

# Simon Keyes: Less Than Zero: Summer Leagues

## Audition Script

### Part 1: You And The Hole

Simon Keyes wasn't unhappy with his life. He shouldn't be. He had a close family, with a twin sister that was just a little more domineering than most and a mom who did love him even if she had a tendency to get complicated in showing it. It's not like he was ever out of money and he always had a place to call home. By all accounts, he was blessed with real power. He was royalty. Surely, he was nothing but privileged. Yet there was always *that* feeling. When the breathing starts to slow. When your bones start to feel so brittle they could break with the slightest movement yet every movement drains you like your limbs are sandbags. The emotions and stimuli start to dull until they're muted in the dark of ennui. All that's left is you and the hole you're in. He never did like that hole, but it was something to bear with life. The dread he could bear with. The voice was another story.

“[Rise and shine, Simon.](#)”, the voice of the hole, Solomon, echoed through the boy's cranium. Simon didn't care enough to answer him for now. He'd go away soon.

“[Get up. I know you can hear me.](#)” He could feel Solomon getting louder. The nerves started to numb as if they were making way for his commands. This was starting to get exhausting.

“Come on, kid. You could at least get the chores done.”, suggested Solomon. The chores? Simon had nearly forgotten about the chaos his room was in; clothes of various sizes and shapes huddled together in lumps patterned over the floor, sheets that started to tear as they were stretched out by the bedframe, and a kaleidoscope of neglected garbage all around the desk he had basically never used. He could just clean it up like he was meant to. Yet the body was fickle. Life wouldn’t return to him no matter what he did. It just proved to be another waste.

“Kid, I know you’re not feeling up to it. But you’re wasting your time grieving. *Get up.*”, the hole boomed out. The volume was starting to wash Simon away. Who did this problem think he was? He was just another liar, puppeteering him towards some nonsensical goal. Surely, Simon could just rest and let this blow over. He didn’t need to be the one to do anything. His body was weighing down, as if gravity was strong holding him. That empty feeling was winning once again. All he had to do was hold out. The sensation would subside soon.

“Simon, wake up. It’s getting late, we have to go.”, another voice commanded outside the door. Whatever his apathy was festering came to a screeching halt with the bang on the wood bringing life to Simon’s senses.

“I-I’m coming!”, Simon yelped out as he darted up from his bed, making sure to get ready as quickly as possible. Bad enough that he spent the day just lazing around, but he also disappointed his family. With no time to waste, Simon rushed out of the room. His family didn’t look pleased. He could barely bring himself to look at his mother’s expression, though he certainly sensed a gaze that drilled to his soul.

“Now now, Simon. It’s not becoming of you to waste time so needlessly.”, Clementine Keyes, Simon’s mother and Queen, declared with her gaze as cold as ever. She was never one who had an abundance of patience. Cheyenne Keyes, Simon’s sister and Princess, didn’t have

much else to say on the matter. It seemed like she had already known of the purpose they were gathered.

“Mom, I’m-”

“Enough. What matters is what happens now. I have a *crucial* duty for you, my son.”

Simon started to sweat with how Clementine seemed so keen on the phrase “crucial”. He remembered that word all too well. All he could do was brace himself.

“What’s the mission?” Clementine could only grin with relaxed glee.

“Simple. I want you to *execute* someone.”

## **Part 2: Dragged to Hell**

This wasn’t Simon’s first experience with murdering someone. If anything, his count ranged quite far from just a simple 10 or 30. Who knew how high it was? Counting only made the guilt grow like a cancer. Not that failing to keep track helped anything.

“It’s 42, in case you’re wondering. You shouldn’t forget a number like that. Lord knows I wouldn’t.”, Solomon chimed in, disapproval lacing the number like a poison. Simon’s heart started pounding at that number. Why did he have to say it? 42 couldn’t be right. But what if it was? What if he was underestimating it? Would that stupid voice do that just to make this task worse? What was he planning? It wasn’t worth focusing on. Simon needed to concentrate on other things. At the very least, he had a plethora of options.

The roaring crowd of the civilians like a pack of wild animals, their faces only sharing one similarity of burning hatred amongst the sea of variations. The parade of guards with

equipment more fitted for what seemed like a scarred battlefield than a mere execution, their eyes hidden by visors of ruthless indifference. The buildings pristine but emptied for almost no citizen would desire to walk away from something so needless.

“How does it feel, kid? You proud of yourself for making a world such as this? Taking in the sights? *Hope they’re worth the corpses.*”, Solomon making no attempt to hide his raw vitriol for this pathetic prince. Simon only prayed that this would end as quick as possible. The crowd only wanted a display of power. It was time to give them their dues. With the walk befitting something both inhuman and almighty, the mob quickly ceased its frenzy to pay tribute to their Empress. Clementine grinned at the tapestry she had created.

“Greetings, my fellow children of Dominion. I gather you all here for a momentous occasion. An occasion that I wish wasn’t needed in the first place, but I’m afraid that our kingdom needs a reminder in the use of strength.”, Clementine spoke out to the crowd, their faces now mixed with fear and disdain.

“For all our incredible gifts and abilities unique to us, it comes to us alone to decide the future of the world. Only the powerful have the key of guiding the world’s future. Those without power must conform to the influence of the strong! Those who don’t will inevitably bring chaos and ruin to those around them!”, Clementine roared out with wholehearted passion. The crowd responded in kind, screaming in mania and devotion to the very concept of power. Simon really didn’t understand. But there wasn’t time to think on that. The moment of truth was getting close. With a clap of her hands, Clementine summoned a captured individual to the stage. Their face couldn’t possibly be distinguished with a bag over their head. Their wrists and ankles were cuffed with no hope of escape. The skin was tan with freckles patterned around the body, bruised around the legs and stomach. It wasn’t much different from presenting some prize at an auction

“*This right here...* This is what happens to those that defy us. This rebel was more than just someone that didn’t know their place. They have *murdered* innocents. At least 21 cases of murder towards our own people. 21 civilians forever lost to us. **They are the weak of our kingdom. They are human.**”, Clementine scowled out with pure hatred, inciting the crowd to a hellish rage. 25 of them screamed for their death, 30 onlookers belted out how they should’ve stayed where they belonged, and 15 of the rest just booed in abject disgust. A murderer... Simon shouldn’t have pity for that. But he somehow did.

“Such a defilement of our laws shall *not* stand. That is why I’ve called upon my darling son to eliminate this matter for us.”, Clementine proudly declared. The tides started to turn. The crowd’s emotions transformed into something else. Simon knew what those feelings were that made his hairs stand on end. It was like a million eyes were watching him. Staring through him. Stripping apart all the skin, muscle, and bone that could be put in a human to see his very soul. Judgement. Simon took a sigh as he walked to the victim. He could feel the emptiness replace his guts. The hole let itself in.

The parade of malice that sieged the public like a plague, the expectations of an entire kingdom of people, the weight of family and responsibility, and whatever was in between those cracks disappeared. All that was left was him, the victim, and the hole. Did the victim have a name? A family? Dreams? Hopes? They were a killer. Surely, this was justified on some level. But what levels even were there? He didn’t want to think about these questions. He didn’t want to be here. That bed with all the dirty clothes, torn sheets, and garbage strewn about seemed all the more welcoming. Perhaps he’d get that ease soon. Simon’s arm shifted to a blade, raised his arm, and swung away what was needed for that ease to return.

### Part 3: Underground Fox

“...Did you know their name?”

“...huh?”, Simon replied.

“Did you ever figure out their name?”

“No.”, Simon responded back. There wasn't much else to discuss. This was Simon's normal after all. Pleasing the strong was all that could be done. It was what he had consigned himself to.

“Surely you have something to say. You added a tally and you don't feel anything?”, Solomon barked at Simon.

*“It just gets common. This is merely the way of the world. The strong win and the weak lose.”* He could hear the voice scoff. He should've expected that. Why did he even answer?

“And that warrants innocent people dying? Just because it's expected? *That's* how you excuse slaughter? Chock it up to just being how things are? How lazy can you be?”, Solomon replied with aggression.

“...I don't know. I don't like this any more than you do. But there's nothing to change.”, Simon replied sullenly. Seems they were at an impasse. Solomon couldn't help but sigh. He couldn't agree with Simon at all. But he could try to change Simon's way of thinking instead of arguing.

“...people die all the time. It's true that tragedy and misery aren't so easily avoidable in life. But simply being a bystander is worse than all that. If you truly want to save anyone, you need to do something. Even the littlest thing.” Simon didn't really know how to respond to that. He wasn't wrong. Doing something was better than just doing nothing. But then why was doing

anything so difficult for Simon? It felt almost impossible. Why couldn't he just escape??? Didn't he already do so much? Simon didn't have an answer to that. He merely sighed, wanting nothing more than to leave. Perhaps he could just run away. Probably impossible, but doable in a sense. He just needed to-

“*Yip!*”

“[Did I just hear a fox?](#)” Simon heard it too. He looked around the room for whatever kind of animal snuck itself in here. How could a fox even get here? Simon continued searching. Surprisingly, nothing. Weird... Did he ever get a letter? Looking at the engraving on it, it looks like there's a thing called Summer Leagues. Was this a sign? Simon opened the letter in hopes of finding something useful. What he saw merely perplexed him all the more.

“A tournament for a wish???”

“[That's unusual. Maybe it's some kind of prank?](#)”

“That'd be pretty weird for a prank.”

“*Yip!*” Simon's ears darted up as he could hear it again. There was most definitely a fox here. He looked straight forward. There it was. A snow white fox, small and fluffy. Simon was more perplexed than anything else.

“W-Wha-?”, was all the sound Simon could make before the fox speeded towards him. Simon could feel *something* happen to him. His body felt so lightweight when its head clashed with his body. Was this some weird death? He didn't exactly feel himself. As if his body just lacked form for one moment. And it gained it back the next. Sight started to shift back to him. Where was he? Certainly somewhere new... In fact, it looked like it was outside. It was outside.

“H-Huh??? W-Wait! What's going on???”

“This is definitely new. Whatever’s happening can’t be good. First thing to figure out is where we are.”, Solomon suggested. That was a good idea. Looking around, Simon couldn’t help but notice such a bustling town. People were everywhere. This wasn’t the oppressive atmosphere of his kingdom. This was new. Vibrant. And strange. No one looked alike at all. Certainly a lot of foxes. But also some humans. Bats. Witches. Ghosts. Some of this was unbelievable.

“Ahh, first time, huh? I get it! It’s very confusing for a lot of people!” Simon jumped back at the random fox girl that appeared behind her. When’d she even get here?

“Sorry about that~. Name’s Chiifu. I have to say you seem different. You’ll make for an excellent competitor.~”, the fox lady giggled. Competitor? So the letter.

“T-That was real?”

“Of course!!! It’d be weirder if it wasn’t real. Now, I’m assuming you have a letter right? That means you must want to participate in the Summer Leagues!!!”, Chiifu laughed aloud. She seemed excited about Simon just being here but in some strange sense. Like a fish swimming haphazardly into the talons of an eagle.

“W-Well... yeah???”, Simon squeaked out. He had 0 clue what was going on. But maybe that wish of escape could be made true in a sense? He didn’t even know what to wish for if he won.

“Well, if this is the real deal then we can figure it out later. Now let’s just finish business with this girl and move on.”, Solomon ordered sternly.

“Well, if you are participating you’re gonna need this.”, Chiifu exclaimed before handing out a red bracelet with a golden bell. It seemed rather standard. “This right here’s your Tag! You’ll need to get this from people if you want to proceed! And now that you have a Tag...” As if on cue, Simon couldn’t help but feel some weird itch on his back. He looked back to see if he



had something appear and to his surprise, there was! A transparent blue tail. “There! That should let people know you’re a competitor! At least to any of the non-participants! Now, you should find the rules on the letter. Better keep holding onto that. Don’t expect things to go easy, ok?~” This was too much to grasp. Was there a manual?

“W-Wait a s-se-!”

“Bye bye! Good luck out there!”, whispered a very quickly departing Chiifu. Simon could barely understand a word. Whatever he entered, he really should’ve thought about this.

“How interesting. This may prove to teach you something. Your world can change if you’re here. I have a feeling.” The world changing. Simon didn’t know what that meant. But maybe... spending time here wouldn’t be so bad.

“Well... I guess this is ok. Let’s just be quick about it.”