

# VICIOUS, Cannibal Queen

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**VICIOUS.** I'm here in person to support my friends.

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** Bull. You haven't bothered to support any of these people, including me, since your Sprite commercial hit YouTube. *(softer)* You used to be the most fun guy on the whole circuit, Vicious. The absolute most fun guy to be around backstage, or in the green room, or at the hotel. It didn't matter how you did onstage on a particular night, you were always excited to be in the room. That's the guy I want to be around. That's the guy we all want to be around. And I don't know if he even exists anymore.

**VICIOUS.** *(a moment of real vulnerability)* It's real easy to be the "fun guy" when you don't have anything to lose. You guys have nowhere to go but up. There's a huge target on my back, and all of you act like it's not there. Like nothing's different now. Everything is different now. *(resuming his persona)* I have a legacy to protect.

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** *(not letting him off the hook)* Well if your "legacy" is all you care about anymore, then you *should* be scared of The Nina. You've got the charisma on lock, Vicious, but she's a better guitarist than you. I've seen it. I watched your old band videos online.

**VICIOUS.** You did what?

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** Come on, they're on YouTube. It's not like I hacked your computer.

**VICIOUS.** That's still weird.

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** She hasn't played since Staten Island, how else am I supposed to know what I'm up against? I'll say this: I've never seen two people in the same band who more wanted to be solo acts.

**VICIOUS.** Real nice.

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** The Nina's got terrible stage presence, and she's totally in her head, but she's got good musicality. I've seen that girl literally everywhere this season—she knows everyone's strategies. If she shows up here tonight and pounds it out enough to qualify, she's gonna come at us hard in the championship.

**VICIOUS.** Nina's a decent guitarist. I don't know that she's better than me, I don't know why you would say that, except to make me mad, but she's decent. But this is all a vendetta thing for her. She doesn't have the heart. And she's never gonna win Nationals. Come on, she's a . . . *(he stops himself)*

**CANNIBAL QUEEN.** Yes?

**VICIOUS.** *(covering)* Nothing.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. She's a girl? She'll never sweep Nationals because she's a girl?

VICIOUS. You're putting words in my mouth.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. Then deny that's what you thought.

VICIOUS. FINE. I thought it. But I didn't say it.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. That's bad enough. *(pause, a realization)* You never, for a single moment, thought that I had any chance at beating you. Did you?

VICIOUS. *(losing it)* You don't!

CANNIBAL QUEEN. Prick!

VICIOUS. You don't! What, like that's big news? I shred harder, I work the crowd better . . . you . . . You give the audience something to look at between real competitors.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. Take a flying leap, loser!

VICIOUS. I have to be twice as good as you, because I don't get to bounce around and bat my eyelashes. Instead of whining and crying about how girls never win, I don't know, Astrid, why don't you *just work harder*, huh? You have every advantage that I do, plus more, so don't point your finger at me and say I'm keeping you down. You have no idea what it's like, as a dude, to work and sweat and rehearse for weeks, cut together the perfect song, drive for hours to compete, and then get upstaged by some barbie that just showed up to have fun.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. Is that honestly what you think I am? You think I don't take this as seriously as you do?

VICIOUS. You don't have to when you start on third base. But you know what? You can't touch me. I'm channeling the rage and glory of my forefathers. That's why I'm not scared of you, OR Nina. You're a sideshow around here. I'm the main event.

CANNIBAL QUEEN. I see you. Wow, I see you for real, David Cooper. And you're a complete idiot.

*(They are both furious. A beat of silence.)*

*The door to the venue opens, and NINA is standing there. NINA is dressed, for the first time, like an air guitar goddess. She sees the two of them, feels the tension in the air, but before she can speak, CANNIBAL QUEEN grabs her hand and drags her into the green room. Lights dim on the venue, and VICIOUS.)*

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