

THE LAST NINJA INTERN
(WRITING SAMPLE)

Written by

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INT. ANIME CONVENTION - EXHIBITION HALL - DAY

A large convention crammed with anime vendor booths hocking fan paraphernalia. COSPLAYERS reenact scenes from anime while ATTENDEES gawk.

Near the entrance, security guard GARY (50s), lanky with a thick gray moustache, waves a metal detector wand over HIRO (early 20s), an actual ninja intern draped in generic shinobi garb and fragile stoicism. Gary's partner MARTHA (40s), cherubic and stout, holds up a GRAPPLING HOOK.

MARTHA
Is this for fishing?

HIRO
Climbing.

Martha nervously taps at the hook's point.

HIRO (CONT'D)
Its plastic.

Gary finishes his wand waving without incident.

GARY
He's all clear.

MARTHA
Well you have a wonderful day
playing ninja, young man.

Hiro ventures into the crowd, darting from one hiding spot to another. His surveillance is interrupted when he is accosted by DANTE (10s-20s), a superfan covered in samurai regalia and pimples.

DANTE
Are you Sasuke from the second
season Ninja Academy?

HIRO
Who--

DANTE
It is I! Ryu Takahashi of the Sengu
clan! You killed my father! And my
mother! And the love of my life,
the beautiful Mai!

HIRO
(pause)
Did Sam send you?

DANTE
(boldly over acting)
I don't know this "Sam", but any
foe of yours is a friend of mine!

A crowd starts to form around the two. Dante beams at the attention.

DANTE (CONT'D)
I have mastered all 7 forms of
kenjutsu! And to smite you, I've
perfected my ultimate technique!

Dante shifts into an impractical but practiced swordplay stance. The crowd swells as ONLOOKERS chime in.

ONLOOKER #1
Is he supposed to be Ryu?

ONLOOKER #2
I think this is the fight from the
season finale.

DANTE
(in mangled Japanese)
HISSATSU! CHI NO RYU!

Dante lunges with plastic sword drawn. Hiro expertly disarms him and pins Dante to the ground.

HIRO
(menacing)
Where's Sam?

DANTE
(surprised)
Such skill! To be expected from my
nemesis!

In one swift motion, Hiro wraps a ROPE around Dante's neck.

HIRO
Is he here?

DANTE
(whispers)
Easy, the ropes a bit--

Hiro tightens the rope. Excitement ripples through the crowd.

DANTE (CONT'D)
(choking)
--rough!

GARY (O.C.)
 Hey, break it up! What's going on
 here?

As the two security guards push their way through the crowd, Hiro detonates a SMOKE BOMB. When the smoke clears, Hiro has vanished, leaving a redfaced Dante gasping for breath. The crowd cheers.

INT. ANIME CONVENTION - MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Hiro drops from an air vent into an unoccupied bathroom stall. In the next stall sits SENSEI, wry and chronically off screen.

SENSEI (O.C.)
 Quite the show, Hiro.

HIRO
 I am hiding in plain sight, Sensei.

SENSEI
 I suppose the effort is
 commendable. But you still need to
 complete your Quest of Vengeance.

HIRO
 I am determined.

SENSEI
 As were the other interns. Didn't
 pan out. Poor Becky is still
 looking for her left pinky.

(pause)
 Oh right, sagely advice.

(clears throat) Your rage blinds
 you. You are not the only one
 hiding in the open.

HIRO
 I will complete my mission--

SENSEI
 --by midnight. With proof, or I'm
 afraid you'll remain uncertified.

HIRO
 I will not fail--
 (interrupted by the sound of
 Sensei's toilet flushing)

Hiro's breathes deep, trying to expel doubts. He walks out of the stall. The bathroom is empty and still. Hiro walks back onto the Convention Floor.

INT. ANIME CONVENTION - EXHIBITION HALL - DAY

Hiro continues his reconnaissance, running around the convention hall in a gratuitous display of ninja prowess. He passes by Dante, who has amassed a small following from the show he put on earlier.

Hiro's search drags on. He's wavering between panic and rage when he spots a familiar TALL MAN (20s) standing in front of a large poster that reads "Sam the Samurai".

Hiro tails the man, who strolls through the crowd before turning a corner and disappearing into quieter hallway. Hiro tenses, preparing to round the corner and pounce when Gary grabs him by the shoulder. Martha is beside him.

GARY

You need to come with us.

HIRO

I cannot--

MARTHA

(sweetly) Honey, I promise it'll only be for a moment.

INT. ANIME CONVENTION - BREAK ROOM - DAY

A small, gray supply room that doubles as a break room. Mops, buckets, and a table littered with empty potato chip bags. Hiro and Martha sit on fold out chairs while Gary questions.

GARY

Hiro, correct? You're in violation of the rules of conduct.

HIRO

I did not use lethal force against that imposter of a warrior.

GARY

You've been seen entering VIP areas. You only have a general admissions pass.

HIRO
Incorrect. I procured a VIP
Platinum pass. (aside) and there's
no way I was spotted.

GARY
(Aggressively tapping
Hiro's CONVENTION PASS)

General Admission.

HIRO
(glancing down in
realization)
This is not possible!

(pause) This must be sabotage. (to
self) Did he swap the passes? Could
it be, he anticipated this hunt?
How could I have missed this
subterfuge? My plans! Have all
these years of training been a
fool's--

MARTHA
Calm down, calm down.

(to Gary)
I'm sure it's a misunderstanding.

(to Hiro)
You said someone had your pass. Do
you know who?

HIRO
Sam. He must have it. Another act
of thievery from the scoundrel.

MARTHA
Let's breath, sweetie. I'm sure we
can help you find Sam. Can you tell
us his full name and how you know
him?

HIRO
His name is Samuel Orai. My
roommate former.

MARTHA
Samuel Orai. (pause) Why don't you
stay here while we page him on the
intercom.

Smoke fills the room. Gary collapses immediately as Martha begins to cough. Hiro stands, unaffected.

HIRO

My apologies but I must seek him
myself. I will take back what he's
stolen from me.

Hiro walks towards the door, the smoke obfuscating everything.

MARTHA (O.S.)

Oh honey. I'm afraid that's not how
we do things around here.

Martha grabs Hiro by the feet and spins him around with superhuman force, clearing the smoke from the room. She slams Hiro into the ground as if he was a rug in need of dusting.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

I hope you had fun playing ninja.

Hiro blacks out.