

The Danger

A ten-minute play

By
Joshua James

Joshua James
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joshuajames99@yahoo.com

CHARACTERS

DUANE – A very mild mannered man, complete with sweater-vest, in his mid-thirties. The picture of calmness.

DARCY – Duane's wife, twenty-nine and prone to impulsiveness and profane emotional outbursts.

TIME

Present

SETTING

A living room in a very comfortable house.

NOTES

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JoshuaJames99@yahoo.com
www.playwrightjoshuajames.com

Duane sits calmly reading a paper in his chair. His wife Darcy enters and sits in the chair next to him. She is wearing oven-mitts on both hands.

Darcy
Goddamn shit piss FUCK!

Duane
Honey . . .

Darcy
Cocksucker! Motherfucker!

Duane
Darcy Hon . . .

Darcy
SHIT! Shit on me, SHIT.

Duane
Darcy. Are you okay? What's wrong?

Darcy
I burnt the fucking pot-roast.

Duane
Oh. Okay. Well, why don't we order a pizza? Call Domino's. Order a Meat-Lovers, large.

Duane goes back to his paper.

Darcy
Duane, let's cut the shit, shall we?

Duane
I'm sorry?

Darcy
I said, let's cut the shit. Listen, this is not what I imagined my life would be, you know? Burning pot-roast, ordering take-out and watching reruns of Friends with my husband every night while we eat dinner, this is NOT what I signed up for!

Duane
Well, we can watch something else if you want . . .

Darcy

It's not the food or Friends, it's you, me, US. Our LIFE. Duane, I'm only twenty-seven years old. I'm twenty-seven, I have a secure job with benefits, a house with a large mortgage, a used car that needs new tires AND I have loads of relatives and in-laws all looking forward to the children I'm supposed to squirt out sometime very soon. You understand? My life is basically OVER!

Duane

Darcy . . .

Darcy

Look at our life! We don't do anything exciting! We don't have any adventure! You go to your job, I go to mine, we come home, watch HBO and most of the time we can't even stay awake long enough to have sex! And when we do have sex, it's usually the same approach, the same positions, the same safe orgasms. Duane, I only shave my legs ONCE a week. Once a week! Do you understand the implications of a woman shaving her legs only once a week? Do you?

Duane

Honey . . .

Darcy

It's only been two years and already we don't do anything exciting other than visit our folks, and let's face it, that's not a challenge. It's unpleasant but it's not challenging. Oh my God. I can't believe it, it's happened to me, it's really happened to me.

Duane

What's happened to you?

Darcy

My mother's life. I'm in it, I'm LIVING IT. I got sucked up into it, the wife-mother whirlwind, I must have caught it when I was in college, get a man, get married, get a house and have kids. Work, cook, clean, wipe everybody's noses and be a credit to your community. I used to laugh at girls like that, and now look at me. I've turned into my mother! Right down to the pot-roast. I can't believe I didn't realize this before now. You know where I am? I'm at the fork. This is the fork! Thank Christ I recognized the fork now, if I waited until I popped out a few kids, by then it would have been too late.

Duane
Fork?

Darcy
Fork, fork, fork. Fork in the road, where you have a choice, you can go one direction or you can go another. Oh my God. That is where I am now. I go one way, I end up a grandmother, I go another, I get romance, excitement and adventure, I get it. The fork. Duane, I'm sorry. I have to leave. It's not your fault, I love you very much, but I don't want this. I need some danger and excitement in my life. You understand, right?

Duane
Well, okay then. If that's what you want. Let's go find some excitement, some adventure for the both of us.

Darcy
No Duane . . .

Duane
We could go on a cruise.

Darcy
Duane please. Come on. You're an accountant. You don't drink, you don't drive too fast, you don't even curse. You are a safe, secure man. That's what drew me to you, it's one of the things I love about you but it's not enough. This is not the life I dreamed about when I was growing up. I don't want one of those lifetime weepy chick-flick movies for my life, I want an action movie. I want to live a life on the edge. I have to leave. Oh my God, I can't fucking believe it. Duane, I have to leave you.

Duane
Honey . . .

Darcy
I'm sorry sweetie, I'm so so sorry, but there isn't anything you can say right now that will stop me.

Darcy kisses Duane on the cheek and begins to exit.

Duane
I once killed a man.

Darcy
What?

Duane
I said, I once killed a man.

Darcy
You killed somebody?

Duane
Yes.

Darcy
By accident?

Duane
No. On purpose. I purposely killed a man.

Darcy
Was it self-defense, or . . . ?

Duane
No. I just killed him. I waited for him when he was alone,
then I killed him. With a crowbar. I killed him with a
crowbar in a parking lot.

Darcy
When was this?

Duane
Four years ago.

Darcy
That's right when we met.

Duane
Yes. I met you the week after I did it.

Very brief pause.

Darcy
No fucking way. You would never kill anybody.

Duane
No, it's true. I was never going to tell you, but . . .

Darcy
Who was he?

Duane
Just somebody that lived down the street.

Darcy
Why?

Duane
Why did I kill him?

Darcy
Yes.

Duane
He was bothering me.

Brief pause.

Darcy
Duane, I think you're going to have to ELABORATE just a LITTLE more about this . . .

Duane
It's uh, well, it's not something I'm really proud of, I guess. You remember where I used to live, the little house my grandmother left me, with the white fence and roses, blue A-frame, big yard . . .

Darcy
Yes. You sold that house right after we met.

Duane
Yes. I did. Next door to me lived this guy, Lawrence, he was into sales or something, some sort of sales director for a direct mailing company. Big guy, talked real loud, had a pinky ring, huge gut, the kind of guy played football in high school, threw spitballs and always thought kicking somebody in the crotch was funny, you know? That kind of guy. He was pushy, a big bully, I guess you could say, a real bully. He didn't have a driveway or garage, he parked on the street and sometimes it was hard finding a place. One day he parked right in front of my driveway, and blocked my car in so I couldn't get out. So I went to his place, that morning, and rang his bell and woke him up. He got real mad and called me a fag, told me not to bother him or I'd be real sorry. Then he slammed the door in my face. I didn't know what to do, I had to get to work. So I called the cops. They showed up, rang his bell, he came out and was nice as pie to them, told them all I had to do

was ask, if I'd rang his bell he would have moved his car no problem, sorry officer. While he was telling them this, behind their backs he was mouthing the word "fag" at me whenever he could. But he moved the car and I went to work. I thought that would be it. When I got home that night, I found, on the welcome mat in front of my front door, I found a pile of . . . human excrement. It was disgusting, but I figured I'd let it go and he'd let it go after awhile. He didn't. Every time he saw me, he'd call me a fag. He'd wait for me, out on his lawn, and holler it out loud. Couple times a week there would be a pile of human excrement on my porch. Once when I was walking home from the neighborhood store, carrying a couple bags of groceries, he deliberately ran into me and knocked the bags out of my hands onto the sidewalk. "Watch where you're going, Faggot," he said. It kept getting worse and worse, I spoke to him about it, I said, "Listen, I don't like it that you're calling me these names," and he just said "Too bad, Fag," unzipped his pants and urinated right on my rosebushes. Which is very bad for roses, it can ruin them. One day I got up and found all four tires on my car slashed. Next time there was a scratch across the hood of the car. Next time it wouldn't start because someone had urinated into my gas tank. It was really costing me money, I called the cops but there was nothing they could do, unless someone saw him do it. The final straw came one morning when I was leaving for work and I noticed someone had spray-painted the word FAG in large letters on the side of my house. I was livid, I loved that house. Lawrence was just coming out of his place, he saw me and he started laughing. I told him, I said, "This has got to stop, you can't do this." He grinned and said, "Hey Fag, maybe you should move, it might be too tough a neighborhood for you." I said, "I'm not moving and this is harassment. I will sue you unless you stop this right now. I mean it." He got all quiet, staring at me, then he said, "I want you to do something, I want you to take a look around right now. Do you see anybody around? There's nobody around. Do you know what that means, you little fucking pussy?" And right then he slapped me, with his open hand, real hard. Knocked my glasses off, and I fell to one knee, bleeding from my lip. "That means that nobody's around to see me do that," he said, "Think about that, Fag, next time you get lippy with me. Next time, it's gonna be worse." And then he left. I thought about it for a long time. Days and days. I was at that fork in the road, Darcy. I was at the fork. I realized I didn't want to sell a house I loved because an over-aged high school bully was pushing me around. I also realized

that he wasn't ever going to stop, that next time he would seriously hurt me, or even worse, unless I did something about it. I decided I didn't want to run from bullies any more. So I got some rubber gloves, you know, the kind you use for cleaning the kitchen, and a rain-slicker, and one night I waited for him in the parking lot of this bar he always went to. I'd been following him for days to get his schedule and I knew he'd stay until last call, even though it was a weeknight. I had this pellet gun and I used it to knock out all the streetlights in the parking lot so that it was real dark and nobody could see. He came out to his car, whistling, and when he opened his car door I came up behind him and said, "Hey Lawrence." He turned around, weaving a little, and said, "Hey, Faggot, what're you doing here?" I held up my left hand and said, "Look at my thumb," and when he did, I hit him with the crowbar I was hiding in my right hand. I hit him real hard. He fell and I hit him some more. I hit him until I was sure he was dead. Then I went home. I burned the slicker and the gloves, buried the crowbar in his yard, and then went to bed. I slept pretty good. Police came, asked me some questions, but nothing ever came of it. Nobody was around to see it, so nobody knew. They never closed the case and they never arrested anyone. I ended up selling the house anyway, but it was my choice to do so. For me. I never bad about what I did to Lawrence, not once. I just felt it was just something that had to be done. So I did it. And after that, I met you.

Pause.

**Darcy walks forward and kisses Duane hard on the mouth.
Then she steps back.**

Darcy
Are you sure Domino's is okay?

Duane
Sure, I like Domino's.

Darcy
Large Meat-Lovers?

Duane
Yeah. Get some of that cheesy-bread, too. I like the cheesy-bread.

Darcy
How about some wine, you know, maybe for later? In case we want to, you know . . .

Duane
Hey, that would be great.

Darcy moves to exit, then stops for a moment.

Darcy
Honey?

Duane
Yes dear?

Darcy
I love you.

Duane
I love you, too.

Darcy exits and Duane goes back to his paper.

The End