

'The End's Beginning' is a Prologue of Choice & Destiny That Lays Groundwork for The Witcher



Photo Credit: Netflix

In the middle of 'The End's Beginning,' Geralt (Henry Cavill) states that within choosing between two evils, he would choose to do neither. The first episode of *The Witcher*, the new Netflix series based on books and short stories from Andrzej Sapkowski and later adapted into video games, is predicated on the value of choice. There are often certain situations that you come across and you have to choose. Sometimes, being non-committal is indeed making a choice. Then there are situations where someone decides to act upon action and it forces you down a pathway you may not want to go.

We first meet Geralt of Rivia, a genetically enhanced monster hunter called a Witcher. Though Cavill's performance of the character, he's seen as very cold and beholden to his purpose. The color palette around him very much of the episode is very grey and devoid of light which helps to enhance his brooding nature. His voice is monotone and devoid of any particular emotion. If there's any evidence of him breaking into some type of character, it's a brief moment where he talks to his horse, Roach. Even then, the antidote surrounds his job.

He's a man who is fixated on his job of killing monsters for money. His explicit devotion gets tested as he arrives in the town of Blaviken. His presence is very much unwanted and the townspeople see him as a freak. These interactions, in the beginning, are interesting given his particular arch during this episode and may give a hint.

When he arrives to town, he meets Renfri of Creyden (Emma Appleton), a princess turned bandit and Stregobor (Lars Mikkelsen), a mage who both want to kill each other. Each character seeks to employ Geralt to do the job for them making their appeals to him in a different way. What's at play is the definition of what a "monster" truly is and who gets to make that denomination for others.

Stregobor believes that Renfri is a product of evil to being born during an eclipse. Renfri was attacked and raped by Stregobor and his men and that led her down a path of vengeance and anger. Geralt is already defined as a monster, but in conjunction with Renfri, he doesn't let that move him to take action. If so, he would then embody what they are saying. Renfri has to struggle with this same sentiment in her own way. Revenge tends to strip a person to their most primal selves. Caught between two forces, Geralt's choice to be neutral ultimately makes Renfri make the choice for him. The irony is that his warning to her in not letting vengeance turn you into a monster becomes a fulfilling prophecy as they fight.

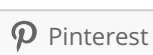
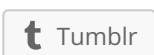
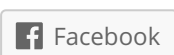
As Geralt's storyline is taking form, a congruent thread with Cirila (Freya Allan) is taking form. She is the princess of Cintra who is inquisitiveness and spunky. As war nears, we find that there's a reason that the people around her value her so much – even past her lineage. She calls this into question a lot and it's only hinted at through cryptic advice from her grandmother Queen Calanthe (Jodhi May). Much like the quintessential hero's journey, she hints towards her higher purpose. The audience discovers that Cintra has powers at the same time that she does. It's through death that destiny is discovered. Geralt and Cintra are supposed to find each other for a not yet known purpose.

The first episode in a TV series is much like a first impression. If you have enough intrigue and substance, people will definitely come back for more. Director Alik Sakharov and writer Lauren Schmidt Hissrich include the wonderful continual shot action sequence between Geralt, Renfri, and her men towards the end of the first episode of *The Witcher*. It almost acts as a teaser for things to come in the series. Between this and a big war sequence within the middle of the episode, it gives enough action as a break from the exposition.

In the end, you have two characters who are set on a path to find each other, but are put in peculiar situations only known to them. Cintra, losing everything she knows as to discover why people were so willing to sacrifice themselves for that. Geralt finds himself in a world that's not so black and white and where he will have to use his heavy hand to change fates around him.

***The Witcher* is currently streaming on [Netflix](#).**

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