



Biting Dust

To whom it may concern,

Attached is a 2-pager for the larger series concept of *Biting Dust*, to accompany the proof of concept film (of the same title) that was recently produced via The Equity Foundation's 2021 'Diversity Showcase'.

While *Biting Dust* has many intriguing characters, we were limited to working with only two actors via the initiative, so we chose to hone in specifically on the relationship between Tamika and Nan.

Within the constraints of the initiative, we shot the film in one day and completed post production, including animation sequences, within two weeks. We strove to bring together a diverse emerging crew, including six emerging First Nations cast & crew members.

We hope you enjoy watching what our amazing cast and crew were able to pull together within such a short timeframe and that it will pique your interest enough to want to know more about the larger story. If you'd like to connect or read further materials, including an early draft of the full pilot episode, please feel free to reach out to me via the contact details below.

Many thanks for your time,

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Creator of Biting Dust

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Biting Dust

Format: 6 x 25 min tragicomedy

LOGLINE: Orphaned and living with her headstrong Nan, Tamika's brain may be filled with colourful fantasies and tongue-in-cheek humour, but her reality is full of unresolved trauma. As Nan's health deteriorates and questions of the past are left unanswered, Tamika sets out on a quest to uncover deeply buried family secrets.

THEMES: Biting Dust (working title) follows a young Indigenous woman who must discover her independence and sense of identity, while learning to forgive and heal her family. The series explores themes of family trauma and its intergenerational impact, especially when shame, guilt and fear prevent family members from acknowledging and healing the past. As colourful and humorous as it is heartbreaking and sincere, the series will emphasise an urban Indigenous perspective on the search for community and identity in contemporary Australia, where family secrets and denial act as stubborn roadblocks.

On the flipside, the series embraces and celebrates the healing that takes place when truth telling, connection and a grounding in personal identity is allowed to occur. Through an Indigenous lens, the series reflects on the painful beauty of the healing journeys many Blackfella families continue to go through, celebrating our resilience and the power of our community when we come together and embrace one another.

The series ultimately explores and questions family, community, identity and the society that shapes us.

A LITTLE BIT MORE (Why it is unique, distinctive tone/style):

An intriguing, quirky tragicomedy, 'Biting Dust' offers a fresh and engaging take on the contemporary journey of an urban Indigenous character's search for identity in the absence of community. Part of what makes this series unique is Tamika's active imagination, which brings to life inanimate objects and characters in paintings, conjures up goldfish in toilet bowls and turns her fluffy, delicate dog into a mischievous and adventurous ruffian – all while serving as a device to offer insight into her thoughts and emotions.

While weaving a tale of family steeped in trauma, 'Biting Dust' seeks out the joy and humour in Tamika's imaginary world, in her relationships and her wider community. The series presents a colourful, at times dark/tragic and often funny 'treasure hunt' of hidden family secrets, taking some cues in style and tone that lands 'Biting Dust' somewhere between the painful sincerity of tragicomedy 'Fleabag' and whimsy and heart of feature film 'Boy'.

'Biting Dust' also aims to authentically portray the real-life community of Inala, Brisbane - a vibrant multicultural suburb, home to many resilient Indigenous and migrant families. Between the tragedy and comedy, the series finds quiet moments in this setting to reflect on family and community.

GENERAL STORY ARC (in development) :

At the start of the series, Tamika (25) is living with her Nan and purposely avoiding dealing with her own life. Squandering career opportunities and avoiding relationships outside of her immediate bubble, Tamika uses her over-active imagination to weave a colourful, often hilarious world that distracts her from reality – and Nan's increasing lack of patience. Beneath it all, the colourful world of Tamika's imagination is a coping mechanism to avoid facing and healing her traumas. In the exposition of the first episode, we learn that Tamika was orphaned at a young age and raised by her mother's parents, Nan and Grandad. The rest of her mother's family is estranged, and Tamika knows nothing of her dad's family. Her Grandad had a drinking problem and passed away when Tamika was only 10 – it is revealed early on that Tamika has a fear of the garage and the old beer fridge that resides inside, where Nan now keeps the dog food for their pet terrier, Moppet.

When an Aboriginal family moves in next door, including potential love interest Bailey, their curiosity of their new neighbour brings to light the fact that Tamika knows little of her Dad's family or her Aboriginal identity.

Tamika's world is suddenly turned upside down when Nan collapses and is rushed to hospital. Soon after, Tamika discovers an old letter Nan has written, addressed 'To My Family', hinting towards regrets of the past regarding Tamika's parents. Faced with the reality of the gaping holes in her family story and fuelled by a burning need to know the truth, Tamika enlists the help of best friend Jamie as they attempt to solve her family riddle. When Nan's estranged son turns up to admit Nan to a nursing home and put her house on the market, Tamika's impending homelessness, alongside Nan's deteriorating health, creates a ticking clock against Tamika's quest to find answers. Tamika throws herself head-first into her quest, discovering that multiple quirky members of the neighbourhood community each hold a part of the puzzle. Becoming consumed by her mission, Tamika neglects her budding relationship with Bailey and begins to put a strain on her friendship with Jamie. Nan serves as the antagonist, as her deteriorating mind threatens to rob Tamika of answers or closure.

Leading up to the mid-point, Tamika faces the devastating passing of Nan. At Nan's funeral, the presence of an unfamiliar Indigenous man leads Tamika to uncovering the identity and whereabouts of her father's family. This turning point sees Tamika start on the journey to reconnecting with family, and all the joy and pain that is revealed as she learns of her parents. From this point the series takes time to reflect powerfully on the journey to being accepted by her family and learning of her Aboriginal identity. Tamika learns the heartbreaking truth of how her Nan disowned her mother when she married an Aboriginal man, Tamika's father, leading to their estrangement and Grandad's guilt-ridden alcohol addiction. Tamika is faced with the knowledge that her Nan and Grandad took her in out of grief and guilt after her parents passed away in a car crash. She must decide, for the sake of her own healing, how she will choose to remember her Nan.

By the end of the series, Tamika is on her way to her healing. She is spending time with her newfound cousins and learning from her Uncles and Aunties. Her relationship with Bailey begins to bloom. We see her start a new job, move into a new apartment with Jessie, commit to her relationship with Bailey and forgive her Nan and Grandad. We end with Tamika at a big family gathering (Christmas) surrounded by her loved ones, optimistic for her future.