

# SHAKA

## SC. I

EXT. NANDI'S ENCLOSURE - QWABE COMMUNITY

SHAKA enters smiling to himself.

**START ->**                   NANDI  
You spend every day with Pampatha?

                              SHAKA  
And I work for Gendenaya in his  
fields.

                              NANDI  
But mostly with her.

                              SHAKA  
You don't approve?

Nandi is silent for a moment, considering.

                              NANDI  
Have you told her why you're here?

                              SHAKA  
That we defied Sipho and left your  
people? No. Everyone's attention is  
on Dingiswayo, that he was being  
hunted by Zwide. No one is thinking  
about us right now.

                              NANDI  
That's not what I mean. Have you  
told her who you are? Who you are  
destined to be? Have you told her  
about the prophecy?

                              SHAKA  
No.

                              NANDI  
Why not?

                              SHAKA  
Mama, we're here to find a new  
start. With a new start, I can make  
new allies.  
                              (reminding her)  
Like you said. With allies, I can  
raise an army--

                              NANDI  
                              (sharp)  
Raise an army, not a family!

Shaka looks at Nandi.

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SHAKA: KING OF THE ZULU NATION

# SHAKA

## SC. I CONT'D

NANDI (CONT'D)

It's time to speak seriously, my son. The prophecy says you are destined to become king of kings. There is no wife in the words of the prophecy. Sithaye spoke of a great leader standing alone.

(beat)

Perhaps I should explain to Pampatha what the prophecy means--

SHAKA

(shouting)

Stop!

(more quietly)

Never, ever discuss Sithaye's words with Pampatha. I forbid it.

NANDI

You forbid it? I am your mother.

SHAKA

You hold the prophecy against my throat like a spear! You've made it a prison!

NANDI

I only tell you what I know.

SHAKA

What if what you know is a lie? What if the prophecy is the ravings of a false diviner? What if your birthmark is a flower--not a tree--and the story has nothing to do with you or me?

NANDI

Then my life is a lie. Is that what you think?

SHAKA

What I think is--

(vehemently)

You are not to discuss the prophecy with Pampatha. I will make my own destiny.

(beat)

I'm going to sleep.

<- END

He leaves her alone, stunned at his outburst.

# SHAKA

## SC. II

INT. SHAKA'S HUT - DAY

SHAKA stares wearily as DINGISWAYO strides in with a small chest. DINGISWAYO opens the lid, REVEALING a royal leopard skin cloak. SHAKA is impressed, but doesn't touch it.

**START ->** DINGISWAYO  
You will have need of this when you take your place on the throne.

SHAKA  
Thank you.

Shaka is unmoved; DINGISWAYO lays it across the chest.

DINGISWAYO  
There is a separate matter to discuss. The item that was given to you...  
(beat)  
Did you know it belonged to me?

SHAKA  
How did you come by it?

DINGISWAYO  
It was a trade. But Yawdee stole it from me.

SHAKA walks across the room and pulls out a rifle. DINGISWAYO's eyes light up when he sees it.

SHAKA  
It's not as if this is the last wheat stalk in a famine.

DINGISWAYO  
You've never seen anything like it.

SHAKA  
I should keep it. You keep the skin.

DINGISWAYO  
I want Ensimbi to make more.  
(beat)  
You can't imagine the noise it makes. What it does.

SHAKA  
What goes in the hole?

DINGISWAYO  
Let me show you.

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SHAKA

SC. II CONT'D

2.

He takes a step toward SHAKA, but SHAKA takes two steps back.

DINGISWAYO (CONT'D)

Give it to me. Don't be a child.

SHAKA

The child that I am knows a child's  
toy, and it is not meant for  
honorable men.

DINGISWAYO

It will expand our kingdoms and  
kill our enemies.

SHAKA

You told me once that when people  
see the man you are, it provokes  
real fear. Respect.

(beat)

When I face my enemy in war, I  
honor his life by giving him a  
warrior's death.

What is this? What is this?

<- END

SHAKA drops the gun.

# SHAKA SC.

## III

EXT. QWABE HILLSIDE - NIGHT

SHAKA and PAMPATHA find their way up a steep forest.

PAMPATHA  
**START** -> How far up do we need to go?

SHAKA  
Hopefully not much longer.

PAMPATHA sighs, growing unsure of this hike.

PAMPATHA  
Tradition forbids, an unmarried man  
and woman, to be out this late,  
alone, by themselves.

SHAKA  
We'll be fine. No eyes out here.

PAMPATHA  
Don't you see them?

SHAKA throws his gaze around. Sees nothing. Confused.

SHAKA  
What am I missing?

PAMPATHA looks up. SHAKA tracks her gaze until his eyes  
catches--

The SEA OF STARS glimmering against the night sky-- like  
diamonds in a black pot.

A moment. SHAKA waits for PAMPATHA to say something, to  
explain herself. She doesn't.

SHAKA (CONT'D)  
I see stars.

PAMPATHA  
Those are the eyes of our  
ancestors.

SHAKA stares back down at PAMPATHA, curiously. She notes  
that.

PAMPATHA (CONT'D)  
Because we made the hills our home,  
our people believe the ancestors  
are closer to the Qwabes than all  
other Nguni people.

SHAKA

SC. III CONT'D

SHAKA processes that to himself, then waves his torch forward. They continue hiking.

PAMPATHA (CONT'D)

Or do you not believe in the ancestors?

SHAKA

(shrugs)

Where ever they are, I don't think they care much about what we are doing down here.

PAMPATHA

You sound so sure about that.

SHAKA

Everytime I was in peril, it was up to me. I prayed once when I was a boy. One time. No one answered. Nothing came... My mother would have died, if I had not acted... I don't look for eyes in the sky. My fate is in my hands.

<- END

SHAKA pushes forward. PAMPATHA follows. Above them, the stars sparkle. So bright and close, it feels overwhelming.