

## Scene context

Five years ago, **Ayana** (19) watched from hiding as **Wikkam**, the commander of a raiding rival tribe, brutally murdered her father. She has since spent every waking moment preparing to exact her revenge, even if doing so means facing exile. But she needs supplies and guidance from **Vina**, her father's sister, who lives by the tribal border and can help her cross it.

But helping someone leave the tribal lands is a crime. The guilt of making her aunt an accomplice is only outweighed by the guilt of doing nothing as her father was killed.

**Vina** (40) is a hardened survivor, living in the most dangerous part of the tribal lands. The murder of her brother left her feeling hollow, but her occasional visits with Ayana bring her joy, even if she isn't good at showing it. She would do anything to protect the girl, so the idea of her niece crossing the border to face exile, and probable death is unthinkable.

But at the same time, she wants Wikkam dead as much as Ayana does, even if she'd never admit it. And she hates herself for lacking the courage to do anything about it.

INT. VINA'S HOME - DUSK

Ayana is visiting her aunt, Vina, at the border of the tribal lands. The two women converse about trivial things as Ayana helps Vina prepare a meal. Eventually, Ayana steers the conversation to the true intent of her visit.

AYANA

I need your help, Aunt Vina.

VINA

Hmm? I know that look. Out with it.

AYANA

I'm ready to go after Wikkam.

Vina stops abruptly. She speaks after a brief pause.

VINA

Don't be absurd. You're not going after Wikkam.

AYANA

Someone has to. It was your loss too.

VINA

What do you know of loss?

AYANA

Enough to do something about it.

VINA

Careful, girl.

AYANA

There's nothing careless about any of this, Vina.  
Not that you would know.

VINA

This poison in your heart...it doesn't  
discriminate.

AYANA

You don't know the half of it.

VINA

Ayana, you have to set down this burden. You  
cannot carry it forever.

AYANA

It isn't that easy, aunt. At least not for me.

Vina remains silent for a good while. When she speaks again,  
her voice sounds thoroughly spent.

VINA

All right. I'll play along. I help you cross the  
border. You find Wikkam. What then?

AYANA

I make him pay. I...we get justice.

VINA

And then?

AYANA

He won't be able to hurt anyone else.

VINA

No, for you. Then what, for you?

AYANA

That doesn't matter.

VINA

Of course it matters. For you, the tribal lands would remain forever closed.

AYANA

You say that like nothing worse has already happened to me.

VINA

Haven't you lost enough family?

AYANA

Is that a threat?

VINA

Family isn't always about yourself.

AYANA

I could say the same to you.

Both women stare at each other, saying nothing. Eventually, Vina turns and walks pointedly away from Ayana. She settles down on the hearth, staring blankly into the fire.

VINA

Your mind seems made up. There is a bag of supplies by the bow. But know that this is no way to honor your father's memory.

AYANA

I'm trying to find justice for my final memory of him. And I didn't come here to win your approval. Goodbye, Aunt Vina.

Ayana collects the bag of supplies and makes to leave. She pauses at the door and looks back at her aunt. Her aunt does not return the gesture. After a moment's hesitation, Ayana tugs the amulet her father carved for her off her wrist and leaves it by the door before finally making her exit.

Vina turns to look at the door just as it closes shut. She hears footsteps fading away. She closes her eyes, grips the rug beneath her tightly, and whispers to herself.

VINA

I pray you succeed, sweet girl.