

DIVINE WARRIORS

by

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CHARACTERS

VANESSA	Director of a Homeland Security satellite office.
JAMES	A journalist and concerned citizen
SASSY	Almost beehive hair, glasses, a pink tutu.
GENERAL TREK	Early 20s at most. In full general uniform, perhaps slightly too big for him.

DIVINE WARRIORS

(At Rise: JAMES sits facing VANESSA, who is behind a big desk with an intercom. He carries a newspaper. Behind them, numerous file cabinets.

NOTE: If budget allows a screen behind them will continually play footage of the aftermath of a bus explosion.)

VANESSA

So... Tell me again. Mr... Ah...

JAMES

I told you. I keep telling you. This never happened. This... Event! The one we keep seeing over and over all across the nation.

VANESSA

How did it never happen?

JAMES

I was there.

VANESSA

You were at the site? You experienced it?

JAMES

Yes... I mean no! I didn't experience anything.

VANESSA

How did you get here? To this office.

JAMES

I went to the police.

VANESSA

Ah... But the video on file confirms it. The media material shows --

JAMES

Created in a studio. Had to be. There's no other logical explanation.

VANESSA

Ah, yes. Logic.

She jots down some notes.

So, you're saying this is a manufactured event.

JAMES

I was there. There was no explosion.

Pause.

VANESSA

You do realize the gravity of what you're saying. The insanity.

SASSY enters.

JAMES

I am not insane.

VANESSA shares glances with SASSY.

VANESSA

Sassy? Can you please pull Mr. Lane's file?

SASSY

Yes, Ms. Burns.

JAMES

Who is she?

VANESSA

My secretary.

JAMES

What's with the outlandish costume?

SASSY

I beg your pardon.

SASSY drops the file on the desk.

VANESSA

Thank you, Sassy.

SASSY looks deeply into JAMES's eyes. She exits.

Now. Let's see what we have here.

JAMES

Why do you have a file on me?

VANESSA

We have a file on everyone, Mr. Lane. Behind me are just the active ones.

JAMES

I'm not here to create trouble. I'm just a journalist. Doing my job.

VANESSA

Yes. A journalist. Mr. Lane. Or may I call you James? We are a Homeland Security satellite office.

JAMES

A satellite office?

VANESSA

Your... Experience of events... Varies widely from the official line. Correct?

JAMES

Yes. So how can we get word beyond this... satellite office?

VANESSA

Well. We do have a liaison to the next level here. A General Trek.

JAMES

Can I please speak with General Trek, then?

VANESSA

Are you sure? We'd prefer this remain a level one problem.

JAMES

I'm not convinced that would be sufficient. This is something that deserves top-level awareness.

VANESSA

I can see we're going to run into a wall with you. So... suit yourself.

Into the intercom.

Sassy? Send in the General.

SASSY

From the intercom.

Yes, Ms. Burns.

VANESSA

You can tell him it's urgent. (To JAMES) Urgency defeats distraction.

JAMES

Might I ask... What is your role here?

VANESSA

It is my job, Mr. Lane, to liaise with the concerned public about issues related to the homeland security.

JAMES

I see.

VANESSA

We're kind of like the atmosphere on the "Planet Homeland", you see. If something comes to my attention, that pertains to our security, it's my job to make sure it falls into the right place. If it has no bearing, I reflect it back into deep space. If deemed a security breach, I make sure it incinerates into nothingness on entry.

TREK enters. He is staring at a smart phone, which he tucks away into his pocket. VANESSA stands.

General.

TREK

Vanessa. At ease.

She sits.

Congratulations on your win. On a state level... But still...

VANESSA

Thank you, General.

TREK

So... Mr... Ah...

VANESSA

Lane. This is Mr. Lane. He's a journalist.

She passes him the file, which he reviews.

TREK

Ah yes, of course. So what do we have here?

TREK's phone beeps.

Uh-oh! Excuse me a second.

He looks at it.

Oh shit. Why did she have to do that?! She did it again, Vanessa!

VANESSA

Not again!

TREK puts away his device.

TREK

Sorry. James. Can I call you James?

JAMES

If you need to take an important call--

TREK

No. It's my play.

JAMES

Your play?

TREK

My turn. Divine Warriors. I highly recommend it. Depending on how things go here, I'll give you a password before you leave. You won't be disappointed. To be part of the game.

JAMES

I assure you, General, I'm not here to play games.

TREK

No, of course not. Journalists do not play games. At least, not overtly.

VANESSA

General... I was just about to explain to Mr. Lane the importance of certain events in terms of the national security.

TREK picks up JAMES's file.

TREK

Ah yes. The bomb on the bus. It says here you went to the police and they sent you to us. Haven't you watched enough movies, James? You don't go to the police with national security issues. It never helps.

SASSY enters with milk and cookies.

SASSY

Your milk and cookies, General.

TREK

Thank you, Sassy.

SASSY exits.

Do you like her outfit? We don't have a dress code here like they do further in. So I encourage her to wear pinks and fluff. It brightens up our grey world. And playfulness is important today, don't you think? So where were we?

He eats cookies and drinks milk.

VANESSA

The bomb on the bus, Sir.

JAMES

There was no bomb on the bus.

TREK

You say... You were there?

JAMES

Yes.

TREK

Congratulations! I want to shake your hand.

JAMES

For what?

TREK

For being there. On the ground. I've never been on the ground.

JAMES

All these wars. And you've never been in battle?

TREK

Always on the inside. Never out of the country. Holding down the fort is my job. It's much more dangerous than you think. But Home. LAND. Security. I hate to fly.

JAMES

You're a general.

TREK

I know what you're thinking. But not since the Civil War... Aside from that short little mishap Pearl Harbor... have we ever seen battle on US soil. And the inside fact? It's partly due to the work that I do. That our office does. That Divine Warriors has been doing for a lot longer than you think.

JAMES

There was 2001.

TREK

A grave miscalculation by some of our best players. But still a drop in the bucket. Compared to the Japanese massacres leading up to the Harbor attack.

JAMES

General. With all due respect.

TREK

Thank you.

JAMES

My concern is that the public is being misled.

TREK

Not at all! They are being led. Albeit with a strong hand. We are leading into strength. And you'll see this when you play the game.

SASSY enters.

It will all be made clear. How the world of the game... And this world that you think is the only one there is... Come together. Am I right, ladies?

They nod in unison.

SASSY

Sir, the server needs rebooting.

TREK

Do it then, Sassy.

SASSY exits.

JAMES

But you're talking about a national conspiracy here!

TREK

Possibly. But what is a conspiracy? What does it mean to conspire? This is a fascinating word that has been thrown into a process of evolution. We can conspire for good. Or we can conspire for bad. Take this explosion. If it never happened, that's a good thing right? This is benign. No innocent lives lost. So clearly we are right on track.

JAMES

It's a lie.

TREK

A lie in support of the truth. Truth with a capital T. Surely a journalist would understand that.

JAMES

You don't like journalists do you, General Trek?

TREK

On the contrary. I find them to be the most confoundingly proficient players. Now, I'd be willing to let this all go, if you'll do the same. I have a starting level password waiting for you; for someone of a relatively high level of proficiency such as yourself. This way you can work with us here on the inside.

JAMES

The inside of what?

TREK

The cerebral landscape of the divine warrior. The winning side of the battle field in the great war of the cosmic play. The creation and destruction at the pinnacle of the modern world, James. And it's all in here. In this little device. Those news reports of the exploded bus?

JAMES

I must admit. They were flawless. The work of some... insane mastermind.

TREK

Quite the opposite! Created all in here. The exceedingly sane mind of the masterful game.

JAMES

General, what's your view of intelligence?

TREK

I assure you, contrary to my physical appearance, I'm highly educated.

JAMES

No. What I mean is a general who's never been in battle couldn't win at a game like this. You need the kind of intelligence that comes from experience. Not education. Or historical knowledge.

TREK

Have you ever been in battle?

JAMES

There's a battle going on out there right now, among people in the streets. I see it every day.

TREK

That's why I love journalists, James! You know there's the bomb itself. And then there's the bomb of telling about the bomb. If you really want to make a difference, why not do it from within?

JAMES

And if I choose not to... play this... game?

TREK

Well, I'd be willing to offer you my legal services.

JAMES

What do you mean?

TREK

I'm a highly qualified lawyer, and I'd be willing to take your case. I can show you my diploma. From Harvard.

He pulls out his phone and pulls up his diploma and shows JAMES.

JAMES

Thanks. I already have a lawyer.

TREK

I'm afraid in cases involving homeland security you don't have the choice of your own counsel. And as liaison to the next level, I would assign you the best lawyer I know. Which would be myself.

JAMES

What if I refuse?

TREK

You may refuse counsel. However, you've already had us open this case. My job is to close it. Pandora's box kind of thing you understand. The other option is we could offer you a doctor.

JAMES

I have a doctor. Thank you.

TREK

Ah, James! You've lost the right to choose your own medical services. Vanessa?

VANESSA

Yes, General.

TREK

Please ask Sassy to come in.

VANESSA

Right away. (Intercom) Sassy? The General would like to see you.

TREK

You'll see shortly that my staff is highly qualified and here to assist you.

SASSY enters.

Sassy...

SASSY

Yes, General.

TREK

Do you have any openings for Mr. Lane in the next few days?

JAMES

Openings for what?

SASSY

I can check my schedule.

She gets out her phone.

TREK

Very nasty move before on your part by the way. Divine warrior my ass!

SASSY

It's your turn, Sir.

TREK

As soon as we're through here... We're busy people as you can see, James. It's not easy carrying on in two different dimensions, which tend to crash into one another at times, I might add.

SASSY

I have an opening this afternoon, Mr. Lane.

TREK

Why don't you tell James your specialty, my dear?

SASSY

Through hypnosis I'm extremely proficient at helping people relive trauma in the womb. It really... Gets you off to a fresh start! Would three o'clock work for you?

JAMES

I'm afraid I'm quite busy.

SASSY

Or whatever!

JAMES

I see what's going on here.

TREK

Of course you do.

SASSY

Or... We could just play the game.

TREK

Sassy has a point there, James. And she's quite qualified. To make these points. To connect the dots. P.H.D. in psychology. Expert in brain stem surgery. She can produce her documents as well.

JAMES

That won't be necessary.

TREK

Playing the game would seem rather to be a better choice for you. The only other option is to return to the outside legal system. As of yesterday, Vanessa was elected State Attorney General. She'll be happy to assist you.

TREK grabs a bottle of whiskey. He pours four shots.

Raises a toast.

Vanessa? Again. Congratulations!

VANESSA

Thank you, Sir.

Everyone drinks, except James.

TREK

James? (Pause.) Are you with us? Or against us?

JAMES pauses. Then downs the shot.

Good choice. Vanessa? Please get Mr. Lane a password for Warriors. Welcome to the game.

BLACKOUT

END OF PLAY