

Vexing Vex

A Critical Role Story

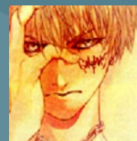


Season 1

Episode 10 (Good)

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Season 1, Episode 10 – Berin (Good) Ends

Vax'ildan stepped out of the shadows of the room.

He was ragged, blood-coated, scarred, furious. There had been a smile ghosting him for every day that Vex had known him but now that smile was gone, replaced with a quiet fury that frightened even her.

She didn't see the moment the knife left his hand, only heard it enter flesh and a small gasp. Elly fell off the bed.

“Vex, come to me,” he said, and she scurried behind him while her Darling Lord cowered.

“I'm sure we can-” her Lord started to say, but another dagger left Vax, settling in her Lord's palm. Her Lord screamed and bled.

“Do you know how many people I've had to kill because of you?” Vax hissed. “The watch, the guilds, the Clasp – I have burned this city to ashes and for what? Because you wanted to turn my sister into your pet?”

He stepped forward, utterly focused on her Lord.

“Let me,” Vex whispered, remembering.

Vax nodded, handing her the knife.

Berin had taken the knowledge of knife-play from her, but that didn't stop her from stabbing him again and again until he was more hole than whole. He took a long time to die.

When he was dead and gone the twins left the room. Vex knew the Abenard Estate, where all the guards and family members were. They ambushed and killed them all.



It took days going through the scrolls. Vax wasn't as good with languages as she had been, but they were able to sort through them, undoing the bindings Berin had put on her, restoring who she was.

They learned that Berin had done this to dozens of half-elves, reducing them to nothing and selling them. His biggest clients were in the Clasp, who would ship Berin-trained slaves all over Exandria.

A single name came up again and again in these purchases: Spireling Gideor.



The last time Vex cried was when they found a bearskin rug.

After that, she was as mirthless as her brother.



Vax had already killed most of the Clasp. He'd locked people in their bar and burned it down, picking off the survivors months ago. The City Watch had probably thought he was doing them a favor until he'd done the same thing to them.

Vex had no pity for them.

A handful had survived. The smart ones had fled elsewhere and the twins would find and kill them later. First, however, they would find the ones that had been stupid enough to stay.



Vex was not afraid. Fear was for the enemy. Fear, daggers, and arrows.

She woke up screaming sometimes. Only Vax could hold her then.

Vex did not cry, just seethed with hatred in the dark.

Berin was dead. Spireling Gideor was next.



The remaining members of the Clasp died. The Cobalt Reserve was burned to ashes. Zeenoth had known where Gideor might go and gave it up to them in the end, some old drow ruins tied to the distant Kryn Dynasty.

Gideor's remaining guards were standing at attention, holding their ground. They were the best of what Gideor had left. It took the twins less than a minute to kill them all, attacking from the shadows and reducing them to nothing.

Gideor was standing in a circle, holding a sphere made up of triangles. It was glowing.

Vex's arrow took him in the knee and he fell, still holding the thing up.

"Wait!" he begged. "Wait."

Vex did not want to wait. She put an arrow through his elbow. She looked at her twin and he nodded: this one was hers.

"I can make it so it never happened!" Gideor cried. "So you're never taken at all!"

"How?" Vex asked. Her voice was cold, inflectionless, and the dwarf she had shot twice trembled.

"It's an old ritual, an experiment by some magus named Essek based on notes from ancient Avalir," Gideor said. "Do you know him?"

"Sounds like a drow," Vax whispered.

"We don't know any drow," Vex told the dwarf.

"Look, here's the deal," Gideor whined as she put another arrow in him, playing with him. "Berin

never gets Vex, but I get Vax to join the Clasp. Talent like yours, boy, talent like yours I want. She's untouched, but you're mine."

"We are not things," Vex hissed. Two more arrows found purchase inside the dwarf.

"He'll work with me, that's all!" Gideor swore. "No trauma for you, and your brother gains resources, both of you gain protection."

"Protection," Vax repeated, and laughed.

"Sure, you've wiped us out here, but the Clasp operates all over Exandria, all over the world," Gideor whimpered. "You can kill me-"

"-we will, thanks-"

"but the others will come and one of us will get the two of you eventually. Or... what was your plan?"

"Vax?"

"Rescue you," Vax said. "Kill everyone that got in my way."

"That's more tactical objectives than an actual plan," she said. It was a ghost of their old banter, uncomfortable to both of them now. She turned to Gideor and put another arrow in him. "How does this work?"

"We all touch the sphere, we go back four or five months," Gideor said. "I know how this works so I'm the only one that will remember, but the things we agree on here will change in the ways we wanted them to. Three things four or five months ago."

"Vex isn't taken," Vax said. "I join your Clasp. And...?"

"The person that poisoned Vex takes her place," Gideor said.

"Lyre," Vex remembered. "He had silver eyes, a scar running from right eye to chin."

Vax shook his head, no. He didn't recognize the description.

"He fled, was one of the first ones to go," Gideor said. "But I'll get him for you."

"Okay," Vex said.

"Okay," Vax followed.

They reached out and touched the sphere.



Voices rang through the Market Ward of Westruun. Merchants praised their wares, every one of them trying to drown out the others. The twins were innocuous as they wove through the crowds, drawing no attention save a single pair of eyes.

"Finally," Gideor said, staring at Vax.

He knew what was coming. The Clasp would gain a talented assassin in Vax'ildan, his enemies would lose a powerful tool in Lyre, he would make a powerful friend in Berin Abenard, and Westruun would never know that he had save the whole city from destruction.