

## Ch1. Village Outlaw

The agent was looking out the window to his left, his sunglasses shielding him from the bright late afternoon sun behind the house that he could see across the street. He took a sip of his coffee as he examined the house. The main reason he was called out here in the first place.

Usually, he only works with larger corporations as they have the funds to pay for his services, but never in his life did he expect an anonymous caller to offer him such a large payment to do what he believed was a very simple job. But he didn't mind. He decided to entertain this situation and show up at this diner to discuss these plans with this anonymous guy in person.

After a while a figure in a large cloak entered the diner. At first it just stood in place awkwardly, looking around as if it was lost, but then it noticed the agent sitting at the booth.

The agent was well-kept. His brown-orange hair was slicked back, and his grey suit and pants were over his white button-up and navy blue tie.

He went to sit in the booth across from the agent.

"Are you the man I hired for the job?" the cloaked man asked in a hushed tone that grated with his southern accent.

"Depends. Are you the anonymous payer?" the agent replied, quite surprised at the scene.

"Oh yes, that would be me. Nice to meet you!" The cloaked man stuck out his hand for a handshake. The agent only stared down at it for a brief moment. His hand did not leave the embrace of his coffee cup.

“What’s up with the cloak?” He engaged the man, pointing with his left hand at his attire.

“Oh, I was trying to be discreet. Didn’t want to attract too much attention, so I decided to wear the cloak. Felt appropriate for the mood and it gave me an excuse to use it.” The cloaked man exclaimed in a way a child talks about his favorite toy.

“Uh, huh.” The agent took another sip of his coffee. “At least take off the hood, you’re attracting even more attention to yourself.” As the cloaked man looked around, he could see that everyone else in the diner would take quick glances over at him from time to time. Thus, he finally took off the hood of his cloak. Revealing his aged skin, wrinkles under his eyes, long white beard, and goatee hanging down to the bottom of his neck, bald on his head, but he was already wearing a trucker hat over it. His face had a hue of red to it. Might have been from the blush he acquired from the recent embarrassment. “Anyways, now that we are both here we can discuss the details of this job. You said you wanted me to deal with a…” He took another sip. “nuisance?”

“Ah yes! You see that house down across the street. That place is like a stain on our little village. You know, we try so hard to keep it nice and clean over here. We want our children to play in clean parks, we want to be able to walk our dogs during a pleasant stroll on a nice day, we want to just be viewed as respectable citizens, but we can’t do any of that with that insane freak down there bringing down the value of this village with his insanity!”

“So, you just don’t like how dirty his house is? Isn’t that an HOA problem?”

“Oh, that’s just part of it. Even though he’s so far away from us, he always finds a way to make these ridiculously loud noises from his home. Sometimes it sounds like he’s sawing

things, or hammering things, but what bothers us the most is the loud gunshots from his house that spew at random times of the day!”

“This homeowner owns a gun?”

“He must! The very few times we see him out in the village; he’s always walking around with a giant case on his side. I assume that whatever is making that loud gunshot noise is inside that gun case.”

“Have you not just brought this up to your local PD? I don’t know how the rules work on firearms in this place, but surely they could handle it?”

“Nah the stupid police won’t do anything. They’re all heavily understaffed here and are just lazy bums! They never want to do anything! It’s honestly a surprise if we see a patrol car out on the streets.”

“I think I’m understanding the situation now. There’s just one more clarifying question I have for you. What exactly do you want me to do? You’ve put quite a lot of money on the line here; I assume this seems urgent?”

“Very. Look, I know the money we gave you seems quite high for my budget, and trust me it is. I’m not the only one that has a problem with this guy. There is a massive group of villagers here who have come to this agreement to hire your services to help us. In about a week, the biggest event in our village is about to take place. The ceremony for the National Girl Scouts of Southern County. We take pride in being able to hold this event every year, and we really don’t want it to be disturbed by the insane work of that man. We just ask you to do what our government won’t. Relocate this guy, maybe send him for jail for all I care, just do literally ANYTHING that is within your power to prevent him from potentially ruining this

ceremony for us.” The citizen finally expressed his concern, taking a moment to catch his breath. The two stayed in silence for a while. The agent as usual continued to drink from his coffee. He was thinking everything over in his head, and finally, after a while, he came to an agreement.

“Alright, I’ll help. Let’s discuss how things are going to move from here.” The two men began to discuss the best possible way to finish this job.

In the meantime, Kerth was cleaning his Remington Model 870 Wingmaster shotgun from the barrel. He sat on his cushion-less sofa, wearing only an underwear and a tank top, with a defining scar on the right side of his forehead. The air in his living room carrying sawdust in the enclosed room, as the remaining bits of sunlight peer through the spaces between planks of wood. As he sat there, he heard in his head the familiar voice of his gun.

“Be warned! There are devilish fiends who are devising a plan to take me away from you! You must not let that happen!”

“What? Who? How am I to help keep you safe?” Kerth replied gently caressing the shotgun.

“In three days time at noon! They will come, but only from the front of the house. Use this to your advantage. I am your weapon, your child, your life! Use me to eliminate the fiends and purge the world from all that is unholy!”

“Yes, my love.” He embraced the gun. Resolving in his mind the moment he will have to face these fiends, the moment he knew what his purpose in life was all along. A divine trial imposed upon him on the road to greatness.