

TEASER

INT. VEE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A dark living room. Heavy rain outside. The door slams open. VERA RILEY (aka VEE) enters completely drenched.

She's 19, pretty, doesn't wear makeup and has glasses. She slams the door shut and starts to take off her jacket.

VEE

Mom? I got it! I got the gig!

She takes off her jacket and hangs it.

VEE (CONT'D)

It's all gonna be fine because it turns out I'm a genius. Mom? Did you hear me? A G-E-N-I-

She flips on the light switch.

VEE (CONT'D)

Oh...oh my god.

The living room is trashed. All electric appliances have been destroyed. The TV set is caved in. An old video game console lies on the floor in pieces.

VEE (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

She pulls out a pre-smartphone phone and dials 911.

911 OPERATOR

911 what's your emergency please?

VEE

H-Hello? I'm a- there's a- t- There's been a break in. At my house. I don't- I don't know where my mother is. She's not well, I don't know if-

911 OPERATOR

All right ma'am. Stay calm. A unit is en route to your location. What's your name?

VEE

Vera Riley. Vee. I live here.

911 OPERATOR
Vee? Ok Vee. Are there items
missing? Or damaged?

VEE
Uh, god, they just trashed the
place.

She slowly makes her way through the living room.

VEE (CONT'D)
Wait, no, it's - it's weird. Like
they destroyed the TV and the
stereo... but the furniture is
untouched. Weird.
Mom! MOM ARE YOU HERE?

Something crunches under her foot.

VEE (CONT'D)
Ow! Jesus!

911 OPERATOR
Are you all right ma'am?

She picks up a game cartridge that reads "PHOENIX DEFENDERS".

VEE
Yeah, I just stepped on one of my-

She freezes as she sees something.

911 OPERATOR
Ma'am?

On the far side of the room the words "KILL OR BE KILLED"
have been spray painted across the entire wall in large
letters. She slips the cartridge in her pocket as she stares
at the graffiti.

VEE
There's uh, I see some graffiti on
the wall...oh man...I think it may
be Luddites.

Pause.

911 OPERATOR
What makes you say that ma'am?

VEE

Uh, it-it says - they spray painted-
the wall - it's all - it says "Kill
or be killed" - that's their motto
or something right? That
survivalist anti-tech stuff?
And-and all m-my, like I said, the
TV and computer and stuff are
smashed up. All my electronic
things. That's what they do right?

911 OPERATOR

All right, I'm upgrading the threat
level and I'll need to inform the
domestic terrorism unit. Do you
understand? Is anyone injured in
the house? You mentioned your
mother?

VEE

What?

911 OPERATOR

Is your mother in the house?

VEE

I-I don't...I'm not sure.

911 OPERATOR

Ok. Have you checked the house?

VEE

What?

Something falls over in the next room.

911 OPERATOR

Are you sure the intruders aren't
there anymore?

VEE

Oh god, I-I'm not, I'm not sure
what...

911 OPERATOR

Ok. Ma'am? Don't do anything until
we arrive. Step out of the
apartment and a unit will be there
in two minutes. Can you hear me?
Ma'am? Don't try and-

Vee hangs up and just stares into the darkness of the next
room. She starts to slowly walk towards it.

VEE

Mom?

A dim light comes on in the next room. Vee stops and stares. Her breathing is getting rapid and shallow.

VEE (CONT'D)

Mom is that you?

She slowly walks into the next room where she sees the silhouette of her MOTHER, a skinny, frail woman in a black nightgown next to a small table lamp, in an armchair, staring off at something in the distance. She doesn't react.

VEE (CONT'D)

(explosive sigh of relief)

Mom. Jesus, why didn't you say something? Couldn't you hear me?

No response.

VEE (CONT'D)

Did you see what's happened?
Someone broke into the house! Are you ok?

Her mother starts to mutter something. Slowly, she stands and Vee sees a steak knife in her hand.

VEE (CONT'D)

What's the- woah what are you doing with that knife? Hey, put it down ok?

Her mother continues muttering, sounds like the same phrase over and over again. She starts moving towards Vee.

VEE (CONT'D)

MOM. Quit messing around. Put the knife down. I've called the cops. They'll be here any minute. You're freaking me out. Seriously this isn't funny! Mom? MOM! STOP IT!

Her mother raises the knife and slashes at Vee's throat.

VEE (CONT'D)

MOOOOOMMM!!!!

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. BUS - DAY

Vee jolts awake from her nightmare with a loud gasp as the bus goes over a bump. She wears a purple turtleneck and thick glasses. She looks around and sees that she is alone on a bus except for The BUS DRIVER, a jovial man with greying hair and a thick mustache who hums to himself. Vee sighs in relief and looks out the window and sees it's snowing heavily on an overcast day.

Everything is coated in white. She looks down the road and sees a military barricade. A SOLDIER has stopped a DRIVER on the side of the road and is talking to him.

BUS DRIVER

End of the line! Coming up on
Artenon!

A sign reads "ARTENON" as they drive past. It looks like a normal small mid-west town except that there's not a soul in sight.

EXT. ARTENON BUS STATION - DAY

The old battered bus slowly pulls into an empty station with a mechanical squeal. It docks into a parking spot which has a sign reading "WIRELESS CHARGE STATION". As soon as the bus stops the sign turns green.

INT. BUS - DAY

Vee grabs her backpack and starts to walk out.

BUS DRIVER

You be careful now miss. Hell of a
storm coming our way. You'll find a
cab around the corner to take you
to wherever it is you're going.
Don't recommend you go adventurin'
in this weather though.

VEE

Uh, thanks. You be careful too sir.

EXT. ARTENON BUS STATION - DAY

Vee trudges through the snow and gets into a solitary, beat up cab. Windows are tinted black.

INT. CAB - DAY

There is a tinted partition so Vee can't see the driver.

VEE

Uh, corner of uh Faraday aaand a
hundred and eleventh street?

The driver doesn't respond but the car starts to move.

INT. CAB - DAY - LATER

The radio broadcasts news updates.

RADIO (V.O)

Now officially labelled as a domestic terrorist group, the Luddites are famously known for their hack of the national supermarket chain, FairBrands, when they reduced all food prices to one cent. The group claimed it was "time to give back to the hungry" to combat the rising poverty rate. The agency has promised swift and severe action.

In international news, North Korea has claimed it has successfully test launched, not one, but two hypersonic long range nuclear capable missiles further raising global tensions.

Turning to the weather now, one of the biggest snow storms of the year, codenamed Judas, is fast approaching and is meant to last for several days. Listeners are cautioned to-

The radio suddenly cuts out and the engine dies. The cab slowly drifts to the side of the road and bumps against the curb to a stop.

VEE

Uh, hello? Is everything ok? Why have we stopped?

No answer.

VEE (CONT'D)
Hey! You have to answer me!
(beat)
Dammit.

EXT. CAB - DAY

Vee gets out of the car. The snow is falling harder now. She makes her way to the driver seat and yanks the door open after applying some effort.

INT. CAB - DAY

There's no one there, there are a lot of electronic components in the front with barely enough space for a person to sit. It's a self-driving vehicle.

VEE
God dammit.

Vee gets in and attempts to start it but the vehicle is dead.

VEE (CONT'D)
Piece of- come on. Activate!
Engage? Driver manual override.
Help?

A beeping sound is heard.

ROBOTIC VOICE (V.O.)
Help line. How may I help you?

VEE
You're bloody cab stalled on me!
I'm in the middle of nowhere in a
snow storm!

ROBOTIC VOICE
We apologize for the inconvenience.
Your vehicle is currently non-
operational for reasons unknown.
Your destination is two blocks
away. Please exit the vehicle and
follow the map via your mobile
device.

The dashboard opens and a holographic monitor is projected in front of Vee. It shows where she is and indicates the route she needs to take to get to her location.

VEE
Are you kidding? How'm I supposed
to-

ROBOTIC VOICE
Have a wonderful day.

VEE
(sighs)
Typical. Nothing bloody works when
you need it to.

Vee removes her glasses and waves it through the projection.
The projection beeps and then goes dead.

VEE (CONT'D)
And I don't expect to be charged
for this!

She steps out and puts on the glasses which darken into
sunglasses outside.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The smart glasses have a Head-Up Display (HUD) with
directions on how to proceed. She takes a deep breath, wraps
a scarf around the lower half of her face and heads off.

EXT. STREET - DAY - LATER

Vee trudges through the snowy sidewalk. She looks up at the
electricity and phone lines criss-crossing the streets and
then notices cameras on each street that appear to be
tracking her movement. She stops and the cameras stop. She
moves in one direction and the cameras pan to follow. She
looks around the street. She's the only one there. All the
houses don't appear to have any lights on. The wind howls as
the storm gets worse.

EXT. STREET - DAY - LATER

She walks by a large wall that has a "KILL OR BE KILLED"
graffiti on it. She stops and stares at it for a moment and
then trudges on.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

She finally comes upon a two storey house. There is a light
on the front porch and wind-chimes can be heard but otherwise
no sign of anyone in there.

She realizes that there are no electricity or phone lines leading to the house yet somehow it still has power. She heads to the porch, cameras following her, and starts to knock the snow off her shoes before hitting an intercom buzzer.

SIMON (V.O.)

Yes?

VEE

Uh hi? Uh, this is Vera Riley, I'm here for the experiment? Can you let me in?

SIMON (V.O.)

Password please.

VEE

Come on! It's freezing out here!

SIMON (V.O.)

Password please.

VEE

Jesus. Amaranthine! Ok? It's Amaranthine!

Buzzing sound as the door unlocks and Vee enters.

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vee walks into the house and slams the door shut behind her. There is no furniture in the living room, just bare cement and a naked light bulb.

VEE

Hello?

SIMON (O.S.)

In here.

She walks into the next room.

INT. HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY

The dining room, in stark contrast, looks like it's been plucked out of a normal household. Shiny wooden floors, large dining table with warm lighting.

SIMON, a large rotund and bearded man in T-shirt and shorts walks through the dining area carrying a large box.

SIMON

Hi! Please sit down. Just give me a second will you?

He leaves the room and Vee slowly takes off her jacket and sits at the dining table, unsure of what's happening. Simon comes back in with a bottle of whiskey and two glasses and a tablet tucked under his armpit. He plonks the booze and glasses on the table, sits across from Vee and starts to look at something on the tablet.

SIMON (CONT'D)

So! How are we today?

VEE

Cold.

SIMON

Mmm, hell of a storm isn't it?
Would you like a drop of whiskey to warm you up?

VEE

I'm 19. I'm underage. So no.
Thanks.

SIMON

A little nip never hurt anyone. You sure? It's 18 years.

VEE

I'm good.

SIMON

Suit yourself. You want water or OJ or something?

VEE

I'm fine.

Simon puts on a pair of reading glasses and is absorbed with something in the tablet. Vee looks around and sees cameras in the house as well - all of them looking at her.

SIMON

Why don't we start?
Initiate visual and audio recording. This is Employee H-L-9-0-0-0 and I'm here with Vera Riley. Age 19. Graduated high school but not in college? Is that correct?

VEE

Yeah. You can call me Vee.