

CROSSING THE LINE

Written by

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EXT. THE OCEAN. DAY

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Dawn breaks. The sun rises on a placid sea. The bow of the Athlone Castle, a middle-aged, two-funnel passenger liner, barely raises a wave and the wake of its screws is quickly absorbed into the unctuous stillness of the ocean.

EXT. SHIP'S SWIMMING POOL. DAY

The sun is high in a cloudless sky. There's laughter and gaiety. Large numbers of passengers are crowded around the swimming pool. Members of the ship's crew in make-shift costumes, and crude make-up, clown the ritual initiation of novice travelers common to all passenger-carrying ships when they cross the equator.

PAN DOWN

A porthole on a lower deck of the ship.

INT. A CABIN. DAY.

PETE and LIZ, an attractive couple in their mid twenties, are pressed together naked in a bunk making love. Liz is of medium height, boyish short blond hair, pale blue eyes. Pete is taller, clean-shaven, dark and handsome. Their bodies are covered in sweat as they work at it until they reach orgasm.

Liz cuddles him lovingly. She strokes his hair. They lie silently for a few moments, listening to the distant persistent thump of the ship's engines. LIZ lights up a cigarette. They share it.

LIZ

Wanna know something strange?
My mum and dad met on this boat.

PETE

You're kidding.

LIZ

Right here on the old Athlone. It's highly likely I was conceived deep in the bowels of this old tub.

They both laugh. Liz draws on the cigarette

PETE

Where were they heading?

Liz exhales

LIZ

Lord knows. They were crew.

PETE

Oh?

LIZ

Mum was a laundress.

Long pause.

PETE

What was your Dad?

LIZ

D'know... assistant sous chef or
something

Long pause. Liz is dealing with bitter thoughts

LIZ (CONT'D)

Mum heard he'd jumped ship and
settled in Australia

Liz takes a long drag at the cigarette.

BEGIN TITLES

EXT. SEASCAPE TABLE MOUNTAIN. DAY.

Dawn. The mountain a dark shadow on the horizon,
lights twinkling around the harbor.

EXT. BOAT DECK. DAY.

Pete is alone on the boat deck. He leans on the rail
absorbing the extraordinary beauty of the mountain
silhouetted against the dawn sky.

EXT. CAPETOWN DOCKS. DAY.

A vibrant bustling scene of noise and colour. Passengers on
the Athlone Castle bidding each other hasty farewells.

Raggedly dressed Coloured porters struggle against the tide

of disembarking passengers to get on board for their luggage. Liz and Pete follow a porter carrying their bags down to the quayside.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM, QUAYSIDE. DAY.

Liz and Pete follow the porter onto the train, destination JOHANNESBURG.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT. DAY.

Liz dumps herself on a seat by the window and stares out, frowning. The porter stows the luggage, Pete gives him some money. The porter takes off his cap, bows obsequiously.

PORTER

Baie dankie my baas.

Liz smiles at the porter. When the porter has gone, she looks at Pete accusatorially then returns her glum gaze to the window.

EXT. STATION PLATFORM. DAY.

The guard blows his whistle and the train pulls slowly out of the station.

EXT. HEX RIVER VALLEY. DAY.

The sun is high in a bright blue sky over a scene of beauty, warmth and tranquility. The train, chasing its own shadow, winds its way up the valley towards a range of purple mountains.

INT. COMPARTMENT. DAY.

Liz gazes out the window, awe-struck by the landscape. She takes Pete's hand.

EXT. COMPARTMENT. NIGHT.

The compartment seats have been converted to sleeping berths, one above the other. The upper berth is empty. Liz and Pete are both in the lower berth. They lie quietly awake in each others arms, listening to the rhythms of the train as it thunders on.

END TITLES.

EXT. PARK STATION, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

Pete oversees the loading of their luggage into a taxi.

Liz looks around her at the bustling, colourful, station-yard scene, the affluence, the architecture, gleaming modern towers rising above older, more genteel terra cotta colonial buildings surrounded by palm trees, all aglow in the warm summer sunshine.

She's concerned, saddened by the contrasting shabby condition of the Africans, some in western clothes, some tribally dressed, women with bundles on their heads and babes on their backs, thronging in their hundreds around the station or waiting in long queues for buses.

She's delighted by the up-beat tune a raggedly dressed skinny kid is playing on a penny whistle as he strolls confidently out of the station and along the street.

INT. TAXI. DAY.

Liz gets into the taxi with Pete and they drive off. She sinks back into her seat, heaves a great sigh. Shakes her Head. Pete takes her hand. Silence

LIZ

Are we going to your house now?

Pete squeezes her shoulder.

PETE

Our house.

EXT. A QUIET, LEAFY SUBURBAN STREET. DAY.

An elderly, sprawling bungalow, quaint colonial Dutch gable festooned with jasmine, Spanish designs in wrought iron at the windows, half concealed from the road by a jacaranda tree and colourful sub-tropical bushes. The taxi draws to the curb. The door opens, Liz gets out, very slowly taking off her sunglasses, a look of disbelief on her face.

LIZ

Oh Petey. Is this ours?

She laughs with delight. Pete wallows in her happiness. The

cab driver unloads their luggage, Pete pays him. The cab drives away.

INT. HOUSE. DAY

The front door opens and Pete, Liz in his arms, elbows his way in. The house is devoid of furniture. He carries her from room to room. Liz looks about her curiously.

PETE

Bit classier than Holloway Road...

LIZ

You said it was furnished.

PETE

It is.

He elbows another door open into a room, also empty except for a made-up double bed.

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Pete dumps Liz on the bed. She rolls over, lies on her back, arms outstretched to him, grinning.

LIZ

Aw... Pete...

He leans over her. She pulls him down on top of her, kisses him. They make love.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE. DAY.

The back door is unbolted and opens. Pete leads Liz by the hand out into the garden. Both are bare-footed, Pete shirtless. They walk around the unkempt garden. Pete waves at a bunch of trees.

PETE

Apples... apricots... grapes...

Liz puts her arm around Pete's waist. She's visibly awed and delighted by her new territory.

LIZ

Have you brought me to your Garden
of Eden my Pete my Adam my love my
husband?

They hold each other passionately as though they'll never let go. Over his shoulder, Liz notices two tumbledown out-houses at the bottom of the garden.

LIZ (CONT'D)

What's that?

PETE

What?

Pete turns.

PETE (CONT'D)

Oh.

If we had servants that's where they'd live.

A telephone starts ringing in the house.

PETE (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

Pete trots back to the house.

Liz walks slowly down the path to the servants' quarters.

They are two shabby, one-roomed apartments built of breeze block in the shade of a Plain tree. Liz wanders around them, peering through small grimy windows into empty, disused

rooms. The walls are stained with damp. She shivers, walks back into the warm sunlight and, soberly, thoughtfully, back to the house.

INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

Pete is sitting on the floor amongst the luggage talking on the telephone. Liz enters, wanders to the window and looks out through the wrought-iron bars.

PETE

Ask her yourself when you see her.

He listens patiently. Winks at Liz.

Yes, sure. Sure. I know. Give her my love. Bye.

He puts down the telephone.

LIZ

When's the interview?

PETE

Don't be like that. Don't make this harder for me than it already is.

LIZ

Harder for you?

She's not happy. She picks up a suitcase and lugs it towards the bedroom.

INT. THE BALCONY OF A MODERN APARTMENT. NIGHT.

A view of the Johannesburg night-skyline. Pete and Liz sit together on a couch.

BEN SIMMS, a bespectacled, middle-aged man, sits in an armchair across from his wife, bespectacled ROSE, the same age as her husband, a comfortable looking woman. She concentrates on her knitting. None of them speaks. They sit listening to the clack of Rose's needles. Inside the apartment, beyond the sliding glass doors, a middle-aged African woman, SELMA, is clearing the dinner table. Rose looks up, unsmiling, from her knitting for a moment.

ROSE

What about the children? That's what I'd like to know. What will the children be?

Pete and Liz exchange glances. Liz scarcely hides her

impatience. Pete offers her a cigarette and they light up.

Ben smiles at Liz. She smiles back.

LIZ

What will they be?

ROSE

Yes.

PETE

Leave off mum. We've just got
here...

BEN

Mum means a child needs to know
what religion it is.

LIZ

Oh. I see. I'd not really thought
about it.

BEN

You'd agree it would be better if
You and Pete were the same religion
wouldn't you?

LIZ

Of course... we've discussed it at
length haven't we Petey? I just
hadn't thought about children.

Ben is reassured, mildly pleased.

BEN

I'll speak to our Rabbi.
We'll see what we can do.

Ben leans forward, confidential, smiling. He pats Liz on the knee.

BEN (CONT'D)

I don't need to tell you it's
something that will make Mum and I
very happy.

A beautiful African girl of about nineteen, DORIS, a servant, steps out onto the balcony carrying a tray of coffee and cakes. Liz watches her. Pete looks at his watch, picks up a magazine and flicks through it unseeing. Doris stands before Rose offering her cake. She waves her away, smiles girlishly at Liz.

ROSE

Dad and I are on a diet. But you
eat, it's fresh today from
Glintzes.

Doris brings the tray to Liz.

LIZ

Thank you. What's your name?

Liz's question galvanizes attention. Doris glances at Rose, lowers her eyes, smiling shyly.

DORIS

Doris, madam.

Liz takes the coffee.

LIZ

Thanks Doris.

DORIS

Yes, madam.

Liz smiles. Doris serves Pete and leaves. Rose glowers after her.

ROSE

She's new. It's not easy finding good servants these days.

She sighs.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Thank God for Selma. She's been with us ever since we arrived. Heaven knows what I'd have done without her. And she cooks.

She raises her eyes to Liz.

ROSE (CONT'D)

You have to find one that can cook.
There's an agency in town. They'll
find you someone.

LIZ

We're not going to have servants.

ROSE

Don't be silly dear. Tell her
Peter.
Everyone has servants. They
don't cost much as long as they're
not stealing from you.

Liz draws deeply on her cigarette. She looks at Pete. He's
not paying attention.

BEN

It'll probably take you a little
time to get used to. It's a
different way of life out here.

EXT. BUSY JOHANNESBURG STREET. DAY.

Pete enters the modern reception hall of Soames & Styman Advertising.

INT. SOAMES AND STYMAN ADVERTISING AGENCY. DAY.

Pete gets in the 'Whites only' lift with a bunch of people.

INT. LIFT. DAY.

Pete in the lift with a bunch of smartly dressed men and women. They know him.

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr. Simms. Welcome home.

PETE

Thanks, Brenda

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

How's it feel to be a respectably
married man Simms?

PETE

Early days yet Mr. Vorster...

Pete is alone when he gets out at the top floor.

INT. CREATIVE DEPARTMENT, DAY.

An art studio of desks and drawing boards ranged up against the walls leaving a broad aisle between. Four men at desks, smoking, drinking coffee, reading the newspaper.

SANDY, smartly dressed, forty, pink and plump, has a pronounced English midland accent.

ANDREW, fifty-five, tall with a stoop, drawls upper-middle class English.

ROD, twenty-two, sharply dressed, clean shaven and crewcut, speaks with a guttural South African accent.

FLIPPY VAN ZIJL, also about twenty-two, short and plump, a Van Dyke beard on his chubby, amiable chin, speaks Afrikaans better than English.

They all look up as Pete enters.

PETE

Morning all. What's the score?

Andrew turns to Sandy

ANDREW

If I didn't know better, I'd say
that sounded like young Pete.

SANDY

Can't be. Didn't you hear? He was
found on the Pretoria Road
yesterday morning shagged to death.

Everyone's glad to see Pete. They stand and gather round to
shake his hand.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Welcome home you old bastard.
You look knackered. Take it easy.
If it's such hard work laddy you'd
be better off getting a Kaffir to
do it for you!

Laughter. Pete smiles, shakes his head, turns to the younger
men.

PETE

How are you Rod? Flippy... hoe
gaan dit?

ROD

Great Pete. Congratulations.
Welcome back.

FLIPPY

Goed danke Pete. D'is goed jou
weer te sien Engelsman.

ANDREW

Tony's been asking when to expect
you old boy.

Pete goes to his own desk. He picks up the telephone and
dials.

PETE

Hello Mr. Farquhar, it's Simms.
I'm in the office.

INT. TONY FARQUHAR'S OFFICE. DAY.

The furniture is modern, carefully chosen and expensive.
Farquhar, late forties, tall, elegantly dressed, is lying on
a chaise longue, eyes closed behind dark glasses, hands
folded on his stomach, is talking. He speaks with a weary,
upper-middle class drawl. Pete, smoking, sits in an easy
chair.

FARQUHAR

Ergol want to introduce themselves
to the natives... strange really...
Anyway... what we need is a
gimmick... a concept... something
simple and memorable that will make
the native population feel good
about Ergol petrol.
You're not dealing with the most

(MORE)

FARQUHAR (CONT'D)

educated of minds here. Nothing
too sophisticated.

Will you think about that for me?

PETE

Certainly.

Pete stands, walks to the door.

FARQUHAR

How's the wife dear boy?

Settled in?

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

The garden looks fairly orderly. The grass is cut and some of the flower beds have been dug over. It's late afternoon. Liz, deeply tanned, sunbathes in a bikini. A towel, sun-tan lotion, cigarettes, books and newspaper scattered around her. She rouses herself, yawning and stretching. She gets up and wanders towards the house.

INT. THE KITCHEN. DAY

The kitchen is now completely furnished with built in cupboards, refrigerator etc. The clock on the wall says five. She hurriedly prepares food, shoves things in the oven.

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

Liz strips off and looks at herself in the mirror. Twists around to see the contrast between her sunburned back and white bottom. She looks at herself with dissatisfaction for a few moments then steps into the shower.

INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

In the now furnished sitting room, Liz, freshly showered wearing a towel, wet hair slicked back, lights a cigarette and pours herself a drink. Outside, it's twilight.

INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

Liz and Pete sit eating dinner. Pete eats hungrily. Liz is moody. She picks at her food.

PETE

How was your day?

It's some moments before she replies.

LIZ

I finished the book. Wrote to mum.

Did my nails. Got a bit browner.

And yours?

PETE

Farquhar handed me the Ergol
account.

Liz is silent. She pushes her plate from her.

PETE (CONT'D)

They're the biggest oil producers
in Africa...

LIZ

Bully for you.

Pete looks up.

PETE

What's that supposed to mean?

Liz lights a cigarette.

LIZ

Sorry. I've been a bit out of
sorts lately.

Pete finishes eating. Pushes his plate away and refills the
wine glasses. Liz inhales, exhales. Sips her wine.

PETE

I spoke to Dad today. He said
there was no news from the Rabbi.

LIZ

Too bad. How's your mum?

She notes Pete's look of impatience

LIZ (CONT'D)

How's our mum?

PETE

Fine when I last spoke to her.
Having servant problems. She's
having to let Doris go.

LIZ

You mean she's firing her?

PETE

Yes.

LIZ

What'll she do?

PETE

She's got Selma.

LIZ

I mean Doris for chrissake. What
will Doris do when she's got no
job? Doesn't it mean she'll have to
leave Johannesburg?

(MORE)

LIZ (CONT'D)

Isn't there some bloody law about
it?

PETE

Yes.

LIZ

What a bloody idiotic country this
is!

LIZ drains her glass. Sits back.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Your... our mum's always telling us
to take a servant... We'll give
Doris a job? Not a real job...she
can help out if she likes... that
way she wouldn't have to leave
Johannesburg

Pete considers it.

LIZ (CONT'D)

She could live at the bottom of the
garden. I could tart the place up a
bit. Why don't you talk to her?

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Liz and Pete in bed. Pete is asleep, snoring gently. Liz lies awake, smoking a cigarette, gazing at the ceiling.

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

Pete drives up, parks the car in the driveway. The lights are on in the house and African jazz music is loud. He locks the car and goes into the house.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Music loud on the hi-fi, but no one in the room. PETE comes in, puts down his briefcase, walks through to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Liz is dancing a sexy African township dance, with Doris. A cigarette burns in an ashtray, glasses and an open bottle of sherry stand on the kitchen counter. Doris stops dancing when she sees Pete come in. She bows her head bashfully.

DORIS

Good evening master...

Liz, dancing, laughs.

LIZ

You sound like a Genii popping out
of a lamp. How many times do I have
to tell you...? his name's Peter.

Doris retreats shyly. Liz dances up to Pete.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Doris has been teaching me.
It's called Kwela.

Pete is annoyed and ill at ease.

DORIS

I will go see to the dinner.

LIZ

Thanks, pet.

INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete and Liz sit at the table laid for dinner. Silence.

Pete, moody, pours himself wine.

LIZ

What's up?

PETE

Nothing.

LIZ

You don't approve of me dancing
with the servant do you ?

The sound from the kitchen of a plate breaking on the floor.

PETE

Has she been drinking?

LIZ

A sip of cooking sherry. Nothing.

Calling out;

LIZ (CONT'D)

You all right Doris?

PETE

You shouldn't do that.

LIZ

What?

PETE

You shouldn't give her booze.
Africans aren't used to it.

(CONT'D)

LIZ

Darn' tootin' pardner! Them danged
Injuns jes'cain't hold their
liquor.
What Africans have you been
drinking with lately? How come
you're suddenly such a bloody
authority?

Pete is angry. He keeps his voice down so Doris can't hear.

PETE

Come off it Liz! You could get us
all into serious trouble.

Liz quietens down. She looks sadly at Pete. Raises her
glass.

LIZ

I'm sorry. Cheers

PETE

For chrissake,,,

LIZ

I said sorry. Let's drop it.

Doris comes in with food on a tray. Head bowed, she serves
Liz and Pete. She whispers

DORIS

I'm very sorry about the plate.

Liz smiles, touches Doris's arm.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Liz alone in bed in the darkened room. Sounds of knocking, tapping, scraping, penetrate from another part of the house.

INT. ANOTHER BEDROOM. DAY.

Pete is converting a small bedroom into a photographic darkroom.

INT. ART STUDIO. DAY.

Pete at his desk, a pile of African newspapers and magazines in front of him. He gazes at the cover picture of one of the magazines. A beautiful young Basuto woman in a bikini. Of the magazines, it is more professionally presented than the others. Its cover lay-out resembles Life magazine or Paris Match. Emblazoned in the box in the top left hand corner, the word DRUM.

Seated at the desk behind Pete, Sandy peers over Pete's shoulder, wondering what he's up to. He leaves what he's doing and saunters over to him. Looks at the cover girl.

SANDY

Wouldn't say no to a rasher or two
of that myself...

PETE

You'd get done under the Immorality
Act.

SANDY

Can't stop a man thinking. Can
they?

Sandy wanders back to his desk. Pete stares hard at the
cover picture. He reaches for the telephone.

INT. TONY FARQUHAR'S OFFICE. DAY.

Farquhar sits behind his elegant desk. He and PETE are
drinking coffee.

FARQUHAR

A black beauty competition.
I think you may have something
there. I'll put it to Styman.
I think it could be just what the
witch-doctor ordered. Yes.
Well done Peter.

INT. LIZ & PETE'S DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

Liz and Pete are sitting down to dinner. Pete, in self satisfied mood, draws a cork and pours wine. Liz, bored, watches the wine tumbling into the glasses. Doris is back and forth to the kitchen with plates and cutlery. Pete sips the wine.

PETE

How was your day?

Liz is prickly. She stares at the wine in her glass, is slow to answer.

LIZ

I got up after you'd gone
and there was so much to do I
couldn't face it and went back to
bed. OK?

PETE

Why don't you get out and about a
bit? Sandy's Doreen keeps asking
you.

LIZ
(INCREDULOUSLY)

Sandy's Doreen?

PETE

Why not?

LIZ

Do you seriously expect me to spend my time with that bigoted old bag? Listen to her racist drivel about how stupid her servants are and the cost of living?

Doris puts plates of food in front of Liz and Pete. She stands shyly waiting for Liz's attention. Liz looks up.

DORIS

My cousin is visiting from my home village. Is it OK for him to stay in my room tonight?

LIZ

For god's sake! Why the hell ask me Doris?

Doris hangs her head. Liz is ashamed. She takes Doris's hand. She sighs wearily, looking up at her.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I'm sorry pet. I'm just not feeling myself. Do what you like.

DORIS

Thank you Liz. Good night. Good night master Pete.

LIZ

He's not your master.

PETE

Night Doris.

Doris exits demurely. LIZ refills her glass. Drinks. PETE starts eating. LIZ ignores the plate of food and lights a cigarette.

LIZ

I'm sorry. I don't know how much more of this I can take.

It's beginning to get to me.

I can't sleep. I can't eat. I'm bad tempered.

I really don't mean to be pet.

Pete is conciliatory.

PETE

I told you it's going to take a little time to get used to things.

LIZ

I have such conflicting feelings about this place.

(MORE)

LIZ (CONT'D)

I hate it with a passion yet in
some unaccountable way
I feel ... I dunno... as though
I've come home.

Liz shrugs, laughs nervously, drains her glass, pours herself
another. Pete lights a cigarette. They sit in silence.
Slightly drunk, Liz's anxiety mellows into a faint smile.

LIZ (CONT'D)

It's me old working class
background luv - always identifying
with under-dogs.

Pause

LIZ (CONT'D)

How's it going at work? Did they
go for the beauty competition?

PETE

Farquhar said it was just what the
witch-doctor ordered.

Pete shakes his head. They both laugh.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

LIZ opens the wall cabinet and takes out a contraceptive
diaphragm. Switches off the light.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Liz makes love furiously with PETE. He has an orgasm, rolls over exhausted and is quickly snoring. LIZ lies in the dark, gazing at the ceiling.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

Liz is getting dressed. DOCTOR ELSA BLOOMENFELD, a shorthaired, stocky, bespectacled woman of about forty-five, sits behind her desk writing notes while Liz finishes dressing. Doctor Bloomenfeld speaks with a pronounced German accent.

DOCTOR

Sit down Mrs. Simms.

Liz sits in a chair the other side of the desk.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

There's absolutely nothing wrong
with you.

LIZ

Thank God for that.

The doctor puts down her pen, leans back in her chair looking sternly at Liz.

DOCTOR

Do you have orgasms Mrs. Simms?

Liz is startled. She's reticent, avoids the doctor's eyes.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Well do you?

LIZ (ALMOST INAUDIBLE)

No.

DOCTOR

With your husband?

LIZ

Not now.

DOCTOR

That's what's wrong with you. No wonder you can't sleep and have no appetite. Do you love him?

LIZ

Yes.

The doctor is unimpressed.

DOCTOR

What does this husband you love so much have to say? Don't you talk to him about it? Don't you complain?

Liz is nervous. She replies quietly.

LIZ

No.

DOCTOR

Why on earth not?

LIZ

I don't know. We just...

DOCTOR

Sex is not something to be ashamed
of. Orgasm is simply a question of
mechanics. Anyone can do it.

Bring this husband of yours in.

I'd like to talk to him.

Liz stands, picks up her purse. She nods.

EXT. DRUM OFFICES. DAY.

A shabby, two storey brick building in an industrial-looking part of Johannesburg. A cab draws to the curb. Pete gets out. He looks dubiously at the building, at the peeling paint, at the African youth on the flat roof taking a smoke in front of the fifteen-foot-high, dilapidated magazine logo... The youth sees Pete, hides his cigarette behind his back, moves out of sight. Pete enters the building.

INT. DRUM OFFICES. DAY.

A converted warehouse. Stationed at the entrance, the receptionist is the telephonist, POLLY NESSIM, a pretty, light skinned Asiatic. Behind her, about six men, five Africans one White, at desks.

ZEKE, 40, bespectacled, collar and tie, studiously at work at his typewriter.

NIMROD, 30 +, lanky, good-looking, habitually rolls a matchstick around between his teeth, relaxed, reading a book.

PETER MAGUBANI, 20, jeans and sneakers, is peering through a loop at contact sheets.

WILLIE MODISANE, 35, medium build, white shirt, abstract tie, sits on the corner of PETER's desk reading an American film magazine.

FRITZ SCHONBURG, 25, blond good-looking, German, working on a Camera with a screwdriver.

BOB GOSANI, 18, is watching FRITZ.

WILLIE (READING FROM THE MAGAZINE)

This John Wayne's too much. It's
estimated he's been responsible so
far for the movie deaths of two
thousand and fifteen extras - the
fifteen were white trash
gunslingers the rest were injuns.
Guess he has a race problem
but I love him.

Nimrod looks up at Pete's entrance

POLLY

Hello handsome. What can I do you
for?

Pete smiles.

PETE

Peter Simms for Mr. Schein. I have
an appointment.

Polly picks up the phone, plugs in a jack. She eyes Pete
predatorily as she speaks into the telephone.

POLLY

There's an Engelsman here for you.
Can I have him when you're through?
Thanks.

Polly puts down the phone.

POLLY (CONT'D)

He's in the glass cage.

Pete smiles. Polly swings around watching him walk across to the editor's office. The journalists are in a downbeat mood. Pete passes between them. They raise their heads from sombre thoughts, pause from their stories, from their negs and prints, their eyes following him curiously. No one smiles or greets him.

Apart from FRITZ the entire staff is black except ISAAC SCHEIN the editor. A shoulder-high glass partition divides his office from the rest of the warehouse.

INT. ISAAC SCHEIN'S OFFICE. DAY.

The desk is covered in galley proofs; in and out trays overflow with letters and envelopes. Past covers of the magazine decorate the walls along with a heavily marked progress chart and an assortment of scraps of paper bearing written and printed information.

Isaac Schein is in his late thirties, lean, average height, clean-shaven, short greying hair, a face that depends largely on its personality for its attractiveness. It's a far from humourless face but, like a clown's, it rarely actually smiles. He wears a suit.

His shoeless feet, in unmatched socks, are on the desk. He is deep in thought. He surfaces and stands as Pete approaches, waves him in. They shake hands.

ISAAC

Pete... Pete... don't tell me...

He wracks his brain.

PETE

Simms.

ISAAC

Simms. Of course. The beauty competition.

They both sit, Isaac behind his desk.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Related to the Durban Simmses are you?

PETE

I don't think so.

ISAAC

No. Where you from? London?

PETE

Yes.

ISAAC

Yes. Look. We've just had some bad news. My good friend and best reporter Henry Nxumalo has gone missing. We think he may have been murdered by an angry husband. Old Henry has an eye for a pretty woman.

PETE

I'm sorry.

ISAAC (SIGHS)

How long have you been here then?

PETE (IN CONDOLENCE)

Couple of years. Perhaps I should come back another time.

Isaac stands, looks out the window, down into the street.

ISAAC

Two years? How come we haven't met?

PETE

My wife and I don't know many people outside the office...

ISAAC

Come over here.

Pete joins him at the window.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

That fellow in the mack.

THEIR POV THE STREET.

A White man in a khaki mackintosh and felt hat is ambling down the street on the far side. He stops.

ISAAC

See him?

The man in the mackintosh looks up, sees them. He turns around and ambles back up the street.

PETE

Who is he?

ISAAC and PETE move away from the window and sit down.

ISAAC

A cop. Special branch. Monitors everyone that comes and goes.

Thought you ought to know.

A beauty contest. Let's see...

Isaac stands and shouts across the partition.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Willie?

Willie Modisane, looks up. Everyone looks up. Willie, fedora tipped to the back of his head.

WILLIE

Ja my baas. Ek Kom. Ek kom.

Willie enters unsmiling. He rolls like John Wayne when he walks.

ISAAC

William Modisane our social editor.

Peter Simms.

PETE and WILLIE shake hands. They all sit down.

WILLIE

Hi.

ISAAC

This young rooinek wants some help organizing a black beauty contest.

INT. BEN & ROSE'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Traditional, candle-lit, family Cedar. Pete and Liz and numerous other related men and women, around the table. Ben Simms intones a Hebrew prayer.

INT. DARKROOM. NIGHT.

In the monochrome safe-light, Pete is developing pictures of Liz. He slides the prints into the hypo and swills them around. He gazes at them. There's a sadness in her smile.

INT. PETE'S CAR. EVENING.

The sun is setting. Pete and Liz drive away from Johannesburg into the gathering dusk. They don't speak. There's dance music on the radio. Liz is in her own world.

PETE

Did you go to the doctor?

LIZ

Yes.

PETE

What did he say?

LIZ

She said there was nothing wrong
with me.

EXT. PETE'S CAR. NIGHT.

The car turns off a trunk road onto a country lane.

EXT. A FARM HOUSE. NIGHT.

A sprawling whitewashed and thatched farm house, windows ablaze with lights, laughter and music spilling out. Pete's car drives up and parks amongst many others.

INT. FARM HOUSE. NIGHT.

A sitting room, bohemian and comfortable, worn shabby by children and animals. A noisy, happy, multi racial crowd of people, predominantly white, drinks in hand, chat and joke animatedly above loud jazz music. A girl of ten, MAIVA, in her nightdress, dances with a young African woman. A boy of six, PAULY, chases CHARLIE, a large black Labrador, through the room and out into the garden. The staff of Drum are there as well as a number of other suited African men. Isaac Schein, in shirtsleeves and barefooted, is the host. This is his home.

The whites are all in their late thirties but still collegiate in behaviour. ISAAC hovers around LIZ who, surrounded by men, Black and White, is being generous and ebullient as she engages in animated political conversation.

A plain, slightly overweight woman of thirty-five, glass in hand, walks up to Pete. Draws him away from the group. She's arch.

HATTIE

So you're the overpaid advertising man from London?

PETE

Yes.

HATTIE

Bloody Isaac never introduces anyone. I'm Hattie Schein. He told me about you. Where did you live in London?

PETE

Regents Park Road just by the zoo. You know it?

HATTIE

That's where Isaac and I first met. He screwed me on Primrose Hill randy old sod. He said it was my duty to King and Country.

PETE

How did he figure that?

HATTIE

He was a pilot officer in the Air Force and I was a WAAF.

(MORE)

HATTIE (CONT'D)

He picked me up coming out of the
open air theatre.

PETE

What had you been to see?

HATTIE

As You Like It.

Pete laughs

PETE

Hardly the sort of play to get your
juices flowing.

HATTIE

No? What gets your juices flowing
then?

She lowers her eyelids.

A woman, JUDITH, joins them. Hattie is annoyed at her
intrusion.

JUDITH

Please don't let me interrupt.

HATTIE

Meet Judith van der Broek.
Peter Simms.

PETE

Hello Judith.

JUDITH

Isaac told me all about you.

Where's this wife of yours? I hear
she's a honey.

PETE

Here somewhere.

Pete and the two women look around the room.

JUDITH

You should keep your eye on her
jong. This lot turn into vampires
when there's fresh blood around.

Polly Nessim moves in on them.

POLLY

OK Engelsman. Let's dance.

Polly takes Pete away.

JUDITH

He's cute.

HATTIE

Where's that bloody Isaac?

EXT. SCHEIN'S GARDEN. NIGHT.

LIZ and ISAAC are walking away from the house, talking and laughing.

INT. SCHEIN'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

The party is in full swing. Jackets and shoes are off, everyone drunk and dancing to Township Jazz music. Liz dances the Kwela with Willie, the others dance around them, admiring them. Pete comes into the room and sees them just as the dance ends. Liz and Willie join him. Liz is beaming, breathless.

LIZ

Hello Pet...

Pete is uneasy.

PETE

Where've you been?

LIZ

Dancing with Willie. Didn't you see us?

They are distracted by an altercation developing in a corner between Isaac and Hattie, become noticeable in the lapse of music between records. Hattie is furious, Isaac a little shame faced. LIZ watches with interest.

HATTIE

You bastard! It's always the
bloody same! You make me
bloodywell sick!

ISAAC

What are you talking about Hatts?

Hattie flings out of the room. The void of silence following her exit is suddenly filled again with jumpy jazz music. Isaac shrugs, sips his wine, shuffles off on his own to the rhythm of the music.

Another of the staff of Drum, Nimrod, edges up to Willie, Liz and Pete. He's tall, slim, soft-eyed, with a careless grin. He rolls a match stick between his teeth. He smiles at Liz.

NIMROD

Care to dance?

Liz looks at Pete. He looks at his watch.

PETE

I think it's time we got going.

Liz shrugs and smiles at Nimrod

LIZ

Thanks anyway. Bye Willie

She kisses Willie on the cheek.

WILLIE

Bye Liz. Bye Pete. See you next
week?

PETE

I'll phone you. Bye.

Liz puts an arm around Pete's waist and they leave. Isaac is leading a group of whites singing a traditional Afrikaans student song in cacophonous competition with the jazz.

WILLIE

Quite a cherry eh?

Nimrod nods, sad eyed.

NIMROD

Didn't even ask my name.

INT. LIZ AND PETE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Pete gets into bed alone. He lies, eyes open, listening to the sounds of splashing water from the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Liz, by candlelight, lies in a bath of steaming, foaming water, eyes closed, gently caressing between her legs with a face-cloth.

EXT. A MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE. DAY.

Isaac dives into the clear, placid water of a lake. Liz follows him in. She strikes out for an island in the middle. Isaac follows.

Hattie sits dourly watching Isaac and Liz while Maiva and Pauly play with Charlie the black Labrador. Pete sits around taking snaps of them. Charlie bounds down to the edge of the lake, barking, jumps in the lake and paddles towards Liz and Isaac. The children run to the bank shouting for him to come back. Heavy summer storm clouds build on the horizon.

HATTIE

Maiva! Keep an eye on Pauly! He
can't swim.

PAULY

Yes I can.

MAIVA

No you can't.

PAULY

I can.

MAIVA

Mummy says you can't.

Maiva slaps Pauly's hand. He starts crying. Hattie gets up.

HATTIE

I didn't tell you to bloody hit
him!

Hattie picks up Pauly. Looks out to the middle of the lake at Isaac, Liz and the Labrador cavorting on the island. A roll of thunder.

INT. ISAAC'S STATION WAGON. DAY.

It's pouring. Pete, Hattie and the children sit in silence as the rain thunders on the roof of the car and streams down the windows. Hattie lights a cigarette.

HATTIE

Where the hell are they?

PETE

They've probably taken shelter.

Hattie looks dubiously at Pete then at her watch.

MAIVA

Don't worry mummy. It's just a
brief summer storm.

Hattie drags nervously at her cigarette.

HATTIE

I know sweetheart.

EXT. THE ROAD OUT OF THE MOUNTAINS. DAY.

Isaac's station wagon speeds along.

INT. ISAAC'S STATION WAGON. SAME DAY.

Isaac hums quietly to himself as he drives. Pete, Liz and Hattie sit in stony silence. Pauly's asleep on Hattie's lap.

MAIVA

Where were you daddy? We thought
you and Liz and Charley had got
drowneded didn't we mummy?

ISAAC

We weren't drowneded my sweet we
were sheltering from the storm.
Charlie found us a nice dry place.

HATTIE (ARCH)

Charlie's such a smart bloody dog.

MAIVA

Clever Charlie. D'you think
Charlie's a smart bloody dog Liz?

LIZ

Smarter than average.

MAIVA

Pete? Do you think Charlie's

HATTIE

For god's sake shut up Maiva!

Maiva starts to cry.

ISAAC

Now look what you've done.

Hattie gives Isaac a blistering look.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG SKYLINE. DAY.

The sun is setting. The station wagon speeds towards Johannesburg silhouetted on the skyline.

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Isaac's Station wagon drives up. Liz and Pete get out, doors slam, car drives off. Liz and Pete enter the house.

INT. LOUNGE. NIGHT.

Pete is pouring himself a drink. Liz slumps into an armchair.

PETE

Want a drink?

LIZ

Thanks.

Pete pours one for LIZ and hands it to her.

PETE

Where did you and Isaac get to?

LIZ turns on him viciously.

LIZ

Don't you start for Christ's sake!

She slams the glass on the table and strides out of the room.
Sounds from the bathroom of the shower being turned on.

Pete looks glum. He sips his drink.

INT. DRUM RECEPTION. DAY.

Polly at the desk, a queue of young women, mostly African, a few Asian, all the way down to the street. Polly writes on a pad, tears it off handing it to the girl in line. She points behind her.

POLLY

Give this to Willie Modisane
beautiful.

Polly looks up at the young woman next in line.

POLLY (CONT'D)

Name age and place of birth
sweetie?

The first young girl goes past Polly into the Drum office.

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY

Next to a make-shift changing cubicle, a roll of no-seam paper taped out onto the floor. On the no-seam, under a blaze of photo-flood lights, a beautiful young African girl poses in her bikini for photographer Fritz.

Willie and Pete sit close by, watching. Apart from an occasional ribald comment or a low wolf-whistle, the rest of the office functions much as usual. The usual staccato of typewriters, phones ringing and being answered, copy boys coming and going.

The young girl with Polly's slip of paper has been directed over to Willie and now stands shyly before him. He smiles and takes the piece of paper. He looks her up and down approvingly. Addresses her in Zulu pointing to the cubicle.

WILLIE

Go in there my beautiful child and
take off your clothes.

GIRL

Do I have to be naked in front of
this Whiteman?

WILLIE

Not naked. In a bathing costume.

GIRL

I don't like it in front of a
whiteman.

WILLIE

It's all right. You have my word
on it. He's a friend.

The girl looks at Pete who wonders what's going on. The girl
turns back to Willie, smiles.

GIRL

He looks a bit like Rock Hudson.

She disappears into the cubicle.

PETE

Is there a problem?

WILLIE

She thinks you look a bit like Rock
Hudson.

INT. PETE'S DARKROOM. NIGHT.

Pete is printing up pictures from the picnic. One is coming up in the developer, a picture of the kids squabbling at the lakeside. In the background, in the lake. The soft focus image of Isaac and Liz with each other, leaping about and laughing, is growing more and more distinct.

INT. SOAMES & STYMAN BOARDROOM. DAY.

Pete is addressing a meeting of business men. Tony Farquhar and Hannes Styman, GRAHAM ROADS, fifty-five-year-old advertising director of Ergol, his assistant STOFFEL VAN RIEBECK and a secretary taking notes. Pete's delivery is enthusiastic.

PETE

The grand finale will be the biggest stage event Johannesburg has ever seen. Popular bands... vocal groups... dancing... everything building to the climax of the show... the announcement of the judges' choice for Miss Ergol 1956.

Silence around the table. Eyes shift hesitantly towards Rodes. Everyone awaits his reaction.

RODES

I think it's great. Congratulations
Peter. What do you think Hannes?

Hannes Styman smiles.

STYMAN

We think it fits the bill.

RODES

Stoffel?

VAN RIEBECK

I like it Mr. Rodes. I wonder
however what Mr. Simms means when
he says the biggest stage event
Johannesburg has ever seen. Does
he mean to stage the event in
Johannesburg itself?

Everyone looks at Pete.

PETE

When I said Johannesburg I meant
black Johannesburg.

VAN RIEBECK

So where would you hold it then?

PETE

In Sophiatown.

VAN RIEBECK

In the Township?

RODES

Is it legal Hannes?

STYMAN

We've double checked with the
police.

RODES

Then let's get on with it.

Rhodes stands. Everyone stands.

EXT. SOPHIATOWN. EVENING.

The sun is setting behind the well worn houses and corrugated iron shacks of the township. Smoke from the fires of street vendors, cooking and selling cobs of roast corn, hangs like a thin veil across the landscape. A car, recognizably Pete's, rocks and rolls its way down the rutted, litter-strewn street. Passers-by watch it, curious. Some call out insults in Zulu.

INT. PETE'S CAR. EVENING.

Pete drives, Liz next to him, Willie gives directions from the back seat.

WILLIE

Sop at the red door. You can park here. The car will be safe.

Pete pulls up at the red door. Willie gets out.

EXT. WILLIE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

Willie thumps on the red-painted corrugated iron door and waits. Someone comes, and they exchange words in Zulu.

CHILD (V.O.)

Who?

WILLIE

Willie. Come on Josh. Open up.

CHILD (V.O.)

OK.

Bolts are drawn and the door grates open. A small boy of ten yaers, Joshua, greets him, smiling. They continue in Zulu.

WILLIE

Greetings Josh. How goes it?

JOSHUA

It goes well Willie.

Willie beckons to LIZ and PETE in the car. They get out. Pete locks the doors. They go through the door into Willie's back yard.

EXT. WILLIE'S BACK YARD. EVENING.

Joshua pushes the door closed and slides home the bolts. The yard is small and untidy and backs on to a patch-worked, dilapidated, two room, tin roofed house. Each room has it's own door onto the dirt yard.

WILLIE

This is my little brother Josh.

He addresses Josh in Zulu.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

These are my friends from England
Pete and LIZ. Greet them in
English. Go on. You can do it.

Joshua smiles shyly and runs into the house.

A middle-aged woman, MA WILLIE, meets him in the doorway. The boy hides behind her skirt, peeking out at the strangers. She addresses Willie in Zulu.

MA WILLIE

You are early.

Willie introduces Liz and Pete to Ma Willie.

WILLIE

This is Liz. This is Pete.

And then in English to Liz and Pete.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Meet my mother. Ma Willie.

They shake hands. Willie addresses Ma Willie in Zulu.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Has Gerhard arrived yet?

MA WILLIE

Not yet and just as well. Zena has only now finished laying out the food. Ask your friends if they would like to come in for a sip before they eat.

She smiles at them. Willie makes a wry face.

WILLIE

With respect Ma I have a nice bottle of wine for them in the fridge.

Ma Willie shrugs and goes indoors.

LIZ

What did she say?

WILLIE

She was offering you African beer.

She brews it herself and sells it.

It's illegal but it's a living.

INT. WILLIE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

A small room. A large, iron-framed bed occupies one entire corner, a refrigerator another, a third corner curtained off for clothes. The remaining floor space is filled with an easy-chair, some stools, a coffee table and a new portable record player. Against a wall are shelves of books and records, the walls themselves covered with film posters, mostly westerns, and an occasional postcard reproduction of an Impressionist painting. The table is laid with little sandwiches, olives, smoked salmon etc.

WILLIE

It ain't much folks but it's home.

Make yourselves comfortable. Let

me have your coat Liz.

She hands Willie her jacket. He hangs it behind the curtain with his hat.

Goes to the refrigerator and takes out a bottle of wine, opens it and pours three glasses. He hands them around. He switches on the record player puts on a record and out comes Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Cheers.

They all drink as they listen to Beethoven and start breaking into the food. A knock on the door and Willie's on his feet. He lays his head close to the door.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Yes?

A voice mumbles. Willie opens the door. A short, stocky African, Shortstraw, pokes his head in, smiles and nods to Liz and Pete, speaks in Zulu to Willie.

SHORTSTRAW

Saw the car.

Willie is cool. Shortstraw shuffles his feet. Smiles again at Liz and Pete.

SHORTSTRAW (CONT'D)

What's that noise, man?

He points to the record player.

WILLIE

Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Shortstraw makes a wry face.

SHORTSTRAW

What could you expect with a name
like that. Come on man... invite
me in for a little drink to meet
your friends.

Willie capitulates, closes the door behind Shortstraw.
Shortstraw shakes hands with Liz and Pete and sits down.
Willie pours him a glass of wine. He drinks. There's a
knock at the door. Willie goes through the same procedure.
This time his face lights up as he opens the door. A tall,
heavily built, bearded whiteman wearing a beret enters.
GERHARD PLOTZ is in his late twenties. He keeps his beret
on, speaks perfect English in a deep, resonant voice with a
German accent.

PLOTZ

Sorry I'm late. Got held up.

WILLIE

You been in Africa too long boetie.
You're running on African time.

Laughter. Plotz acknowledges Shortstraw. They shake hands
in the African manner, gripping each other's thumb.

PLOTZ

Shortstraw. How goes it?

SHORTSTRAW

Nice to see you Gerhard. How's
tricks?

WILLIE

Meet Liz and Pete Simms. Gerhard
Plotz.

Plotz shakes hands with Liz and Pete. He addresses Liz.

PLOTZ

I've seen you before.

Liz looks at him, smiling quizzically.

LIZ

Where?

PLOTZ

Main Stream Records.

LIZ

Small world.

PETE

Where are you from Gerhard?

PLOTZ

Planet Earth.

Laughter. Plotz pulls a half pint bottle of brandy from his pocket and hands it to Willie.

WILLIE

Thanks. Have something to eat.

He offers Plotz the plate of sandwiches. Plotz takes one. Shortstraw eyes the sandwiches hungrily. Willie admonishes him in Zulu.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Hands off Shortstraw. Have a drink
but the food's for the guests.

There's a knock at the door. Willie shrugs, gets up and goes to the door. He opens it to two pretty young girls. They smile and talk to Willie in Zulu.

GIRLS

We saw the car. Thought you were
having a party.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER TIME.

Charlie Parker is trilling up and down the be-bop scales at a pace. The room has filled with numerous African, young men and women, dropping by to see what's happening at Willie's.

They sit around the room sipping wine, Brandy, beer, smoking, some of them chatting, some of them staring curiously at Willies's white guests. Everyone is a little drunk. The food is finished and a number of bottles empty. Plotz is in conversation with Liz and Pete.

PLOTZ

Willie tells me you're organizing
the beauty competition in Drum

PETE

He's doing the organizing.

PLOTZ

It's ironic.

PETE

What?

PLOTZ

An ugly white racist company like
Ergol representing itself as a
beautiful African woman.

PETE

I hadn't looked at it like that.

LIZ

You don't think it's the greatest
idea then?

PLOTZ

If what I thought made any
difference there'd be a few changes
around here I can tell you. This
country has gone completely off its
rocker. To be rational is a
treasonable offense.

LIZ

What can we do about it?

PLOTZ

You can do what you like. I've got
troubles of my own.

A girl remonstrates with Willie in Zulu.

GIRL

Willie. Enough of this music. We
can't dance to it. Put on
something we can dance to.

ANOTHER GIRL

Give us some Kwela Willie.

WILLIE

OK girls. Try this.

Willie selects a record and puts it on the record player. The smoke filled room starts to bounce to an African rhythm. People get up and find space to dance. Willie invites Liz. The Africans are delighted by the way Liz dances. They clap and dance around her. Shortstraw leans over to Pete, smiling.

SHORTSTRAW

Wheee! That Lizzy. She's like an
African girl!

Willie leaves Liz dancing while he goes to answer the door letting in another Africa. It's Nimrod, sad eyed, smiling, rolling a matchstick between his teeth. He nods to Plotz and Pete and admires Liz's dancing. She sees him. Remembers him. Smiles.

LIZ

Didn't you want to dance?

Nimrod starts dancing, edging in on the crowded floor towards her. They dance in front of each other, checking each other out. There's a hammering on the door. Willie opens it. He retreats slowly into the room before an AFRICAN POLICE CONSTABLE, assegai in one hand, a prisoner handcuffed to the other. Everyone looks. The chatter suddenly stops. The music stops. Willie slides a whisky bottle into his pocket. The Constable comes further into the room. He addresses Willie in Zulu.

CONSTABLE

What's going on Willie? This all
looks a bit illegal if you ask me.

WILLIE

Just a few friends.

CONSTABLE

White friends eh?

WILLIE

Nothing illegal in that.

The Constable picks up an empty glass and smells it.

CONSTABLE

What is this everyone's drinking?

WILLIE

Like a spot? It's very good.

As they talk, people are muttering farewells and sidling out
the door.

CONSTABLE

Always said you were a gent,
Willie. Don't mind if I do.

Liz and Pete watch them apprehensively, not understanding the
exchange between the cop and Willie. Nimrod, unperturbed,
twirls the matchstick between his lips.

Willie sits the cop in the easy chair, his handcuffed prisoner still attached to him squatting at his side, and pours him a stiff drink. And then another. Everyone watches in silence.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)

This is fine hooch my boy. What
happened to the music,

Willie puts the African jazz music on again.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)

Smokes?

Willie finds him a cigarette and a light. The Constable drains his glass and stands, his prisoner with him. He cocks his head, rocking to the music. Eyes closed, he smiles and starts dancing. He and his prisoner dance handcuffed together. Liz and Nimrod join them. Then Willie, Pete and the girls and Plotz, still wearing his beret, everyone dancing and having a good time again.

INT. STUDIO AT SOAMES & STYMAN. DAY.

A middle-aged African in white jacket, NATHAN, collects empty coffee cups. Everyone is bent to the drawing board, working. Pete is at Rod's desk looking at photographs of a happy African family in a gleaming new Chevrolet, filling up with Ergol at a petrol station.

PETE

Keep the pic big and reverse out the headline. You won't need much space at the bottom. There won't be very much copy.

SANDY

Why bother with copy at all? The monkeys can't read. Nathan my boy can you read?

Nathan picks up Sandy's cup, shakes his head without looking up.

NATHAN

Haikona baas.

SANDY

What petrol do you use in your car Nathan?

Nathan smiles, shakes his lowered head.

NATHAN

Oooh. Ek het ni a car ni my baas.

SANDY

Baas Simms thinks you have. He thinks you've got a brand new fifty five Chevy.

Laughter. Nathan shakes his head as he leaves.

SANDY (CONT'D)

It's irresponsible running ads like that. Gives these monkeys ideas above their station. What d'you say Andrew?

ANDREW replies without looking up from his work.

ANDREW

Rather old boy. Give 'em an arm they'll take a leg. Look what's happening in Kenya. We wouldn't want that Mau Mau business down here would we?

SANDY

Not bloody likely.

Pete and Rod exchange looks of resignation.

EXT. A MAIN STREET, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

A warm, sunny day. A colorful, busy, thriving scene. Liz walking down the street, pauses to watch an African road gang, stripped to the waist, brown muscular torsos sweating, swinging their pickaxes in perfect rhythm to the song they chant.

ROAD GANG

Ubulungu goddam....

ubulungu goddam goddam!

Passers-by, Blacks and Whites, look at Liz, wondering what has her so intrigued. She stops a passing African. He's surprised and curious.

LIZ

What are they singing?

The African looks up and down the street, as though fearful of being seen talking to her. He smiles.

AFRICAN

They sing "Whiteman goddam" missus.

He hurries off smiling, shaking his head.

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY.

Liz walks through the fire doors.

POLLY

Morning Liz.

LIZ

Morning Polly. Isaac at home?

POLLY

Go right through sweetheart.

Liz goes through into the main office. Nimrod, at work at his desk, looks up surprised, smiling. He takes the match stick from his mouth.

NIMROD

Hey Liz. What are you doing here?

Liz smiles, pauses at his desk

LIZ

That was quite an evening at Willie's.

It's a pity we didn't get a chance to talk. Isaac says you write poetry.

NIMROD

He was kidding you.

LIZ

He says it's good. Can I read some?

NIMROD

I don't think so. They're really not...

INT. ISAAC'S OFFICE. DAY.

Through the glass partition, Isaac, moody, watches LIZ talking to Nimrod.

ISAAC'S POV,

Liz writes something on a scrap of paper and hands it to Nimrod. Touching him on the shoulder, she walks towards Isaac's office. Nimrod, smiling, watches her go. He twiddles the matchstick between his teeth, folds the scrap of paper and puts it in his shirt pocket.

INT. ISAAC'S OFFICE. SAME TIME

Liz walks in smiling. Closes the door behind her.

ISAAC

Hi.

LIZ

You look glum. What's the matter?

ISAAC

I don't like you being nice to other men.

LIZ

Shush. Poor Isaac. Are you jealous?

ISAAC

Maybe.

LIZ

Are you serious?

ISAAC

Maybe.

Liz sits down, smiles at Isaac sympathetically.

LIZ

You know I'm a respectably married
woman.

Isaac looks at his watch.

ISAAC

What about lunch? I'm starving.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. SAME DAY.

The blinds are drawn. Liz and Isaac are making love on the
bed, Liz gazing at the ceiling.

INT. LIZ AND PETE'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete is replenishing Nimrod's glass with brandy. LIZ comes
out of the kitchen with a tray of ice. She puts ice into
Nimrod's glass. He sips at it.

NIMROD

You're in a dangerous situation.
You know very little about us. You
hardly know we exist. We know
everything about you down to the
most intimate details of your
family life. You give your children
into our care. You're very
trusting.

PETE

Should we all get out then? That's
the logical conclusion isn't it?

NIMROD

It's up to you. None of us knows
how it's going to work out...
yes... I'd get out if I were you.

Nimrod drains his glass and gets to his feet.

NIMROD (CONT'D)

I've got to get going...

He scratches his head, grimaces.

NIMROD (CONT'D)

Write me a note, Pete... in case
the cops stop me.

Pete's embarrassed. He gets some paper and a pen.

PETE

What should it say?

NIMROD

This boy Nimrod is in my
employ. He has been working late
for me and is on his way home.
Then sign it employer.

Pete writes and signs and folds the piece of paper. Nimrod
pockets it without looking at it. They shake hands.

LIZ

How will you get home?

NIMROD

Walk.

LIZ

It's miles! Pete'll run you.

PETE

Sure...

NIMROD

It's OK. I like to walk at night.
It'll clear my head. Good night
Pete. Thanks for dinner.

PETE

Take care.

LIZ

I'll see you out.

Liz and Nimrod exit. Pete picks up the empty brandy bottle.
Shakes his head.

EXT. LIZ AND PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Liz and Nimrod stand in the dark at the door of the house.
She holds his hand, looks up into his sad eyes, his smile.
She speaks softly to him.

LIZ

I wish you'd let Pete drive you
home.

NIMROD

Thanks. I'll be OK

Silence.

LIZ

So you think everyone should leave?

NIMROD

Everyone but you and me.

They embrace and kiss.

INT. KITCHEN, ISAAC'S HOUSE. DAY.

Hattie is pouring coffee. Isaac, in worn out week-end clothes, slouches at the kitchen table reading a newspaper. The servant, MATILDA, washes clothes at the sink.

HATTIE

Want a cup. Matilda

MATILDA

No thanks.

Isaac and Hattie sip their coffee either side of the newspaper. Isaac hums quietly to himself, Hattie lights a cigarette.

HATTIE

Haven't seen much of the Simms lately. What's happened to them? One minute they're best friends then suddenly they're not around anymore.

Isaac grunts from behind the newspaper.

ISAAC

D'you have to smoke? Have you any
idea what it's doing to your lungs?

Silence.

HATTIE

Pete's pissed off at you for paying
so much attention to Liz. I bet
that's it.

No reply from Isaac.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

That's it isn't it? I'm right
aren't I?

ISAAC

Don't be so foolish woman.

Isaac goes on reading. Hattie smokes and sips coffee, her
mind working furiously.

HATTIE (WITH GROWING SUSPICION)

Of course. You've been screwing
her haven't you?

Isaac lowers the paper.

ISAAC

Jesus Hats! This is Saturday
morning! This is my time!

HATTIE

It was her at the party you
bastard! Wasn't it?

ISAAC

What party?

HATTIE

And at the lake! You screwed her
up at the lake you rotten sod.

ISAAC

Hatts...

HATTIE

And he knows about it! That's why
they don't come around!

ISAAC

Nonsense.

HATTIE

You can't fool me you bastard. The
slut! Are you still screwing her?
I'm going to call them...

Hattie stands and goes to the telephone. Isaac deflates, the clown departs. He looks out the window at the dog playing with the children. Matilda is hanging up the washing.

ISAAC

There was something but it's over.

Hattie puts down the telephone and bursts into tears.

HATTIE

You really are a fucking bastard.

You're always doing this to me.

Isaac gets up, shrugs and goes out into the garden.

Hattie, through her tears and cigarette smoke, sees him playing with the dog and children. Matilda is still hanging up the washing.

INT. HANNES STYMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Styman, Farquhar, Pete and three other executives sit around a conference table. Styman reads from a letter.

STYMAN

Our research has found the campaign to be an unmitigated success. The advertisements scored above average for brand name recall.

The beauty competition running in Drum Magazine, however, surpassed

(MORE)

STYMAN (CONT'D)

all known figures. Ninety percent of readers interviewed knew our name and liked it. The board have asked me to immediately extend the campaign nationally and they would like to see proposals and costs for a similar one for the Rhodesian market at your earliest convenience. Signed Graham Rodes. Advertising director.

Styman lays the letter gently on the desk.

STYMAN (CONT'D)

That gentlemen is what I call success. Congratulations all round. I don't need to tell you how pleased I am. How's the final selection of contestants coming along Peter? How are the arrangements for the free-for-all at the... er...

PETE

The Odin cinema sir. It'll be a Sunday. I've agreed a fee of a hundred and fifty pounds for the day including rehearsal time. I'm

(MORE)

PETE (CONT'D)

talking to someone at Drum about getting bands and singing groups together. It should be a good party.

STYMAN

Well done Peter. You're becoming quite a mister show-business.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH-RISE. NIGHT.

Establish high-rise. Pete's car draws to the curb and parks. Pete and Liz get out, lock doors, walk into the lobby of the apartment block.

INT. 11TH FLOOR HALLWAY. NIGHT.

A number of people in the elevator as it opens. Liz and Pete and another couple step out. Liz and Pete walk down the corridor searching for an apartment number. The other couple stop at a door. While they unlock it, they watch Liz and Pete suspiciously.

OTHER COUPLE'S POV.

They watch Liz and Pete find the door they're looking for and ring the bell. They see the door being opened by a beautiful light-skinned Basuto servant woman of about twenty-five.

GIRL

Ja my baas?

PETE

Mister Plotz is expecting us.

GIRL

Wait a moment please.

The girl goes and Plotz comes to the door. Welcomes them inside.

PLOTZ

Hello. Come in.

Plotz looks up and down the hall.

PLOTZ'S POV.

The door down the hall closes.

INT. PLOTZ'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

The room is plain and unpretentious. There's an absence of pictures or plants. A table with ash trays and two half empty glasses. The kitchen door is open, the African girl can be seen pottering around making coffee. Plotz waves Pete and Liz to sit. He sits down and offers them cigarettes which they take and light. Liz leans over, smiling, her voice low.

LIZ

I wouldn't have thought you'd have a servant Gerhard. Not even a pretty one.

PLOTZ

You would be right. I don't.

Pause while LIZ tries to put two and two together.

LIZ

Who's the lady in the kitchen then?

PLOTZ

Miriam Lesotho.

Pete and Liz look at each other and burst out laughing. Miriam comes in with a tray of coffee. She no longer wears her shoes or the statutory head-scarf. She puts the tray on the table, pours the coffee then hands the cups around.

MIRIAM

Help yourselves to cream and sugar.
What's so funny?

PLOTZ

They thought you were the servant.

MIRIAM

It's OK. You thought what you were
meant to think. The performance
was not for you it was for that
couple down the hall.

PLOTZ

When Miriam is here she pretends to
be what anyone would expect her to
be.

Liz, grinning with admiration, sticks out her hand

LIZ

I'm Liz.

MIRIAM

This boy's so bad with
introductions. Nice to meet you
Liz.

LIZ

We just bought your latest record.
It's tremendous.

PETE

I'm Pete. It's an honor.

MIRIAM

What nice friends you have Gerhard.

Plotz is at the hi-fi selecting a record.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

Why don't you put on the new one?

Gerhard puts it on.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

I just finished recording this one
this afternoon.

The music comes on and Miriam immediately gets caught up in it, starts singing over it, swaying and dancing. Liz claps in time to the music, kicks off her shoes, gets up and starts dancing. Miriam admires the way Liz moves.

PLOTZ

Keep it down girls.

The girls dance together while Plotz and Pete watch.

PETE

I suppose you have to be pretty
careful?

Plotz shrugs.

PLOTZ

You have to be pretty careful
whatever you do in this country.

PETE

But right here in the middle of
town?

PLOTZ

Where would you least expect a
black and white to be living
together?
The idea you can get jailed for
making love to someone the wrong
colour is pure Kafka.

PETE

Where are you from... on the
planet?

PLOTZ

Zurich.

PETE

Why did you leave?

PLOTZ

The draft.

PETE

That's why I'm here.

My parents emigrated here while I was still at Art School, so I now have a legitimate way out of conscription.

I'm joining my family.

Plotz nods his understanding

PETE (CONT'D)

Why did you choose South Africa Gerhard?

PLOTZ

I'm just crazy about South African women.

EXT. LIZ AND PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

A warm summer's afternoon. Liz and Pete are entertaining Pete's mother and father, Ben and Rose Simms, to tea. An umbrella-shaded table and chairs. Tea and cake on the table. Liz is serving. Pete is taking snaps.

Rose is facing down the garden towards the servants' quarters. She looks up from her knitting.

ROSE'S POV.

Doris comes out of the servant's quarters to hang up her washing

ROSE

Doris not working today?

PETE

It's her day off.

ROSE

She's pregnant you know.

LIZ

She's not. Is she? How do you know?

BEN

Rose is never wrong about these things.

ROSE

Just look at her.

Everyone turns to look.

EVERYONE'S POV.

DORIS finishes hanging the washing and goes inside. A young African man comes out to empty a dustbin.

ROSE (CONT'D)

And there's the father

The young African goes back into the house.

LIZ

Zack? He's Doris's cousin.

ROSE

Cousin my eye. He's the father
take my word for it. What's he
doing here?

PETE

He needed a place to stay and a job
so we let him take care of the
garden.

ROSE

Get rid of him.

LIZ

If he's the father as you seem to
think - isn't this the best place
for him to be?

BEN

You youngsters must be careful.
Mum's right. They don't think the
way we do... about responsibility
and things like that.

ROSE

You think you're doing them a good
turn and look what happens. If I
were you I'd send them packing
before you have a whole tribe
camping at the bottom of the
garden.

PETE

More tea mum?

LIZ

I'll get some hot water.

Liz, seething, goes back to the house.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Liz puts the kettle down on the hob. She picks up a pack of
cigarettes, nervously pulls one out and lights up.

INT. BEDROOM. SAME TIME.

The curtains are drawn, the room in shadows. Liz is lying on the bed, smoking. Pete enters.

LIZ

Are they still here?

Pete sits beside her.

PETE

Come on. They'll be gone soon.

LIZ

Sorry. I've had my daily dose of hypocrisy. You know what happens when I go over my limit.

PETE

Liz...

LIZ

The registrar of marriages didn't say anything about parents. They were not in the deal. They're your parents not mine so go and take care of them and leave me out of it. OK?

Pete leaves. Liz lies on the bed smoking her cigarette, gazing at leafy patterns on the ceiling.

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Pete parks the car in the drive and enters the house. He's tired. The house is in darkness.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete slings his briefcase onto a chair. Turns on the lights. He takes off his jacket and pours himself a drink. He wanders into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Pete puts on the light. Looks in the oven. Looks in the refrigerator.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Pete switches on the light. He looks at his tired face in the mirror on the cabinet, feels his shadowed chin. He rinses his hands and face. Before leaving, he opens the cabinet, looks inside and closes it again. He switches off the light.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete loosens his tie and flops into an armchair sipping his drink, pensive.

TIME DISSOLVE

Pete awakens in the armchair. The sounds of a car driving up, doors slamming and the car leaving again. The front door being unlocked. Liz hurries into the room, apologetic. Pete rouses himself, looks at his watch.

LIZ

I'm sorry darling. Did you get yourself something to eat?

PETE

Where the hell've you been?

LIZ

You know where I've been. I told you I was having dinner with Miriam and Gerhard.

PETE

Until this hour?

LIZ

You know how it is at Gerhard's. A few people drop by and suddenly it's a party

PETE

You might have called.

LIZ

I did. Several times. You weren't here. I imagined you'd got caught up at the office or something.

Like a cuppa?

Liz goes off to the kitchen. Pete lights a cigarette.

LIZ VO

I asked Miriam about doing the Ergol finale.

PETE

And?

LIZ (V.O.)

She'd love to! Miriam thinks your a charmer.

She's going down to Durban this week end for a concert and she's invited us to drive down with her and Gerhard tomorrow evening. What do you think?

PETE

Damn. I can't.

Liz returns with two mugs of tea. Puts one down by Pete.

LIZ

Why not?

PETE

The agency's sending me up to
Bulawayo for a meeting. I don't
think I can get back in time.

LIZ

So we'll go to Bulawayo instead.
What time's the plane?

Liz sips her tea.

PETE

It's best I go on my own.

LIZ

We could see a bit of Rhodesia.
We could see the Zimbabwe Ruins.
Wouldn't you like that?

Pete doesn't respond. Liz puts her tea down.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Oh. You mean they wouldn't like
it.

PETE

It's only for a few hours for
chrissake. It's hardly worth making
a fuss about.

LIZ

Baas Styman thinks I might shoot
off my mouth is that it?
Is that what you think too?

PETE

Come off it LIZ...

LIZ walks out of the room into the bedroom slamming the door
behind her.

INT. AN OFFICE RECEPTION ROOM. DAY.

A dozen or so men, two or three women, stand drinking
cocktails and eating canapés. Pete is introduced all round.
He responds charmingly to the chit-chat of the people he's
meeting but it's clear his mind is elsewhere. Pete excuses
himself, makes his way to the telephone and places a call. He
waits.

PETE

Hi. It's me. I'm sorry. Yes.
I'm desperately bored and missing
you. I want to come with you to
Durban. I think I can make it.
There's a plane that gets me back
by six. I'll be home by seven at
the latest.
What time are they picking you up?
They can wait a few minutes can't
they? I'll be as quick as I can OK?
I love you. Bye.

Pete replaces the telephone, a little anxious.

INT. THE OFFICE RECEPTION ROOM. DAY.

Pete plays impatiently with a pencil. Looks at his watch.

EXT. BULAWAYO AIRPORT. NIGHT.

PETE skids to a stop at the check-in. The plane has left.
The next is in an hour.

EXT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT, JOHANNESBURG. SAME NIGHT.

A passenger plane lands.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT. SAME NIGHT.

Pete deplanes and runs into the terminal to a phone booth. He has to wait in line.

INT. LIZ & PETE'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Liz sits at the desk writing a note. She looks at her watch. An overnight bag sits by the door. Outside, the sound of a car pulling up. It blows its horn. Liz bites her lip. Hurries around. Places the note she's been writing under the table lamp. Looks at the telephone. Shrugs. Picks up her bag. The car outside blows its horn. She grabs her purse, switches out all the lights except the table lamp and leaves. The car can be heard driving away. Under the table lamp is the note.

NOTE

Dear Pete. What happened to you?
We waited as long as we could.
Everyone's terribly disappointed
but we had to go because of
Miriam's schedule. I'll call you.
Love.

The telephone starts ringing.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT PHONE BOOTH. NIGHT.

Pete on the phone, listens to the unanswered signal at the other end. He slams down the phone, walks impatiently out of the booth.

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. SAME NIGHT.

Taxi pulls up at the house, Pete gets out. The house is in almost complete darkness. He enters.

INT. SITTING ROOM. SAME NIGHT.

The only light is from the table lamp. Lying under the lamp, the note. Pete picks it up and reads it. He sinks into an armchair, rereads the note. He sits, thinking for a few moments, gets up and goes into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM. SAME NIGHT.

Pete switches on the light and opens the bathroom cabinet. He pulls everything out on to the floor. He can't find what he's looking for. He slams the cupboard closed, cracking the mirror. The telephone rings. The darkroom phone is nearest.

INT. DARKROOM. SAME NIGHT.

Pete moves quickly to the phone.

PETE

Hello? Oh. It's you.

CUT BACK AND FORTH

TO ISAAC'S HOUSE

INT. ISAAC'S HOUSE. SAME NIGHT

Isaac on the telephone, speaking against the sound of loud music and chatter.

ISAAC

You sound down in the dumps boy.

There's a party here.

Why don't you two come over?

Hattie's complaining, we never see anything of you.

PETE

Liz isn't here. She's gone down to Durban for the weekend with Miriam Lesotho.

ISAAC

Right. One of our guys went down with her.

PETE

Who? Did Willie go?

ISAAC

No. Willie was busy. I sent
Nimrod down at the last moment to
cover for him. Anyway. Why don't
you come over?

PETE

Look... I just got back from
Bulawayo. I'll be over as soon as
I've landed.

Pete replaces the phone. Miserable, he wanders into the
sitting room. Pete pours a large brandy and downs it.

INT. ISAAC'S HOUSE. SAME NIGHT.

A party is well into its drunken stage, people dancing to the
hits of the day. Isaac takes Pete's empty glass and pours
him another drink.

ISAAC

What's the matter? You look like
you just lost a client or
something.

LIZ

Liz's fucked off.

ISAAC

You're kidding? Left you?

PETE

Not exactly. I think she's
screwing around.

Isaac is uncomfortable.

ISAAC

Any idea who it is?

PETE

Could be anyone. Probably Nimrod.
I thought it was Willie.

A few moments of silence. Hattie sways up to them and puts
her arms around Pete.

HATTIE

Don't waste your time talking to
this boring old fart. You wouldn't
like him so much if you really knew
him...

ISAAC

You're drunk Hats.
Why don't you go to bed?

HATTIE

Fuck off. I want to dance with
this handsome stranger. You are a
stranger you know? We hardly ever
see you. You and that fascinating
little wife of yours.

She looks churlishly at Isaac and he moves away. Pete puts
his arm around Hattie and they dance. She steers him towards
the door.

EXT. GARDEN. SAME NIGHT.

Hattie staggers and clings on to Pete.

PETE

You all right?

HATTIE

Never felt better. Come on... over
here... I want to show you
something.

She leads him unsteadily further into the garden away from
the lights of the house.

PETE

WHAT?

She moves his hands to her breasts and squeezes them there. She slides to the ground pulling Pete down with her, dragging her skirt up around her thighs. She thrusts his hand between her legs, stares insanely into his eyes.

HATTIE

Fuck me.

PETE

Hattie...

HATTIE

You can fuck can't you?

PETE

Come on Hattie. What about Isaac?

HATTIE

He won't mind. He's your friend
isn't he?
What's a little fuck between
friends?

PETE

I'm sorry Hattie. I can't.

Hattie is irate. She sits up glaring at Pete.

HATTIE

You bastard! What you mean you
can't?

(MORE)

HATTIE (CONT'D)

I bet your good friend Isaac didn't
have such fine feelings about you
when he was fucking Liz!

PETE (SURPRISED)

What?

HATTIE

Come on Petey...

Pete is suddenly sobered by the revelation. He pulls away
from her.

PETE

Liz and Isaac...

HATTIE

Come on. Fuck me you beautiful
bastard.

She reaches out to touch him. He stands and walks slowly
away.

INT. THE HOUSE. NIGHT.

People are lying around on the couches, on the floor, some asleep, some necking. Isaac is trying to keep the party going leading two or three other men singing one of his old Afrikaans student songs "Dar kom die Alabama, die Alabama kom oor die see-ee-ee-ee". He stops at the sound of a car engine starting. He looks around. Walks outside.

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Isaac stands unsteadily watching the receding lights of a car as it bumps away down the drive. He turns and looks around into the darkness. He can hear someone sobbing.

ISAAC

Hatts? Is that you?

He wanders across the garden, peering into the darkness. Hattie is huddled on the grass sobbing her heart out. He sits down beside her. He puts an arm around her, gently strokes her hair.

INT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. DAY.

Mid-morning. The key turns in the front door. Liz comes in with overnight bag. She walks into the sitting room and stops short. She's amazed to find Pete at home, unshaven in his pajamas. He glowers at her.

LIZ

Hello darling. What are you doing home? What a nice surprise.

She opens her arms and crosses the room to him smiling. She hugs him, kisses his cheek.

Pete is unresponsive, unsmiling. Liz is concerned.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Why aren't you at work?
You're all right aren't you pet?

PETE

Did you have a good weekend?

LIZ

It was great. I only wish you could have been there.

PETE

You said you'd call.

LIZ

It was just impossible. I couldn't
find a phone.

You know how it is in these places.

How was Bulawayo? How did the
meeting go?

Are you feeling all right luv?

PETE

You couldn't wait could you?

Liz hesitates.

LIZ

We waited as long as we could.
Miriam had a schedule.

PETE

Was Nimrod there?

LIZ

He was on an assignment for Drum.

PETE

Did you sleep with him?

LIZ

What's this all about?

PETE

You slept with him didn't you?

LIZ

Don't be ridiculous. Of course
not.

PETE

I don't believe you. And what
about Isaac?

LIZ

Isaac?

Liz looks at him as though she doesn't quite comprehend his
question.

PETE

Yes, Isaac!! You know Isaac?
You didn't sleep with him either
did you?

About to answer, LIZ decides to give up. She sits slowly
down on the arm of the chair. Her shoulders sag.

PETE (CONT'D)

You haven't changed a bit. You
just go on fucking everything in
sight don't you?

LIZ

I'm sorry. I think I'd better go.

PETE

I don't give a shit what you do.

LIZ

I'm sorry.

PETE

I really thought being married
would make a difference.
I really thought maybe if I made
things good enough for you
it would be different...
you wouldn't want anyone else.

LIZ

I'm sorry.

PETE

And now it's a bloody African.
Don't you know where we are?
Do you only think with your cunt?
Christ knows what'd have happened
if you'd been caught.
My job! Everything! You'd be in
jail. Did you think of that? I
thought when people got married
they looked out for each other.
You've turned our marriage into a
fucking obstacle course.

(MORE)

PETE (CONT'D)

Not a day goes by I don't wonder
when you'll hit me with the next
fucking problem.

LIZ

I said I was sorry.

Silence.

Liz stands, picks up her overnight bag and goes to the door.
Pete stands wretchedly with his back to her. They
are both desperately sad. Liz has her hand on the doorknob.
She seems unable to turn to look at Pete.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I've made a mess of things again
haven't I?

Pete remains immobile, silent.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Can't we...

Liz decides not to say what's on her mind. She's empty. Pete
doesn't move.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I guess not.

She leaves closing the door quietly behind her. Pete doesn't move. Tears course down his cheeks. He sighs deeply.

EXT. ODIN CINEMA, SOPHIATOWN. DAY.

The pink, white and green cement building pulsates with Township jazz music. It blares from loudspeakers to the hundreds of people crowding around the building out in the street. Everyone is dancing and having a good time. A banner strung across the front of the building reads MISS ERGOL 1956 BEAUTY CONTEST FINALS.

INT. ODIN CINEMA. DAY.

The auditorium is packed. Miriam is on stage with a ten piece band and twelve beauty contestants, belting it out to an outrageously enthusiastic audience. Pete stands in the wings with Willie and Plotz, his eyes roaming the audience. He sees Liz in beret and dark glasses trying to conceal herself amongst some Africans. Two white men in suits are taking notes. There's a disturbance in the wings behind Pete. He turns to see a group of suited Africans arriving back-stage, the political movers and shakers he'd met at Isaac's.

PETE

What are these guys doing here?

He looks at Willie for answers but Willie, absorbed in Miriam's performance, hasn't heard him. Pete turns to Plotz.

PETE (CONT'D)

What the hell's happening?

EXT. ODIN CINEMA. SAME DAY.

VOICE

And now ladies and gentlemen it's time to announce the judges' decision and greet Miss Ergol 1956. But before we do that... there is someone here who wants to say hello to you. One minute... What's that?

Three police trucks drive up, pushing their way into the crowd. Platoons of armed policemen spill out onto the street, cordoning off the cinema.

INT. ODIN CINEMA. SAME DAY.

The doors at the back of the auditorium burst open and a platoon of armed police, led by a MAJOR with a pistol in his hand, stride down the centre aisle. The audience is in confusion. Up on stage, Pete sees the politicians spirited away. Liz is struggling to get out but is prevented by police. The Major is up on stage. He grabs the microphone.

MAJOR

I have reason to believe a banned person or persons is illegally in this building. Everyone will stay where they are.

A submissive murmur runs through the crowd.

EXT. A SHABBY OLD SUBURBAN APARTMENT BLOCK. NIGHT.

Taxi draws to the curb, Liz gets out and goes into the apartment block.

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK. SAME NIGHT

Liz walks wearily up a flight of concrete steps into a hallway. She opens a door with a latch key and steps inside.

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. SAME NIGHT.

A one room apartment with a kitchen and bathroom. The curtains are drawn. Liz sighs, switches on a light. Nimrod is lying half clothed on the bed asleep. He's awakened by the light. He raises himself half asleep on his elbow, shielding his eyes. He groans. Liz kneels on the bed beside him and kisses him. She notices a bruise on his cheek.

LIZ

What happened to you?

Nimrod elbows himself into a sitting position, finds a dog-end in the ash tray and lights it.

NIMROD

I was getting out of bed and caught
my face on the table here.

He grins wryly. Liz goes into the bathroom and turns on the shower, comes back into the room, walks to the desk and glances at the few lines on a sheet of paper in the typewriter, and the empty half-jack of Brandy.

LIZ

You didn't get far with the story.

Nimrod scratches his head.

NIMROD

The bottle got empty and the muse
departed.

Liz starts taking off her clothes.

LIZ

Did you know the ANC big wigs were
going to be there this afternoon?

NIMROD

ANC? The beauty competition? Hell
no. What happened?

LIZ

There was a raid. Someone must
have tipped them off. The sods
held us until they had everyone's
name and address. They knew me.
They even knew I wasn't living with
Pete any more.

NIMROD

Was he there?

LIZ

I suppose so. I didn't see him.
Poor old Pete. This'll do wonders
for his career.

Liz goes into the shower. Nimrod stubs out the dog-end and
gets up off the bed. He wanders to the door of the bathroom.

NIMROD

Did you pick up any booze sweetie?

Liz doesn't answer immediately

LIZ VO

In my bag.

Nimrod searches Liz's bag and comes up with a half-jack of Brandy. He pours himself a liberal measure and drinks, savoring it. Liz comes out of the shower dripping, toweling herself. Nimrod, spirits restored, looks at her admiringly, affectionately. She puts jazz music on the record player. They sit on the bed together.

LIZ

Do you really love me?

Nimrod kisses her.

NIMROD

How can I make it plainer?

LIZ

I mean it. Do you really?
Sometimes I think you love brandy
more.

NIMROD

Brandy's just a platonic friend.

LIZ

Some friend.

Nimrod drains his glass and puts it on the table. He unwraps the towel around Liz and makes love to her. She enjoys making love to Nimrod. She becomes loudly vocal in the throes of her passion. There's a sharp knock at the door.

They freeze. Liz jumps out of bed, goes to the door, pulling on a bathrobe. She lays her head to the door, anxious.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Who is it?

MAN'S VOICE VO

It's Mr. Katz next door. Could you turn the music down Mrs. Simms? Mrs. Katz has a headache and can't sleep.

LIZ

Sure Mr. Katz. Sorry. Is there anything I can do for her?

MAN'S VOICE VO

Just turn it down.

Liz is relieved. She turns the volume of the music down low, gets back into bed with Nimrod. He lies with his back to her, she with her arms around him.

LIZ

Let's go to London. You'd love London.

I can get a good job there. You could write. We'd be free.

None of this paranoia. Wouldn't you like that my love?

She cuddles into his back. Nimrod stares sadly, vacantly across the room.

INT. TONY FARQUHAR'S OFFICE. DAY.

Farquhar, in dark glasses, sips coffee at his desk. Pete stands in front of him.

FARQUHAR

Of course not dear boy. Nobody's saying it is. I don't believe for a moment you knew anything about it. Be that as it may the gods of Ergol have to be appeased.

PETE

Are you sacking me?

FARQUHAR

Styman thinks it would be a good idea to take you off the account until this thing blows over. OK?

Pete turns to go.

FARQUHAR (CONT'D)

One thing I would say to you as a friend Peter. Steer clear of getting too involved with the Africans.

(MORE)

FARQUHAR (CONT'D)

They won't thank you for it and
you'll be the loser in the end.

PETE

I'm sure you're right Tony.

Pete leaves. Farquhar takes a cognac bottle from a
drawer, tops up his coffee and drinks.

INT. STUDIO. DAY.

It's lunch time. The art staff are eating sandwiches and
listening to a radio broadcast of a cricket test-match. Rod
and Sandy are playing cricket with a cardboard tube and a
table-tennis ball. Pete sits at his own desk seeming to be
reading a newspaper but consumed by his own down-beat
thoughts. Rod can't find the table-tennis ball. Sandy
ambles over to Pete. Sits down beside him.

SANDY

Sorry to hear about you and Liz.
Mustn't take it too hard lad.
Believe me... worse things happen
at sea

PETE

So they say.

Pete goes on appearing to read. Sandy fondles the cardboard tube between his knees, leans forward confidentially.

SANDY

Sometimes things work out for the best lad. You could say Liz leaving home has cleared path a bit.

PETE

I suppose you could.

Pete folds the newspaper and stands. Looks at his watch.

PETE (CONT'D)

I have to go. See you later.

Pete leaves. Andrew shakes his head.

ANDREW

Poor old Pete's not taking it too well.

SANDY

That's exactly what I said. What's the score?

ANDREW

All out for ninety-eight old boy.

Sandy claps his hands with delight.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD. DAY.

A private room. Rose Simms lies in bed, Pete and Ben Simms either side of her. Rose is pale and weak. Ben holds one of her hands, Pete the other. Rose, smiling weakly, looks from Pete to Ben.

ROSE

Is Selma looking after you?

BEN

Don't worry about a thing. Just get yourself well again.

I spoke to the surgeon. Everything went fine. He says we'll have you home in a week.

Rose turns her head slowly to Pete.

ROSE

Is Liz looking after you?

PETE

Yes Mum.

ROSE

She's a good girl really.

PETE

Yes.

Pete gazes out the window.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. DAY.

Pete and Ben walk slowly towards the entrance; Pete has his arm around his father's shoulders. They walk slowly down the corridor to the exit.

EXT. PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Pete drives up, gets out of car, enters house.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete drops his jacket and briefcase into a chair, loosens his tie, fixes himself a drink and walks through to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. SAME NIGHT.

The back door opens as Pete enters the kitchen and Doris, very pregnant, comes in. She stretches her back against the weight of her belly.

PETE

Hello Doris.

DORIS

Good evening Pete. I heard the car.

Doris goes to the fridge. Starts taking out dishes of food.

PETE

I'm not hungry. I had a sandwich
at the office.

Pete sits at the kitchen table with his drink. Watches Doris
wearily return food to the fridge.

PETE (CONT'D)

Where's Zack? I want to talk to
him. The garden's a mess.

DORIS

I don't know where he is.

PETE

You mean he's not home?

Doris smiles shyly.

DORIS

He has left home.

PETE

Left? The bastard. Left you like
this? What a complete bastard.
You don't know where he went?

DORIS

No.

PETE

Well we'd better find him.

DORIS

It doesn't matter.

PETE

Of course it matters.

What are you going to do?

What about the baby?

Doris shrugs and goes to the door.

DORIS

We'll go back to Natal to my
family.

PETE

When's the baby due?

DORIS

I don't know exactly. Not yet
awhile.

Doris closes the kitchen door quietly behind her.

EXT. TOWNSHIP. NIGHT.

SUPER: DECEMBER 1956

The sky is beginning to lighten in the East as trucks and vans full of police bump along the deserted, still dark streets. Police knock rudely on doors opened by frightened, confused people. Houses are searched, property confiscated, people singled out. Arrests are made and the prisoners shoved roughly into vans.

NEWSREADER VO

Top ANC leaders and white lawyers and business men will be amongst those to stand trial for their lives. Today one hundred and fifty-six people of all races were arrested on charges of high treason.

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY.

A hive of activity. Much telephoning and typing and coming and going.

INT. ISAAC'S OFFICE. DAY.

Isaac is on the telephone.

ISAAC

Where the hell is he then? I haven't seen him all week. If you find him tell him to get his arse here pretty damn quick.

He puts down the phone and turns to the news editor JASON NDUBE.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Have you seen Nimrod? He's supposed to be doing the piece on Mandela.

Jason shakes his head.

JASON

Did you check the shebeens?

Isaac shrugs, dismissively. He picks up a photograph.

ISAAC

OK. Page one then. This nice smiley pic of Mandela, Sisulu and Tambo. A really big banner headline "Guilty of High Treason?" and then...

Isaac turns a page.

an entire double page spread of
pics... all the people that were
arrested. OK? Everyone of them...
their names and where they're from.
Then your piece. Some about the
arrests... eye witnesses and so on.

The phone rings, Isaac picks up, listens, picks at a thread
in his sweater.

Sure. Silver Beck at one. Totsiens

Isaac, thoughtful, replaces the phone. Back to Jason.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Tell Fritz to get some pix of the
Drill Hall where they're going to
hold the trial. See if he can get
one or two of the police.

Isaac ties his shoelace, straightens his tie and gets to his
feet.

INT. SILVER BECK BAR. SAME DAY.

Isaac and Pete sit in silence at a table drinking beer.
Slouched in their chairs, they avoid each others eyes.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Your show really got screwed up
didn't it? Don't suppose the
agency was too pleased.

PETE

No.

ISAAC

At least they didn't fire you.

PETE

I don't suppose you knew the ANC
were going to be there did you?

ISAAC

No. But I wasn't surprised.
You'd have taken the opportunity
if you'd been there wouldn't you?
It's not some game they're playing.

Silence.

PETE

There's something I think we need
to talk about...

ISAAC

Right...

PETE

Yeah. It's about Liz and...

Pete is interrupted by a middle-aged man on his way to the bar. He greets Isaac as he passes their table.

MAN

Hello Schein. Keeping those coons
of yours in order? Surprised they
didn't arrest the lot of you this
morning.

The man smiles. Isaac smiles. Waits until the man is out of earshot.

ISAAC

He's the news editor on the Mail.
I used to work for him stupid
bastard.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Sorry. You were saying? Yes. Liz...
Have you seen anything of her?

PETE

No. Have you?

ISAAC

No.

Silence. Isaac fiddles with the loose thread in his sweater.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

What'll you do? Going to stay?

Pete shrugs.

PETE

There's dad... Mum's not at all well...

I think they may well go back to the UK

ISAAC

I've been talking to Hattie about moving out.

I don't even know if I could get a passport. I don't really want to leave with the trials...

everyone's arriving...

all the London papers,

the New York Times. And you know

what? We my boy are the only ones who really know what's going on

here. You've got to stay...

history's happening right before

our eyes. Why don't you take

pictures for us?

Carry your camera around with you.

I'll pay you for anything we use.

PETE considers it. Isaac stands, picks up their empty glasses.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Same again?

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. DAY.

The blinds are closed, the apartment lights on. LIZ stands by the wall at the edge of the curtains, careful not to be seen, looking out on the street.

LIZ'S POV.

In the bright sunlight, three bare-footed Africans dressed in servants' shorts and shirts are standing around the entrance of the apartments opposite, playing music on a guitar, fiddle and mbira thumb-harp. Servant girls in berets, sweaters and tight skirts sit and stand around appreciating the music, moving to it.

Liz smiles sadly. She moves away from the window. Nimrod is lying on the bed.

LIZ

Isaac called this morning while you
were asleep.

Nimrod stares at the ceiling.

NIMROD

What did he want?

LIZ

You.

NIMROD

How did he get this number?

LIZ

Gerhard.

NIMROD

What did you tell him?

LIZ

I said you were drunk.

NIMROD

Thanks a lot.

LIZ

I said I hadn't seen you...

Nimrod swings his legs carefully off the bed. Steadies himself. Tries to stand. Liz goes to help him.

LIZ (CONT'D)

You shouldn't get out of bed.

NIMROD

I have to piss.

He stands and walks unsteadily to the bathroom.

LIZ

I'll make some coffee

She goes to the kitchen. There's an almighty crash from the bathroom.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

Liz rushes to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM. SAME DAY.

Nimrod is on his knees by the toilet, a bleeding gash on his forehead, a half-jack of brandy broken and spilled on the floor. He doesn't seem to know where he is. Liz, terrified, drops to her knees beside him.

INT. LIVING ROOM. SAME DAY.

Nimrod is in bed, a Band-Aid on his forehead. He still manages to smile and twirl a matchstick between his teeth. Liz comes from the kitchen with a mug of coffee.

NIMROD

What would I do without you?

LIZ

Drink this...

NIMROD

No booze left?

Liz puts the mug of coffee on the bedside table and sits down on the bed. She's unamused.

LIZ

Sure. Lap it off the bathroom floor.

Nimrod takes her hand.

NIMROD

Don't be so serious girl.
Why do you try to hide my booze?

LIZ

Why not?
I'm only trying to save you from yourself.

NIMROD

I said don't be so serious. Be a sweetheart. Run out and get me a little half.

LIZ

And when did 'being serious' become such a bad thing? Is everything so trivial to you? What about your

(MORE)

LIZ (CONT'D)

poetry? What about Africa? What about me? Doesn't anything matter to you any more except the fucking booze?

She gets up from the bed. Goes to the curtain, looking out as before.

NIMROD

You want me to take this life stone cold sober? You want me to weep and be sad don't you? Whites are all the same. You have to have us on a fucking cross bleeding crying suffering before you can shed a single tear of remorse. Find yourself another fucking martyr. Get me a fucking drink or leave me alone.

Liz is hurt. They both sulk in silence.

LIZ

Do you hate me so much?

Nimrod takes the matchstick out of his mouth. He sighs.

NIMROD

Come here.

Liz looks at him dubiously. She sits on the bed, holds his hands, sighs. Nimrod smiles gently.

NIMROD (CONT'D)

Hate you girl?

You're the only light in my life.

Liz looks at him sadly. She takes him in her arms and holds him tenderly.

EXT. DRILL HALL. DAY.

A large crowd of Africans of all ages, shapes and sizes, surrounds the entrance to the Drill Hall. Pete, with camera, struggles to get through the crowd. There is a strong police presence. A paddy-wagon drives up to the gates, clenched fists of the prisoners inside thrust through the barred windows. The crowd, as one voice, thunders "Maibuya Afrika" as the prisoners disembark and are led into the Drill Hall. Successive paddy-wagons arrive. The crowd responds in the same way each time. A voice bellows out on a PA system.

PA VOICE

This is a police warning!

This crowd must disperse.

This is an unlawful gathering.

You must all go home.

The crowd grows angry. People yell back at the disembodied voice. The line of police surrounding the Drill Hall are restless. They draw their batons. Pete is close to them and starts taking photographs of them.

PA VOICE (CONT'D)

This is a last warning!
If you do not disperse immediately
you will be in contravention
of the Unlawful Gatherings Act
section twenty-two
and liable to arrest!

The crowd is furious and surges towards the police line. Whistles are blown and the police move forward, lashing out at everyone in their path. Pete snaps away until the camera is struck out of his hand and trampled on the ground. He is arrested and thrown into a paddy-wagon with scores of others.

FREEZE FRAME

Pete grinning, surrounded by jubilant, smiling black faces just before the doors of the paddy-wagon are closed on them.

PULL BACK

INT. HANNES STYMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Styman is at his desk looking at the photograph of Pete dominating the front page of the Rand Daily Mail. He picks up his phone, presses a button.

STYMAN

Farquhar. See that Simms and all his belongings are out of here by five o'clock.

He puts down the phone. He picks up the newspaper, folds it and drops it in his waste basket.

INT. PETE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Pete wakes up to the singing of birds. Bright daylight streams through chinks in the curtains. Slowly, he sits up and looks at his watch, then sinks back into the pillows again, eyes gazing carelessly at the ceiling.

INT. BATHROOM. SAME DAY

Pete comes out of shower, towels himself. He combs his hair. The bathroom cabinet still displays a broken mirror.

INT. DARKROOM. SAME DAY

Pete unclips prints of the Drill Hall riots from the drying line, puts them in a large envelope, turns out the light and leaves.

EXT. FRONT OF PETE'S HOUSE. SAME DAY.

In the driveway, a Vespa motor scooter. Pete comes out locking the door behind. He's dressed in open-necked shirt and slacks; he carries his new camera military style across his back. He puts on sunglasses, mounts the scooter, kicks it into life and rides off.

INT. DRUM OFFICE. SAME DAY.

PETE

Isaac busy?

Willie makes a wry face.

WILLIE

He's in with Jim.

PETE

The publisher?

WILLIE

Our lord and master.

PETE

Something up?

Willie tosses the latest copy of Drum across his desk to Pete. He looks at the colour cover. A black female African American tennis star hugs her vanquished white adversary. In bold type across the cover "BLACK WINS AT WIMBLEDON!"

PETE (CONT'D)

What's the matter with it? Its
great.

WILLIE

Jim doesn't think it's great.
Jim thinks it stinks.
Jim thinks it'll get him into
trouble.
Jim wants it withdrawn.

PETE

And Isaac?

Willie shrugs his shoulders. The door of Isaac's office opens and Jim strides out. He smiles coldly at the staff as he passes through. Isaac saunters out of his office. Waves to Pete.

WILLIE

Don't keep us in suspenders.

What happened?

ISAAC

Nothing much. Jim withdrew the
entire issue and I resigned.

EXT. JEWISH CEMETERY. DAY.

Ben Simms weeps at a graveside as the Rabbi performs burial
rites. Pete stands soberly, thoughtfully at Ben's side. He
takes his arm.

INT. BEN & ROSE'S APARTMENT. SAME DAY.

Pete and Ben sit in silence in the late afternoon. Selma
dressed in black moves around like a shadow, serving them
tea.

PETE

What are you going to do dad?

Ben sighs. He stares out of the window.

BEN

I shall go back to England son.
There's nothing here for me now.
It doesn't feel like home any more.
And you?

PETE

I don't know. I feel very
uncertain about the future.

BEN

Why don't you come home with me?

PETE

I can't dad. Not yet. I have to
be here.

BEN

Liz?

PETE

Yes.

BEN

Things never seem to work out the
way you think they will do they?
I'm sorry son. Everything seems so
meaningless now without Mum.

He gets up and walks slowly out onto the balcony. He gazes
abstractedly at the not too distant city, his eyes wet with
tears. Two Africans can be heard in loud altercation on the
street below.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT LOUNGE. NIGHT.

Hattie, dressed for travel, nervously smoking a cigarette, stands with Pete. Pete carries his camera.

HATTIE

I could do with a drink.

Pete looks around.

PETE

There must be a bar.

HATTIE

There's no time. I'll get one on
the plane.

She drops her cigarette to the floor, expunges it with her low-heeled shoe.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

I don't suppose we'll be seeing you
for a while.

PETE

Suppose not. I have to stay.

HATTIE

You amaze me.

PETE

Why?

HATTIE

You're such a fool. Don't you see
how she uses you? When she'll come
back to you is when she's down and
out. You're such a nice chap.
Always there when you're needed.
Ready to pick up the pieces.

Pete shakes his head.

PETE

It's not like that.

HATTIE

No? Mark my words. Where the
hell's that Isaac?
You should get out while you have
the chance. While she's someone
else's problem. But you won't
because you're a fool

Isaac and the children saunter up to them, loaded down with
sweets and comics.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

Where've you been? It'll be just
like you to make us all miss the
damned plane.

ISAAC

Come on Hats. They haven't even
called the flight yet...

PUBLIC ADDRESS VO.

Will all passengers leaving on flight two one six go to gate
A for boarding. Please have your boarding passes ready.

The message repeats in Afrikaans.

HATTIE

Come on children.

MAIVA

Pete. You will take good care of
Charlie won't you?

PETE

Course I will. As long as Charlie
takes good care of me. Why don't
you write him a postcard from
London. He'd like that.

MAIVA

I will.

PETE

You too Isaac. Write Charlie a
postcard.

Pete and Isaac grip hands. They smile at each other. Pete
kisses the children and Hattie and takes a quick snap of them
all as they wave goodbye and walk away down the hall.

INT. PETE'S HOUSE. DAY.

The door bell is ringing. Charlie bounds to the door. Doris
comes slowly from the kitchen. She is in a very late stage
of pregnancy. Pete looks up from the desk where he's
writing. He hears Doris open the door and men's voices
speaking in Afrikaans. He listens.

1ST MAN VO

Well well my pretty maiden.
Someone's left a very large bun in
your oven. Is your master at home?

PETE VO (CALLING OUT)

Who is it Doris?

Doris, holding Charlie by the collar, backs into the room
followed by the two men. One of them carries a brief case.

2ND MAN

M'neer Simms?

Pete nods.

PETE

It's OK Doris.

Doris takes Charlie into the kitchen. The back door can be heard opening and closing.

1ST MAN

I was just saying what a pretty girl you got. You English like our African maids. Eh?

2ND MAN

Is she a live-in maid Mr. Simms?

The first man takes out his wallet and opens it. Shows it to Pete.

1ST MAN

We're special branch Mr. Simms. We'd just like to have a little talk with you. May we sit down?

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. DAY.

The curtains are drawn closed. Liz is reading at the desk. Nimrod is asleep in bed. The telephone rings. LIZ answers it.

LIZ

Oh. Hello. How are you?

She listens, looks across the room at Nimrod.

LIZ (CONT'D)

What about?

Listens. Looks at her watch.

LIZ (CONT'D)

OK. I'll see you there. Goodbye.

EXT. CAFE. SAME DAY.

Pete sits at an outside table sipping coffee reading a newspaper. Charlie lays in the shade at his feet. He looks up from the paper as Liz approaches. He stands and draws a chair out for her. They sit. He waves at a waiter. Liz pats the dog.

LIZ

Hello Charlie.

PETE

What'll you have?

LIZ

Nothing for me thanks.

PETE

How have you been?

LIZ

Not so dusty. And yourself?

PETE

I've missed you.

LIZ

I'd have thought you'd have been glad to see the back of me. I've never been able to figure you out Pete. I lead you a merry dance... make you miserable as sin and you say you miss me. Like a hole in the head?

PETE

I love you.

Liz shakes her head again with incomprehension, smiling sadly at him.

LIZ

I'm sorry about the way I've
behaved.

She puts her hand on his.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I heard about your mum. I'm so
sorry. It must have been a
shock for you. How's your dad
taking it?

PETE

He couldn't deal with the
loneliness. He went back to
England. I want you back Liz.

LIZ

Even after all this?

PETE

I am going home to England and I
want you to come with me. A new
start. It'll be different there.
Everyone's getting out. Isaac and
Hattie and the kids have gone.

LIZ

I know. Gerhard's going back to Switzerland. He and Miriam have broken up.

PETE

Why don't we go too? I don't think you realize the danger you're in. I'm worried about you.

LIZ

Still?

PETE

I had a visit from the special branch this morning. They have a dossier on us this thick. They know every move we've made... every person black and white we've spoken to since we got off the boat in Cape Town. They know everything... when you left me... where you live. I'm telling you it's time to go.

LIZ

I can't

PETE

Why not?

LIZ

I can't. That's all.

PETE

Is it Nimrod? Are you still seeing
him?

LIZ

Yes.

PETE

Are you in love with him?

LIZ

Love? I don't know.

PETE

The police must know about you.
You know that don't you?

LIZ

When are you going?

PETE

Soon. I haven't fixed a date.

They are silent for a few moments.

PETE (CONT'D)

Come home with me.

LIZ

I can't. I'm home already.

Liz stands. Pete stands. She kisses his cheek.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I must be getting back. It's nice
of you to think of me. I'll always
love you for that. Good luck Pete.

Pete is sad and empty. He watches Liz walk away.

INT. PETE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Pete is awakened by a noise. He gets up, walks curiously into the kitchen and listens. He opens the back door and listens. He hears a muffled cry of pain. He picks up a flashlight and goes cautiously out into the garden. Charlie trots after him.

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Doris is on the bed having birthing contractions. She smiles weakly at Pete as he comes in.

PETE

My god Doris. What's happening?

DORIS

The baby.

Pete is flustered.

PETE

The baby. My god. I'll get a
doctor.

Doris arches her back in pain.

DORIS

Too late. He's coming now.

PETE

What shall I do? I don't know what
the hell to do...

Doris eases herself off the bed and takes up a squatting position on the floor. She gasps with pain as she gives in to the final contractions.

DORIS

It's all right. It's all right.
Just do as I tell you.

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Charlie sits outside DORIS's house, sniffing the night air.

NT. TAXI. DAY.

Doris cuddling her baby, sits in the back with Charlie. Pete sits in front with the driver.

EXT. PARK STATION, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

The taxi comes to the curb. Pete gets out, helps Doris and the baby out of the back. Takes a suitcase from the boot of the car. They walk into the railway station, Charlie on a leash. Pete gives Doris an envelope.

PETE

Your ticket and your wages.

She takes it and smiles at him. Pete is awkward. He looks around. People are watching them.

PETE (CONT'D)

Well then. I'd better say goodbye.

Pete chucks the baby under the chin.

PETE (CONT'D)

Bye little fellow.

Pete hands Doris Charlie's leash. He pats the dogs head.

PETE (CONT'D)

'Bye Charlie. Take good care of
'em.

DORIS

Thank you.

PETE

'Bye Doris.

Pete touches Doris's hand. She turns and walks towards the train, Charlie sloping along at her heels. He watches them out of sight then leaves,

INT. WILLIE'S ROOM, SOPHIATOWN. NIGHT.

Willie and Pete sip drinks. No music. A sober mood. A sense of things winding down.

WILLIE

I'd go if I were you. With or without her. South Africa's not your business. You'll only get hurt.

PETE

I'd feel like a rat leaving a sinking ship.

WILLIE

You're a white rat. It's black rats only on this old tin can.

They chuckle. Willie pours them another drink.

PETE

Why don't you get out Willie?
You've had offers.

WILLIE

Don't you think I'd leave if I
could? Sure I could go to America.
Sure I've had offers...
scholarships. The big apple. Land
of my dreams. You think I wouldn't
like to go?

PETE

Why don't you? It's your life.

A knock on the door. Willie stands. Pete hides the brandy
bottle; Willie goes to the door, listens, opens it. Polly
Nessim walks in.

POLLY

Hi Willie. Hi Pete. I came to say
goodbye.

She kicks off her shoes and starts undressing. Willie walks
to the door, smiles at Pete and waves. He leaves closing the
door behind him. Polly stands in her slip in front of Pete.

Pete smiles sheepishly as she starts undressing him. They make love on Willie's bed.

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Liz and Nimrod in bed asleep. LIZ is rudely wakened by a thundering splintering crash as her front door is smashed open and uniformed police rush into the apartment. One has a camera and is taking flash photographs of Liz in bed with Nimrod. Nimrod awakes to semi consciousness. Smiles as though he's in the middle of a dream. The police scream at him in Afrikaans.

POLICE

You fucking Kaffir! Get your
fucking black arse out here.

He slaps LIZ in the face.

POLICE (CONT'D)

Get up you blicksem!

LIZ

Leave him alone you bastards! Can't
you see he's sick?

She struggles loose from a policeman's grasp and flings herself on top of Nimrod to protect him.

A police boot kicks Nimrod in the head. Nimrod has an unseeing look in his eyes, a St. Sebastian kind of smile on his lips.

POLICE

Get her off him! The filth! I'll
give him what for! Defiling the
white human race!

They pull Liz off him. She lashes out with her fists, screams at them.

LIZ

He's dead. He's dead you fuckers!
Can't you see he's dead?

She breaks into hysterical weeping.

LIZ (CONT'D)

You killed him you fuckers! He's
dead. He's dead...

The flash freezes this horrific scene.

EXT. PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

Bright, blue-sky winter's morning. Pete in an overcoat, collar turned up against the wind wanders around the garden. It's become unattended, looks much the same as when he first brought Liz there. A door on the servant's quarters creaks as it blows open and shut. Pete picks up a chair blown over by the wind. He sits.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

Pete strolls around the terminal waiting for his flight to be called. He browses through magazines and books. He picks up an Afrikaans newspaper 'Dagbreek'. He's looking at a flash photograph of Liz, streaming tears, screaming at the camera, surrounded by uniformed police holding her. Nimrod's body lays on the floor beside her. Pete is stunned. He turns to go.

SHOPKEEPER

Are you going to pay for that?

Pete gives him a coin and wanders back into the terminal in adaze. He sits down on a bench staring at the photograph.

PA. VOICE.

South African Airways flight five
seven seven to London is
ready for boarding.

(MORE)

PA. VOICE. (CONT'D)

Passengers should proceed
immediately to gate number three.

The message is repeated. All the passengers move off towards Gate number three. Pete hesitates. He looks at the newspaper photograph again. He rolls the newspaper tightly, picks up his bag and walks briskly the other way, towards the airport exit.

END

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