

"VAMA"

Written by

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ACT ONE

TITLE CARD: **DUNCAN**

INT. DUNCAN'S HOUSE - DUNCAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The sun shines through the dusty blinds. DUNCAN, 36, lays under a lump of comforters on the right side of the bed. The alarm clock buzzes next to him.

He shuts off the alarm and groans as he sits at the edge of the mattress. He rustles his fingers through his hair and glares at the time. His face saddens as his gaze falls on a family portrait.

ON THE FRAME

DAHLIA, a beautiful, light skinned, and dark brown hair woman. Duncan smiling and holding SHIVANI, a young toddler.

BACK TO ROOM

He stands and shuffles into the bathroom across the hall.

BATHROOM - CONT.

Duncan stares at his reflection with a deadpan countenance. Dark exhaustion soaked bags puff underneath his eyes. Grey strands speckle his dark black hair. He splashes water on his face. He takes a hand towel and pats his eyes.

Just outside the bathroom door, Duncan hears STAMPEDING FOOTSTEPS.

KITCHEN - CONT.

SHIVANI, 9, a messy haired adorable bright eyed child, sits on her knees. She is hovering over a sketch pad as she scribbles with crayons.

DUNCAN
Good morning sweetheart.

He kisses her forehead.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Very pretty drawing. Is that supposed to be me?

Shivani nods proudly.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Where's my strikingly handsome jaw
line, and you forgot the pink pok-a-
dots.

He pokes the page. Shivani smiles then points to the badge
and gun.

Duncan chuckles and messes up her hair as he walks towards
the fridge.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Well, at least you didn't forget
those.

A beat.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
There isn't a thing I wouldn't do
to protect you sweetie.

He draws a carton of milk and places it in front of a bowl.

KITCHEN - LATER

Duncan cleans up breakfast; his cell phone rings. He glances
at the name and steps onto the porch.

PORCH - CONT.

Duncan glances over his shoulder checking on Shivani. She is
still drawing.

INT. MORGUE - MORANA'S OFFICE - SAME

MORANA, 32, pretty dark hair/light eyes; resembling Duncan's
deceased wife from the photo, sits at her metal desk in front
of a computer. She nervously waits with the phone against her
ear.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

DUNCAN
Hello?

MORANA
Good morning, Duncan.

A beat.

MORANA (CONT'D)
How is Shviani doing?

DUNCAN
Doctors say she is still on the waiting list, but not sure how long she has left. We are waiting to hear back on her test results. Do you have anything for me?

MORANA
(sighs)
I found a list of possible donors that will match Shivani. I will forward it over to you shortly. It is encrypted with the same password.

DUNCAN
Thank you.

An awkward silent pause.

MORANA
Are you still there?

DUNCAN
Yes.

Another awkward pause. Duncan stares out the porch door and fiddles with his keys.

Morana nervously taps her pen on her desk, then bites on the end.

MORANA
What's on your mind?

DUNCAN
No, I'm fine.

Shivani gets up from her seat in the background. The porch door opens.

MORANA
Dunc, do you want to talk about something?

DUNCAN
No... just get me that list.

(to Shivani)
Hey, let me help you with your bag.

Duncan hangs the phone up and tucks it into his pocket. He guides Shivani to a bench. He fights with the dungaree backpack zipper.

Duncan mumbles a one sided fight as he forces the zipper back on it's track.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Aha!

Shivani giggles and throws herself into Duncan's arms for a tight hug.

He lifts her up. He walks, mimicking a GIANT, out of the porch as she clings on laughing.

EXT. DELANEY'S HOUSE - LATER

Duncan parks at the curb in front of a two story small house. Duncan helps Shivani out of the car and the front door of the house opens.

DELANEY, 43, a cheery protective older sister, who has loved the sweets a little too much, ties her robe tightly around her as she walks out onto the porch.

DELANEY

Shivani! Darling, get over here!

Shivani races up to Delaney.

DUNCAN

Careful!

DELANEY

Oh hush, she'll be just fine giving Auntie Laney a big...

Shivani leaps into Delaney's arms.

DELANEY (CONT'D)

...hug!

(whispers to Shivani)

Go inside. I picked up something special for you.

Shivani's face livens up and she races past her into the house. Delaney chuckles then turns towards Duncan.

DELANEY (CONT'D)
Morning, oh don't give me that
look. She'll be just fine. Did you
hear anything yet?

DUNCAN
No, not yet.

DELANEY
Has Shivani spoke of Dahlia yet?

Duncan doesn't respond.

DELANEY (CONT'D)
I was reading up on a study.
Typically, when young children face
something drastic like losing a
parent, they can become mute. It is
a coping mechanism... Totally
normal.

She peers over her shoulder into her house.

DELANEY (CONT'D)
You just have to show her life will
continue and give her safe spaces.

He fiddles with his cell phone.

DELANEY (CONT'D)
Dahlia, would want...

Duncan looks away gritting his teeth.

DELANEY (CONT'D)
Never mind, I'm sending positive
prayers her way every night.

Duncan smiles weakly.

DUNCAN
Thank you.

DELANEY
Now go get. Everything will be just
fine here.

Duncan drives away in his car. An OLDER MAN (face unseen),
steps next to Delaney. He stands with power in his presence
as he cleans his glasses on the bottom of his shirt, he
watches Duncan leave.

He kisses Delaney good-bye and walks towards his car. Delaney
waits to wave him off.

The car backs out of the driveway. He waves from the open window and drives away. Delaney retreats into the house.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The lobby of the police department is brightly lit with an abundance of floor length windows. Duncan walks through the glass door in the center.

The lobby is small, but spacious. The receptionist's desk sits centered between two sets of double doors.

RECEPTIONIST/BRINA
Good morning, darling.

DUNCAN
Morin' Brina.

RECEPTIONIST/BRINA
And how are you doing this fine morning?

Duncan pauses. A louder conversation bursts into the lobby.

RECEPTIONIST/BRINA (CONT'D)
Deputy Gunner is having a doozy of a morning.

Duncan smirks; picks up a pile of papers and nods to Brina as he backs into one of the double doors and disappears into the back room.

BACK ROOM - CONT.

The room is staged with a half a dozen of busy desks. At the end of the rows is a small office with drawn blinds against the large windows.

Duncan walks to Deputy Gunner's desk.

DEPUTY GUNNER, early 20s, a young buck fresh to the police force, sits across from MRS. JAIMISON, 40s, a distraught mother; plump and red faced with hysteria.

Duncan chuckles to himself as he ignores the desperate look in the Deputy's eyes.

DEPUTY GUNNER
I do understand, but that is not a question for me-

Duncan walks past Gunner's desk and smirks to himself. He eyes Gunner's report - specifically Mrs. Jaimison's name.

MRS. JAIMISON
Do you understand? Do you really?
Because I don't think you do!

DEPUTY GUNNER
There are protocols and procedures-

Duncan retraces his steps.

MRS. JAIMISON
Damn your protocols!

DUNCAN
Mrs. Jaimison? Hi, my name is
Sherriff Hartlett. I am so sorry
for this troubling time for you.

Deputy Gunner watches Duncan intervene astounded.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
I can reassure you, we will work on
your case with top urgency.

MRS. JAIMISON
But you Deputy here doesn't-

Duncan raises his hands trying to deescalate Mrs. Jaimison.

DUNCAN
I apologize, he is still very new
and is following protocol. Very
closely.

(to Deputy Gunner)
Please finish her report and we
will discuss this at our lunch
meeting.

Mrs. Jaimison gives a smug '*you got told*' face to Deputy Gunner. Deputy Gunner shuffles through the papers on his desk and clicks his pen.

DUNCAN'S OFFICE - CONT.

Duncan retreats to his office. He stares at Mrs. Jaimison attentively through the blinds before turning on his computer.

EXT. DINER - LATER

A MILKSHAKE, is on the red diner countertop. Quiet chatter is in the background. The milkshake is picked up and escorted through the small diner; out to the outdoor seating area.

The milkshake is placed in front of Deputy Gunner. He doesn't look from the milkshake with an excited gleam in his eyes.

Duncan sits across from Deputy Gunner, distant. They sit in delicate looking metal chairs on the patio of a local café.

Deputy Gunner takes a big sip from the straw.

DEPUTY GUNNER

You know, I looked her up. No record.

Deputy Gunner shakes his head in disgust.

DEPUTY GUNNER (CONT'D)

We have protocols and procedures, and from the beginning they just shit on them. Coming in here illegally and now demanding we break more rules to try to find her daughter.

Duncan stares blankly into his black coffee. His phone lights up. His gaze pans over to it. He quickly answers it.

DUNCAN

Hello?

SHIVANI'S DOCTOR

Mr. Hartlett?

Duncan shifts uneasily.

DUNCAN

Yes?

Duncan steps away from the table and walks just out outside of the fenced in dining area.

SHIVANI'S DOCTOR (O.S.)

My name is Dr. Bennett. I am working closely on Shivani's case. I just got out of a meeting with my colleagues discussing the possible paths we can take. Unfortunately, without a donor there is not much we can do. Shivani's tests came back worse her, CBC numbers...

Duncan fades into thought as the doctor's voice becomes inaudible. All sounds, from the phone, to the diner, to the cars driving up the road blend together.

DUNCAN

Okay.

Duncan walks back to the table with a distant gaze. Deputy Gunner takes an obnoxious sip of his milkshake.

DEPUTY GUNNER

Everything okay?

DUNCAN

Huh?

Deputy Gunner stares at Duncan and motions to the cell phone.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah.

Deputy Gunner nods.

DEPUTY GUNNER

So yeah, that Mrs. Jaimison,
totally illegal. Betcha she doesn't
even pay her taxes.

Deputy Gunner takes a large bite of his sandwich and swallows it down with a sip of the milkshake. Duncan looks back at Deputy Gunner as if he gave him a large piece to the puzzle.

Duncan stands and tosses money on the table.

DUNCAN

I have to go. I'll see you
tomorrow.

Duncan drops down some cash for his barely touched food and leaves the outdoor patio. Deputy Gunner chomps down on his fries dismissively.

INT. POLICE STATION - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Duncan prowls through the police station. The dimly lit halls allow Duncan to move unbeknownst to the two third-shift officers.

Duncan arrives at Deputy Gunner's desk. He opens the filing cabinet and rummages through the recently filed reports.

He sets MRS. JAIMISON'S REPORT on the desk, and snaps a few pictures with his phone.

He tucks the report back in the filing cabinet neatly and hurries away.

INT. DUNCAN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Duncan sits still at a desk. The lamp barely illuminates past him. Duncan's head is bowed and a glass of whiskey stays untouched on the corner. Condensation creates a ring on the paper it sits on.

Duncan's eyes flicker back and forth between the name list from Morana and the photos from Mrs. Jaimison's report.

His eyes widen, in a moment of realization and he gets up; snatches a few things around the office and leaves.

INT. DELANEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Duncan stands at the doorway. Delaney walks up to him in her robe.

DELANEY

Duncan, what is going on?

LIVING ROOM - CONT.

Duncan rests Shivani on the floral couch. He pulls back a knitted blanket and tucks her in carefully. He gives her a gentle kiss and turns away.

He meets Delaney back at the front door.

DUNCAN

Can you watch her until I get back?

DELANEY

(sleepily, and worried)

Yes, of course. Dunc, what on earth is going on?

DUNCAN

I can't explain, I have a case I need to take, but I won't be home for a few days.

Delaney nods.

DELANEY

Be safe.

Duncan smiles weakly.

DUNCAN

Always.

Duncan exits the house. Delaney peeks at Shivani sleeping on the couch with a worried expression.

TITLE CARD: **GILDA**

EXT. STREET - EVENING

A beater car drives down a whining road. The road is squished between a forest and a ravine. The car slows and turns down a dirt path.

INT. ANANSI'S CAR - CONT.

ANANSI, 24, a handsome, solid built, young man, has one hand on the steering wheel and the other fixing the static on the radio.

GILDA (O.S.)
Just shut it off.

GILDA, 19, a gorgeous athletic immigrant, laughs allowing her arm to flow with the wind out the window. The breeze messes up her black hair.

Anansi obeys and taps impatiently on the steering wheel.

GILDA (CONT'D)
Calm down.
(Out the window)
We are free!

She laughs again placing her head on his upper arm.

He smirks as she kisses his bicep.

GILDA (CONT'D)
(more serious)
What's bothering you, Anansi?

He looks at her unconvincingly.

ANANSI
No, nothing. It's just- just school.

GILDA
Oh stop! You are smart and talented and any college would be lucky to have you.

Gilda proclaims strongly, opening her phone she snaps a selfie of the two.

ANANSI

Gilda, no.

Gilda looks back at him flirtatiously.

ANANSI (CONT'D)

I want this to be our secret.

GILDA

And it will be, this is for my private collection.

Gilda smiles proudly and shuts off her phone.

GILDA (CONT'D)

Fine! We are finally alone, together, just like you wanted.

Gilda kisses his cheek and snuggles his arm. Anansi stares distantly through the windshield; lost in thought.

INT. ANANSI'S CAR - EVENING

Anansi's car pulls off the dirt path, onto a more uncharted terrain. A few minutes of driving and he pulls into a small clearing.

GILDA

(gasps)

This is beautiful, Anansi. This is more than I could have ever pictured.

Anansi smiles, but as soon as she looks away his smile fades. She gets out of the car.

EXT. CAMP - CONT.

Gilda stretches, showing off her athletic stature.

ANANSI

I'll get the tent set up.

GILDA

(amused)

Okay, huntsman, I'm going to check out that water.

Anansi pulls out duffle bags from the truck and finagles with the tent poles as Gilda walks towards the water.

LAKE - CONT.

The fire-casted sky ignites the sparkling water. Gilda smiles to herself, and undresses; teasing Anansi by poorly hiding behind the shrubbery. Gilda dips her toe into the cooling waters.

She slowly descends into the water. She emerges her head from the water and floats silently as the sun hides behind the earth's surface.

She floats in serenity taking in slow shallow breaths. The water touches corner of her eyes. MUFFLED SHOUTS startle her. She abruptly pops her head above the water. Fear blankets her countenance.

Gilda squints; trying to see Anansi and the camp. She hears an argument in the distance. She quickly swims to the shore.

CAMP - CONT.

Anansi argues with, BHAGAT, 20, a skinny, eccentric, unstable male. His shaggy tangled hair hangs in front of his face, by the dimly lit fire.

Gilda approaches, still unable to make out the foreign man.

GILDA

Hi, boys, what seems to be the problem.

Bhagat takes one look at the soaking wet Gilda, covered with only a small towel and adverts his eyes before quickly retreating into the woods.

Gilda leers where the man disappeared.

GILDA (CONT'D)

(not looking away)

You okay?

Anansi joins Gilda's gaze into the dark abyss where the man went. He walks up to her from behind.

ANANSI

Yes, sorry-

GILDA

What did he want?

Anansi looks at the woods.

ANANSI

I-I'm not sure. He didn't make much sense.

GILDA

Creepy, maybe we should sleep in the car tonight.

ANANSI

(unconvincing)

Nah- we're fine.

He plops next to Gilda. He rummages through his backpack and shakes a small baggy in front of Gilda.

Gilda's smile stretches wide and she digs into the bag of mushrooms and slips one into her mouth.

Gilda watches the fire dance in front of her. The sparks pop and crackle. Her eyes fixate on an ambers and she begins to zone.

Anansi talks incoherently in the background as her eyes follow from the fire the shadows behind the fire.

Soon the shadows grow and face free willingly against the nearby trees. Her heart drops as the shadow disappears behind the trees. She can't look away, something is there. Darker shadows.

A CRACK from a twig snapping behind her makes her immediately stand. Anansi reaches out towards her, but she pays him no mind.

Someone is in the woods.

INT. CAMP - TENT - MORNING

Gilda wakes in the bright tent. Her hand brushes against the damp vinyl as she stretches.

She opens her eyes and glances around.

GILDA

Anansi?

Gilda stretches again and crawls to the door. She unzips it and peaks out.