

# DAY PLAYERS

Episode 1.1

"Improv 101"

Based on characters created by: Farid Yazdani

Story and Screenplay by:  
Chris D'Alessandro

Revisions by: Terry Erickson

Yellow Draft: 03/15/20  
Orange Draft: 05/06/20  
Green Draft: 06/09/20  
Purple Draft: 04/20/21  
Red Draft: 05/06/21

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**FADE IN:**

**INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

NAVEEN sits on a couch watching TV with a CO-STAR (25), both clean cut, dressed business-casual. Naveen types on his phone. Naveen glances up.

NAVEEN

Whoa.

CO-STAR

What's up?

The Co-Star takes a sip of a drink.

NAVEEN

I just used Mega-Tax to do my tax returns on my phone.

The Co-Star does a SPIT TAKE, liquid runs down their mouth onto their shirt.

CO-STAR

You just did your taxes... on your phone?

Insert shots of a tax-app on Naveen's phone.

NAVEEN

Yeah, it was super easy and simple with Mega Tax.

The Co-Star picks up a lamp off of a table and throws it to the ground. It SHATTERS.

CO-STAR

What?!

NAVEEN

Best of all--

CO-STAR

There's more?

The Co-Star KICKS OVER THE COFFEE TABLE.

NAVEEN

Mega-tax got me a \$650 tax return.

CO-STAR

God damnit!

The Co-Star runs into the kitchen, pulls out an ELDERLY WOMAN, and gives her a full Stone Cold Stunner.

Her head bounces off the ground.

CO-STAR (CONT'D)  
How did you file your receipts?

NAVEEN  
Maybe we shouldn't talk about this anymore--

The Co-Star stands straight and stares through Naveen with murderous eyes.

CO-STAR  
(calmly)  
Tell me.

NAVEEN  
You're kind of scaring me right now--

CO-STAR  
Just. Tell. Me.

NAVEEN  
I just-- I just--

CO-STAR  
(imitating Naveen)  
"I just, I just"  
(back as themselves)  
I swear to god if the next thing out of your mouth isn't an explanation of how you filed your receipts I am going to set myself on fire.

From seemingly out of nowhere, the Co-Star produces a red gas can in one hand and a lighter in the other.

NAVEEN  
I-- I just took a picture with my phone.

A beat of tension.

The Co-Star collects themselves and takes a DEEP BREATH.

CO-STAR  
(calmly)  
What's it called again?

Naveen turns to the camera "Mentos Style".

NAVEEN  
(into camera)  
Mega Tax!

The MEGA TAX LOGO appears over the laid out Old Woman, who is face down on the ground.

**INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT**

The classroom is a small auditorium on a college campus, resembling something closer to a small-town movie theater. Students have filled most of the chairs. The professor hasn't arrived yet.

At the front on the class, NAVEEN signs his name on a clipboard sitting at the absent teacher's desk.

Naveen walks in through the back doors and searches for somewhere to sit.

Naveen glazes over a few students before he faintly recognizes BLAKE SUMMERS (25, scruffy beard, with a hoodie over his head).

He considers sitting next to Blake, but continues scanning around the room.

He spots another free seat, this one next to JUNE HAYES (22, sporting glasses and a shirt with Pikachu on it). June's playing a Nintendo Switch.

NAVEEN  
(thinking, to self)  
Nah.

Naveen's eyes dart about the room, revealing a seat next to TRINITY (25, sullen, sharp, dressed for the world's most stylish apocalypse) who cleans her fingernails with a switchblade.

Naveen and Trinity's eyes meet.

If we didn't know better, we'd say Naveen just peed his pants. He recoils.

Naveen goes back to scanning and spots a free seat next to VINCENT ADAMO (27, unencumbered, pensive) and walks over.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
This seat taken, boss man?

Vincent shrugs his shoulders.

Naveen sits down. Vincent doesn't even look his way.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
First acting class?

VINCENT  
It's my 17th. And counting.

NAVEEN  
GOD. DAMN. You got any gigs lined up?

Vincent nods.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
TV or...?

VINCENT  
Theatre.

Naveen puts his hand on Vincent's shoulder, patronizing him.

NAVEEN  
Oh shit man, I got out of that nonpaying bullshit immediately. Making paper now.

It's as if Naveen is a mosquito buzzing around Vincent's head. He'd swat Naveen away if he could.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
But my agent says I need to make this class my bitch to lock down this big role.

Vincent doesn't care.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
I can't really talk about it. I signed an "NPR" and everything.

VINCENT  
You mean an "NDA"?

Naveen can't resist.

NAVEEN  
It's Marvel. I'm going to be the first brown superhero.

VINCENT  
You mean after Kumail Nanjiani?

Kumail who?

NAVEEN

(lying out of his ass)  
Agent says as long as this class goes well, it's pretty much a totally sure thing. You got an agent?

VINCENT

(opening up)  
I have a therapist.

Naveen wasn't ready for that one.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

He says I need pour my energy into something productive. Just filter out all the... noise. I'm not going to lie, I've been having a lot of BAD THOUGHTS--

NAVEEN

(cutting Vincent off)  
Cool. Whatever. You see that guy over there?

Blake takes a flask from his jacket and takes a swig.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

That's Blake Summers.

VINCENT

I don't know who that is.

NAVEEN

Used to be a pretty big deal. Totally over the hill though. Blew up his career over some bullshit.

VINCENT

Really? He seems broken. So much pain behind his eyes...

**CUT TO:**

Blake's eyes are shut, his mouth agape, like he's trying to take a nap.

VINCENT (O.S) (CONT'D)

His performances must be... sublime.

**BACK TO SCENE:**

It's clear Vincent assumes Blake is a better actor than Naveen.

NAVEEN  
(pointing at Blake)  
That guy? If that dude's broken,  
then I'm destroyed. Trust me.

VINCENT  
Really?

NAVEEN  
100%. Totally broken.

VINCENT  
How?

NAVEEN  
What?

VINCENT  
How are you broken?

NAVEEN  
(making it up as he goes  
along)  
If you could see the scorched  
landscape of my soul... the...uh...  
bodies piled high in trenches....

Vincent leans in.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
Fire. Silence. But wait, a child  
crying in the distance... The movie  
'1917' written and directed by Sam  
Mendes. They did it in one take.

VINCENT  
How do you tap into that emotion?

NAVEEN  
Like a keg, bitch.

A door at the front of the auditorium LOUDLY SWINGS OPEN and  
PROFESSOR PETER EDMUNDS slowly and deliberately paces towards  
his desk.

EDMUNDS  
Everyone sit down.

Everybody is already sitting down.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
I am Peter Edmunds. I am your new  
acting coach.

Naveen leans forward.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Let it be known...

That class waits on baited breath...

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Let it be known that I am the best.  
I am an acting GOD. You wouldn't  
know your own pretend asses from a  
pretend hole in the ground. You are  
trash. You are human trash.

The classmates quickly exchange odd looks. Except for Vincent. Naveen looks skeptical. He nudges Vincent

NAVEEN  
Fuck this guy, right?

Vincent says nothing but continues to hang on Edmunds' every breath.

Naveen shoots Vincent an odd look.

EDMUNDS  
Let it be known, I will only take on  
serious students. You will be here  
every night, no exceptions. You get  
the flu? Use it. Your grandmother  
dies? Use it.

A STUDENT WITH A COLD SNEEZES.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Was that a real sneeze?

STUDENT WITH A COLD  
Um... yes?

There's a beat of tension.

EDMUNDS  
I don't believe you. Get out.

STUDENT WITH A COLD  
For real?

EDMUNDS  
Out!

The Student With A Cold collects their things and heads out of the class.

Edmunds takes a look around the room and selects a few more students.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
(points to random  
students)

Also you, you and... you. I don't believe you're serious.

One student protests.

RANDOM STUDENT  
I'm serious!

EDMUNDS  
You're serious human trash. No refunds.

The students take a look around, bewildered, before collecting their things and leaving. The only ones remaining are Naveen, Vincent, Trinity, Blake, June and....

As the other students clear out, Naveen notices VERONICA BLACKWELL.

**VERDI'S DIES IRAE ON FULL BLAST.**

Naveen's head shoots back.

**THE STRINGS. THE DRUMS. THE CHOIR. ALL OF IT. BLASTING.**

Veronica's indeed here.

**MUSIC HALTS.**

RANDOM STUDENT  
(leaving)  
This is bullshit.

EDMUNDS  
Let it be known! You fuck me? I fuck you.

June scribbles things down in a note pad.

Blake looks over at June taking notes.

BLAKE  
Wait, when does he fuck us?

JUNE  
After we fuck him. I think.

The classmates look at each other nervously.

Naveen looks genuinely nervous for the first time. Vincent is on the edge of his seat.

EDMUNDS

Today we will be getting to know each other and ourselves through what is surely the greatest and purest form of theater; improvisation! In pairs, you will perform an unrehearsed conversation in front of the class.

Naveen turns to Vincent.

NAVEEN

(under his breath)  
You wanna be partners?

Vincent guffaws hysterically.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

What is *that*?

He stops.

VINCENT

I'm acting. Keep up.

Naveen rolls his eyes.

EDMUNDS

(to the class)  
I will now sort you into pairs.

Naveen glances over to Veronica, wishing for anything than to be paired with her.

Edmunds picks up the clipboard that Naveen signed in on.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)

June Hayes and Trinity Smith.

June turns around and meets eyes with Trinity. Trinity is scary. Too bad it's a must-go.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)

Blake Summers and...

Blake leans back, cocky.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)

Vincent Adamo

Vincent glares at Blake. It weirds Blake out.

Naveen breathes a sigh of relief.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Veronica Blackwell...

NAVEEN  
(to himself) )  
Please no. Please no. Please no.

EDMUNDS  
Why don't you pair up with...  
Michelle Whittemore?

The class looks around the room. There's no Michelle Whittemore.

BLAKE  
I think you kicked her out, dude.

EDMUNDS  
Damn it.

Edmunds checks his clipboard.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Terry Erickson?

Nope. No Terry.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Chris D'Alessandro? Jessica Latimer?

Nope. Nope.

Edmunds checks his clip board.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Fine. Ms. Blackwell, why don't your  
pair with... Mr... Cosby?

NAVEEN  
Fuck me.

The class looks shocked, a GASP erupting.

TRINITY  
Your last name is "Cosby"?

NAVEEN  
It's "Khasbhi". With a "K".  
It's a last name. I didn't pick it.

JUNE

You could pick a stage name. A lot of people pick a stage name.

BLAKE

Yeah it's why the guy playing Spider-Man doesn't go by "Tom Hitler".

JUNE

Oh my god, is that his real last name?

Blake shrugs, it's obvious to him.

BLAKE

Yeah.

EDMUNDS

Let's start finding our scene mates, please.

The pairs start to find one another in the classroom.

June, Nintendo Switch in hand, breathes deep, shakes off her first day nerves, and approaches Trinity.

As she walks over to Trinity...

JUNE

(to herself)

Eye contact. Eye contact. Eye contact. Eye contact.

June reaches Trinity, makes eye contact.

TRINITY

Hey.

June BRIEFLY SCREAMS IN FEAR.

Naveen pumps himself up and strides over to Veronica.

She avoids eye contact.

NAVEEN

Hey.

Veronica doesn't reply.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

Veronica.

Veronica finally looks up.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
It's me. Naveen.

Veronica fakes nice as best she can.

VERONICA  
Heeyyyy... it's you.

Naveen outstretches his arms.

NAVEEN  
Come on, don't leave me hanging.

Veronica stands up and gives Naveen a very reluctant, ass-out hug.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)  
No reason this has to be weird. I'm very mature, as you can see. So over our break up.

VERONICA  
Okay, that's probably enough.

Veronica pulls away from the hug. The two former lovers sit down.

NAVEEN  
So what's up? LA spit you back out that quick?

VERONICA  
What? No. No-no-no-no. I'm just in town for a bit... I have a lot of auditions lined up. Just so many auditions. Hella auditions, really.

NAVEEN  
Wow. "Hella"?

VERONICA  
I heard this class was great, and I'm going to be here for a little while, so... just thought I'd keep the ol' skills sharp.

NAVEEN  
Might as well while you're here.

VERONICA  
Temporarily here.

NAVEEN  
Temporarily.

VERONICA

Obviously I'm going to go back to LA, because... You know, it's going... really, really great for me out there.

NAVEEN

I know what you mean. Personally I've just been killing it lately. Booking like crazy.

VERONICA

That's great.

NAVEEN

I mean, I haven't been in any rom-com flops about reverse mermaids, so I must be doing something right.

VERONICA

(trying desperately to be nice)

Oh... you didn't like it?

NAVEEN

Come on, nobody liked it.

VERONICA

Well, I don't know if "nobody liked it". Maybe you just weren't the right audience for it?

NAVEEN

Was the right audience "dead people"? Because then yeah, I guess not.

VERONICA

Well you know, it was still pretty cool to be in a movie. A movie that was in theaters.

NAVEEN

For a like a weekend. Not even I don't think.

Veronica bites her lip, trying to constrain herself and quietly suffer through the indignity Naveen is inflicting upon her.

VERONICA

Yeah...

Naveen is supremely smug, confident he has Veronica on the ropes.

NAVEEN

Hey, you want to hear more about how great things are going for me?

VERONICA

(firmly)

Not really.

Blake heads over to Vincent.

BLAKE

Hey man, Blake Summers, you probably know who I am, let's not make it weird.

Vincent stares at his hand for a moment before grabbing it and squeezing.

VINCENT

Who are you?

BLAKE

You never saw the show? Zach In The Box? About the orphan genius who lived in the studio walk up? That was me.

VINCENT

No. Who are you?

BLAKE

Uh... I'm a guy?

Vincent tightens his grip on Blake's hand and Blake recoils a bit.

VINCENT

MORE.

BLAKE

Uh... single, white, ex - child star?

VINCENT

MORE.

BLAKE

(panicking)

Full blown alcoholic. Total mama's boy.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Lost all my money when I invested in a restaurant called "Date Crêpe". It failed immediately, I don't understand why. Just please let me go, dude!

Vincent tightens his grip once again, putting Blake in noticeable pain.

VINCENT

You're a coward. A goddamn one-hit wonder who never got back up on the horse. You're pathetic.

BLAKE

Okay, you sound a lot like my dad right now--

VINCENT

Don't you just wanna let it out right now?

VINCENT let's out a PRIMAL SCREAM at the top of his lungs.

Vincent pulls Blake in by their handshake, so now it resembles something closer to an arm wrestle. Blake is fully panicking.

BLAKE

Just let me go, man--

VINCENT

Let. It. Out.

Blake lets out a meager, terrified WAIL. It's like a screaming goat. In his panic, Blake SHOVES VINCENT away.

Vincent TOPPLES OVER.

BLAKE

Stay away from me!

VINCENT

How can I? I am you.

Blake stands completely terrified for a beat.

Vincent gives Blake an intense stare down. After a beat, he sharply turns towards Edmunds.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

(To Edmunds)

And SCENE!

BLAKE  
WHAT THE FUCK?

Vincent stands confident.

VINCENT  
The stage is anywhere you have an audience.

BLAKE  
I asked you not to make it weird!  
That was the first thing I said!

EDMUNDS  
Marvelous! Of course we don't give grades in this class, but if I had to rate that on a scale from Nicholas Cage to Daniel Day Lewis, I'd give that performance a Susan Sarandon.

The class haphazardly claps. Blake is traumatized. Naveen looks on, shocked. Vincent is really good.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
Next performers to the stage, please! You two, up front!

Trinity strides confidently to the front of the class with a nervous June in toe.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)  
When you're ready, performers.

Trinity takes a deep breath in.

**SERIES OF SHOTS:**

- Trinity holds June by the collar, looking severe and right up in her face. It's intense. June looks on the verge of tears.

JUNE  
Oh my god...

- Trinity falls to her knees and screams to heavens. June looks confused.

-Trinity lies in June's arms "dying", June looks severe, with tears welling up in her eyes.

JUNE (CONT'D)  
For the love of god, somebody do  
something! Why are you still  
watching this? Just help!

-Trinity finally "dies" in Junes arms. June hangs her head  
and cries.

JUNE (CONT'D)  
You bastards! You vicious bastards!  
Is that what you wanted? IS IT?

**END SERIES OF SHOTS:**

June wipes real tears from her eyes. She's convinced this  
whole thing was real.

TRINITY  
(plain, confident)  
Scene.

June breathes a giant GASP of relief.

JUNE  
Oh my god, she's okay. False alarm  
everybody.

Trinity rolls her eyes. June is very impressed.

JUNE (CONT'D)  
(to Trinity)  
That was so real.

EDMUNDS  
Adequate.

Trinity is also a great actor, much to Naveen's chagrin.

NAVEEN  
The fuck? That was "adequate"?

VERONICA  
Oh, was that too intense for you?

NAVEEN  
Intense? I could fake die with my  
eyes close.

VERONICA  
Uh, okay. So you'll be able to keep  
up if I go ahead and act the fuck  
out of this scene?

NAVEEN

Actually you're not going to act the fuck out of this scene, because I'm going to act the fuck--

Veronica has already gotten up to leave. Naveen hastily gets up to follow.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

God damnit.

Naveen and Veronica walk to the front for the class, they stare each other down. Veronica speaks first.

VERONICA

What's a' matter, Khasbhi? Too many puddin' pops?

The class CHUCKLES. It seems like Naveen is about to freeze.

NAVEEN

Veronica, would you do me the honor of being my date to the senior prom?

Naveen pops down on his knee and mimes holding up a corsage... or a ring.

VERONICA

Oh...

Naveen looks Veronica right in the eye. A scowl washes across her face. Naveen wears a shit-eating grin.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Okay. You win.

NAVEEN

So that's a "yes"?

VERONICA

(pantomimes)

Sure. But only if you eat this giant bag of dicks.

NAVEEN

What?

Naveen gets up. They're still playing characters, but very clearly airing out their drama.

VERONICA

Seriously, I found the biggest bag I could and stuffed it to the brim with dicks so it could nourish you.

(MORE)

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Will you please accept my gift? I worked so hard on it.

NAVEEN

Do you have a problem with me asking you to prom?

VERONICA

On one knee?

Naveen gets to his feet.

NAVEEN

Do proposals make you uncomfortable?

VERONICA

Only bullshit fake ones designed to stop me from leaving self-obsessed ex-boyfriends.

Edmunds leans forward on folded hands.

Naveen turns to the audience with big kitten eyes, pleading for sympathy.

NAVEEN

Well, it wounded me deeply when you left. In a lot of ways... I don't think I've ever recovered.

Veronica rolls her eyes. She sees through Naveen's attempt to win over the crowd.

VERONICA

Oh, give me a fucking break.

Naveen turns back to Veronica.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You are not sympathetic because a girl broke up with you one time.

Naveen takes a beat - trying to figure out how to win the fight.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Plus, it is your fault things ended. You're aware of that, right?

Naveen breaks character now, that last dig caught him off balance.

NAVEEN

My fault? You were the one who broke up with me. You were the one who didn't want to get married. You were the one who ran off to LA...

Naveen catches himself, he's supposed to be winning the crowd.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

...And I have been totally wounded and broken ever since.

Naveen looks directly at Vincent in the audience and WINKS.

Vincent grimaces.

VERONICA

Right, I forgot. I left because I'm an ice-princess who enjoys breaking mens' hearts. It definitely wasn't because you're fucking toxic and I was chasing my dreams.

NAVEEN

Your words.

Veronica turns to leave.

VERONICA

Fuck off forever, dude.

Veronica briskly walks towards the back of the class towards the exit.

Naveen looks over to Edmunds, who looks bored and unimpressed.

Veronica is almost out the door. It's a do or die moment for Naveen.

NAVEEN

Reverse Mermaid sucked.

Veronica turns back and swiftly approaches Naveen. Struck a nerve.

VERONICA

What the fuck did you just say to me?

Naveen's act crumples in the face of Veronica's ferocity. He recoils from her.

NAVEEN

Who was that movie even for? Who finds a fish face sexy?

VERONICA

First off, a lot of people want to fuck Nick Kröll--

NAVEEN

Do they?

Veronica punches Naveen in the gut, knocking the wind out of him.

VERONICA

I wanna make this crystal clear so everyone knows. You are not wounded. You are not deep. You're just an average, unremarkable, unlikable dick.

Veronica turns and walks away. She calls back...

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And you're going to be alone forever!

Naveen recovers, and watches Veronica go.

Veronica flies through the doors at the back of the class and Edmunds, along with the entire class, sits silently.

EDMUNDS

That. Was. A delight. I think I speak for the class when I say, Mr. Khasbhi, you knocked us out.

Edmunds starts a CLAP. The class confusedly follows.

NAVEEN

I'm sorry. I... don't think I deserve this. I wasn't really acting.

EDMUNDS

Excuse me?

NAVEEN

I just-- I was doing what came naturally, I wasn't... I wasn't pretending anything.

EDMUNDS

You accessed something real? A real emotion?

NAVEEN

Uh I guess?

EDMUNDS

I've never met someone so egocentric, so callus, so...

Naveen and indeed the class wait on baited breath.

EDMUNDS (CONT'D)

Broken.

A smile washes across Naveen's face.

NAVEEN

Fuck yeah! I'm broken! You hear that shit? Suck my dick and lick my ass all of you. But especially you, weird theatre guy whose name I haven't learned yet.

VINCENT

It's Vincent.

Naveen marches out of the classroom, holding up two middle fingers to everyone.

NAVEEN

Best actor! Super broken!

The class stares in bewilderment as Naveen exits.

JUNE

So is class over, or...?

TRINITY

(to Blake)

You should have called the food truck "The Crêpe Van"

BLAKE

Oh man, that would have described it perfectly.

Edmunds, with stars in his eye, beams with pride.

EDMUNDS

I would binge this show.

**FADE OUT:**

**POST CREDITS****FADE IN:****INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Naveen leaves the classroom, immediately following his "I'm broken" celebration.

NAVEEN

Fuck yeah! So broken! Woo!

Naveen takes a few breaths, calming his excitement.

He realizes he's alone. No Veronica in sight.

NAVEEN (CONT'D)

Super broken... cool...cool.

Naveen stands, solemn for a beat before walking down the hallway, alone.

**FADE OUT:****END OF EPISODE**