's voice mixed with other voices from the past echoing in her mind.

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
What are you?

PATIENCE (V.O.)  
Monster!

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
Are you even human?/  
Just be a girl.

DIRECTOR (V.O.)  
There is no place for you!

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
Don't lie to me.

GLORETH'S MOTHER (V.O.)  
(whispering)  
She's a monster.

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
Don't you wish you were normal?

YOUNG GLORETH (V.O.)  
Go back to the shadows from whence  
you came!

The wind whips through her hair. She looks at the giant statue of Gloreth in the distance. Hurt and betrayal turn into rage.

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
There's something really wrong with  
you. What are you?!

PATIENCE (V.O.)  
MONSTER!

BALLISTER (V.O.)  
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE!

She lets out a SCREAM so full of pain and starts to shape-shift. We only see her from behind - but it's clear that she is more monstrous than we've ever seen.

**SEQUENCE 2380\_PREBATTLE:**

INT. BALLISTER'S LAIR

Todd and his goon squad have Ballister bound. But they're not taking any chances- they all have their swords at the ready.

Clearly enjoying this, Todd punches Ballister, hard.

TODD  
You brought a monster into our  
home.

Todd pulls Ballister close, gets in his face.

TODD (CONT'D)  
You should have stayed in the  
gutter where you belong.

Todd raises his fist to hit him again. Ballister can't take much more.

TODD (CONT'D)  
Now where is it?!

The ground shakes.

TODD (CONT'D)  
You feel that?

The ground shakes again.

TODD (CONT'D)  
It'd be like the whole place just  
went wobble-wobble-wobble-wobble-  
wobble.

EXT. BALLISTER'S LAIR

They drag Ballister outside to investigate.

In the distance, through the mist, they can make out...  
something coming. Something BIG.

A look of dread on Ballister's face.

BALLISTER  
No.

Trees CRACK and fall as it moves...

TODD  
It's is headed straight for the  
city. Alert the Institute!  
(to Ballister)  
And you. If that thing destroy the  
kingdom, it's on you, bro.  
(to the knights)  
Let's go.

The knights drop Ballister to the ground. As they walk off,  
they toss the scroll and his sword down next to him.

Todd and the others get on their bikes and take off, leaving  
Ballister behind.

INT. INSTITUTE

The Director marches down the hall, with staff trailing her  
into her office.

SIR RANDALL EDITUS  
Ma'am, incoming report from Sir  
Thoddeus--

DIRECTOR  
And? What is it?

BOOM. BOOM. Vibrations rattle the diorama of the city. The scale Statue of Gloreth topples over.

The Director runs to the balcony.

EXT. KINGDOM - STREETS

People stop and look around.

BYSTANDERS

What's going on?/What is that?

ON GOLDENLOIN racing in on a hover-bike, leading a squadron of knights. As the unseen monster, closes in.

GOLDENLOIN

We need barricades set up on Avenue A through F. And can we clear the streets. These people are in danger.

Goldenloin is cut short as a monstrous footfalls stop. Shadowy smoke fills the street.

Everyone goes silent. Turning towards the darkness.

Goldenloin looks down the street into the tree line.

Reminiscent of our opening, reveal from the shadows the glowing eyes of --

MONSTER NIMONA.

Monster Nimona rises up - 40 feet tall and terrifying.

EXT. INSTITUTE BALCONY

The Director stares at Monster Nimona with a mix of fear and awe.

DIRECTOR

It's happening.

The Director steels herself.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Sound the alarm. SOUND THE ALARM!  
Hit it with everything we've got!

EXT. KINGDOM - STREETS

The MONSTER ALARM sounds.

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATTACK!  
THIS IS NOT A TEST.  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATTACK!  
THIS IS NOT A TEST.

Hearing that, Nimona shatters the silence with an explosive ROAR. People scream and run. Fear overtakes the Kingdom.

TERRIFIED CITIZEN  
It's the monster!

***Everything about this moment is a mirror image of the Shadow Monster attack on Gloreth and her people that we saw in Act One.***

***Nimona is (consciously? unconsciously?) re-creating the monster story that the whole Kingdom has grown up with for a thousand years.***

SYNTHEYA - VOICE OF THE KINGDOM (V.O.)  
MONSTER ATTACK! MONSTER ATT--

BAM! A giant MONSTER foot crushes the holographic newsstand projecting the alarm.

Goldenloin looks up at Nimona with fear and awe.

GOLDENLOIN  
Everyone stay calm--

A panicked knight FIRES a rocket launcher right over Goldenloin's shoulder.

The rocket misses Nimona and hits a building instead.

INT. INSTITUTE - CONTROL ROOM

The Institute Analysts sit at a bank of monitors, piloting a fleet of drones.

INSTITUTE ANALYST  
Drones engaged.

EXT. KINGDOM

A swarm of drones streak thru the city and attack Monster Nimona. They pelt her with laser fire.

Nimona continues her march towards the Institute. On her way, she DESTROYS every symbol of hate and intolerance- every billboard, every statue, every shred of anti-monster propaganda- she stomps, incinerates and smashes.

*PEOPLE ARE NOT HER TARGET. THE SYSTEM IS.*

Drone-rockets smash into Nimona who stumbles into a building.

INT. BUILDING

Nimona's ginormous tail smashes into the windows. Glass shatters everywhere. The people run for cover.

TERRIFIED CITIZEN

Let's get out of here!

EXT. KINGDOM

An OLD LADY gets knocked down by the panicking crowd.

GOLDENLOIN

Look out!

Goldenloin breaks off his attack to help the lady, pulling her out of Monster Nimona's path just in time.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

(reassuring)

You're okay.

Just then, Goldenloin hears Todd chime in over the comms.

TODD

(on comms)

Hey Goldie, watch how a real knight gets it done.

**SEQUENCE 2390\_ASSAULT:**

EXT. KINGDOM

Monster Nimona makes her way through the streets.

ON TODD leading his group of knights through the city.

TODD

Alright monster-slayers! Let's shoot some darts and break some hearts!

Todd whips around a corner on the hover-bike.

TODD (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be a freakin' herooooo--

He stops short in front of Monster Nimona. Todd craps his pants with fear.

ROARRRRRRRRRR!

Todd SCREAMS!

Todd swings his bike around and guns the engine.

TODD (CONT'D)  
(panicking)  
Outta my way! Outta my way!

He tries to race ahead of his own knights.

TODD (CONT'D)  
(panicking)  
We need more firepower!

ON THE Director - hearing Todd over the comms.

TODD (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(panicking)  
*This thing is gonna kill us*  
*aaaaaallllll!*

ON TODD - Crashing into another knight in his group.

ANOTHER KNIGHT  
Look out!

His bike spins out of control and heads right for an Institute propaganda billboard "Born For This" picturing Todd giving a high-five.

TODD (ON BILLBOARD)  
High-five.

Todd crashes into his own "high-five."

TODD (CONT'D)  
Bro.

The sign explodes and smashes to the ground.

TERRIFIED CITIZEN  
Let's get out of here!

BACK TO THE DIRECTOR

She can hear Todd's scream over the comms - THEN static. The Director looks at the scale model of the city.

DIRECTOR  
Get me to the wall.

EXT. KINGDOM

ON BALLISTER entering the city. He's heartbroken and shocked, seeing all the all the destruction and chaos.

ROAR. That's when he gets his first clear view of Monster Nimona. Angry. And IN PAIN as drones fire at her.

He takes it all in. This is his fault.

BALLISTER  
What have I done?

Ballister knows he has to do something to stop this.

BACK ON MONSTER NIMONA - A SALMON PINK HEART pulses in her chest.

The drones swoop by in another attack run. Monster Nimona takes heavy fire and is knocked into some buildings.

ON A GIANT TIMES SQUARE SCREEN, a commercial for a kids board game plays, starring two adorable kids.

GAME COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER (ON TV)  
*...the game that lets you be a  
hero!*

GAME COMMERCIAL KID #1 (ON TV)  
(holds up a 'dead  
monster')  
*I killed a monster!*

GAME COMMERCIAL KID #2 (ON TV)  
(holds up 2 'dead  
monsters')  
*I killed two!*

Monster Nimona roars in anger and pain. She swats the giant screen. It crashes to the ground.

She continues her march.

**SEQUENCE 2400\_ATTEMPT:**

EXT. KINGDOM - STREETS

Goldenloin with some of the other knights continue helping people.

GOLDENLOIN  
Come on. Come on. Let's go.  
(to the knights)  
(MORE)

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Just keep them moving. Get everyone underground.

Just then Ballister races by on his horse, sword held high. Heading for Nimona.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

Bal?!  
(calling out)  
BAL!

But Ballister doesn't slow. Goldenloin realizes what Ballister is about to do- kill the monster and save the city.

And then AN EERIE SOUND draws his attention.

THE GIANT CANNONS on the walls are turning, pointing inward towards the Kingdom.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

You've gotta be kidding me.  
(speaking into comms)  
Ma'am! Someone is turning the cannons INTO the kingdom!

EXT. WALL

The Director supervises as the cannons turn.

DIRECTOR

Yes, I know. I gave the order.

GOLDENLOIN

Firing them will take out half the city. Innocent people will die.

DIRECTOR

And so will the monster!

BACK TO Goldenloin watching THE TWO MASSIVE CANNONS turning inwards toward the Kingdom.

GOLDENLOIN

But--

The Director cuts the comm.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

(to himself)  
What are we doing?

**SEQUENCE 2410\_TRUEHERO:**

ON THE BRIDGE - Exhausted and in pain, Monster Nimona stumbles into the support towers of the bridge.

The Statue of Gloreth looms ahead. She gathers her strength and presses on.

Blinding spotlights from the circling news helicopters snap on.

LIVE FOOTAGE of Monster Nimona entering Gloreth Square is projected on screens around the kingdom.

People run screaming in all directions.

Knights fire a rocket launcher at Monster Nimona. She's hit and goes down, hard. Even Nimona has her limits. She can't take much more of this.

As she comes to, she sees more people screaming at her, full of fear and hatred. Throwing things at her.

BYSTANDERS

Go away!/You don't belong here!

There's nothing but fear and loathing surrounding her and she feels it all - the screaming hateful crowd, the video screens broadcasting terrifying imagery. And looming above it all: Gloreth's massive statue.

Fire in the monster's eyes is replaced with a thousand years of sadness and pain.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*I don't know what's scarier.*

*(a quiet beat)*

*The fact that everyone in this kingdom wants to run a sword through my heart...*

MONSTER NIMONA summons the little strength she has left and stands, facing the huge statue of Gloreth and its golden sword.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*...Or that sometimes...*

Nimona exposes her GLOWING, BEATING HEART under all of her monstrous darkness.

NIMONA (V.O.)

*...I just want to let them.*

Monster Nimona rears back and lets out an ANGUISHED ROAR.

She's had enough. She pushes forward towards the tip of the blade.

Then...

Silence in the Kingdom. Except for...

Nimona's heartbeat.

Monster Nimona looks down.

**And there's Ballister standing on the tip of Gloreth's sword, his hand on her glowing heart.**

In his other hand, his sword. He drops it.

There's a GASP from the crowd as Ballister's sword hits the ground.

THE PEOPLE look up at the images of Ballister and Nimona filling all the big screens around the kingdom.

ON THE WALL

Goldenloin bursts onto the battlement to stop the Director, but stops in his tracks when he sees Ballister with Monster Nimona.

BACK TO BALLISTER

Looking up at his hurting friend.

BALLISTER

I'm sorry.

ON THE PEOPLE - Watching. Listening.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

(on the big screens)

*I'm sorry.*

BACK TO THE STATUE

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

I see you, Nimona.

Monster Nimona's eyes clear.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

And you're not alone.

Through the monster's shadowy skin, we see Nimona's heart glow with incandescent warmth. A SALMON COLOR starts to appear, replacing the darkness. Suddenly she doesn't seem monstrous at all.

Shadows pulse and race around her. She's a shape ever moving, ever shifting. The shadows unravel and dissipate, revealing an ethereal form.

She floats down onto the end of the sword, and coalesces into her punk form. She starts to buckle from exhaustion.

Ballister lunges forward and catches her.

Slowly, her arms go up and cling to him too. She sobs quietly, letting out hundreds of years of pain.

Images of Ballister and Nimona embracing fill the big screens around the kingdom.

THE PEOPLE look at Ballister and Nimona with... empathy.

**SEQUENCE 2420\_SACRIFICE:**

Everyone is taken in by what they just witnessed. Even the Director seems to be touched by the moment, until --

DIRECTOR

Fire the cannons. Kill it.

Nothing happens.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

I said FIRE THE--

GOLDENLOIN

--NO!

The Director whips around!

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

It's over.

All the knights stand with Goldenloin, following his lead.

DIRECTOR

It's fooling you. Fooling all of you. Can't you see this is what it wants? For us to let our guard down. Well, I see what it really is. And so did Gloreth. That monster is a threat to our very way of life!

GOLDENLOIN

And what if we're wrong?

The Director is shocked into silence.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

What if we've always been wrong?

The Director looks to Nimona and Ballister.

Doubt starts to cloud the Director's certainty. She bows her head...

Goldenloin lets out a breath. He got through to her.

She looks up, more determined than ever. She'll do whatever it takes, just like Gloreth.

She raises her scepter and just like the sword that killed the Queen, the scepter starts to glow.

She fires a plasma blast at Goldenloin and the knights, knocking them all to the ground.

ON BALLISTER AND NIMONA sharing a smile.

BAM! They see the light from the blast.

BACK ON GOLDENLOIN coming to, he realizes the Director has made her way into the control center of one of the cannons and powers it up.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

No.

Goldenloin tries with all his might to pry the door open, but it's no use.

GOLDENLOIN (CONT'D)

NO!

The Director locks Nimona and Ballister in the crosshairs. Innocent people everywhere.

ON NIMONA AND BALLISTER who look to the wall. A deafening WHINE as the cannons GLOW WITH BLINDING ENERGY.

THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM

Fill with dread as they look up at the cannons. In this moment they realize that the Director, not Nimona, is the true monster.

Nimona looks at the terrified people, then at the cannon.

BALLISTER

That gun's going to kill everyone.

She turns to see Ballister watching the people trying to escape. He's worried and not sure what to do to help.

NIMONA

Hey Boss.

Nimona looks at Ballister.

NIMONA (CONT'D)

Be right back. I'm gonna go break some stuff.

She grins.

BALLISTER

Wait, Nimona--what are you--

NIMONA

(badass - determined)

It's time to rewrite this story.

BALLISTER

Nimona...

Nimona runs and dives off the end of the sword.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Nimona!

Ballister knows Nimona is the only one who can stop this.

She shifts into a massive PINK LIGHT CREATURE, launches herself into the air and flies toward the wall.

In the crowd, Patience, the same little girl that held the sword up to Nimona earlier during the fight at the Institute, now looks at her with new eyes.

The Director grits her teeth and fires.

DIRECTOR

Go back to the shadows from whence you came!

Nimona wraps herself around the cannon, heart first, just as it explodes with power.

KABOOOOOM!

Nimona did it!

A WHITE HOT EXPLOSION FILLS THE SCREEN.

FADE IN FROM WHITE:

Where the cannon was just seconds ago, there is now just a massive HOLE IN THE WALL.

Ballister rides up. Hoping against hope, he searches desperately for some sign that Nimona survived.

BALLISTER

Nimona.

No response.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Nimona!

Pink particles gently fall out of the sky and disappear.

BALLISTER (CONT'D)

Come back. Please come back.

Ballister is overcome with grief.

Goldenloin drops down next to Ballister and comforts him the best he can.

When Goldenloin looks up, he sees something that brings him awe.

Others look, approach, and then we see what they see:

OUTSIDE THE WALL - It's beautiful. There was nothing to fear.

**SEQUENCE 2430\_NEWSTART:**

EXT. KINGDOM - DAY

And as we pan down from the sky, we see that some time has passed, changes are being made in the Kingdom.

BALLISTER (V.O.)

Some of us don't get the "Happily-ever-after" we were looking for.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Ballister standing on the wall, which has now become the Kingdom's version of NYC's "The Highline."

BALLISTER (V.O.)

Maybe it's not that kind of kingdom. Or maybe it's not the end of story.

Goldenloin joins Ballister. KISS!

They walk hand-in-hand, watching the people of the Kingdom interact with each other in ways they never did before. It seems that more "walls" have come down.

In the distance, workers are removing the cannons from the wall.

They walk past some young artists spray painting hearts and stars on Ballister and Nimona's "Wanted" Posters.

Ballister and Goldenloin smile with approval at the Kingdom's new direction. They arrive at the spot where Nimona gave her life to save them.

The hole in the wall has been re-made as a welcoming archway. Allowing all people safe passage to travel in and out of the Kingdom as they please.

Some citizens of the Kingdom have left flowers, drawings, and letters at the base of the wall, creating a memorial celebrating Nimona's sacrifice.

Ballister notices Todd, his arm in a sling, placing flowers at the memorial. There is sincerity in the gesture.

Ballister catches Todd's eye. Todd gives him a small smile and a nod before walking off.

Goldenloin hands Ballister a very sweet drawing of Nimona that says "We love Nimona."

Ballister gives a bittersweet smile, honoring her sacrifice, mourning his friend.

**SEQUENCE 2440\_FIN:**

INT. BALLISTER AND NIMONA'S LAIR - LATER

Ballister enters the lair, and looks around to see the place just as they left it.

There's a half-played board game on the coffee table. An opened bags of chips. Empty pizza boxes.

He yanks down all the coverings off the windows to let the light pour in. Pulls down the rest of the "Murder Wall."

In place of the Director's photo, Ballister tacks up the "We Love Nimona" drawing.

Their lair is no longer a place to hide in the shadows.

He's still trying to process all this, when all of a sudden...

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

Ballister opens the door. He's really hoping...is it possible?

There's no one there. His shoulders drop, disappointed. Then from behind him -

NIMONA (O.S.)

Hey, Boss.

Ballister whips around and his face lights up with a beaming smile.

BALLISTER

(surprised; thrilled)

Holy shi--

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END