

BEYOND THE RIVER

Written by

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1

EXT. DESERTED RAILWAY LINE SOWETO - LATE AFTERNOON

1

A bead of sweat trickles down a young man's face. ZAMA(22), edgy, focused on stealing electrical cables from a railway line. The work is dangerous, one wrong move and he's fried. He's totally concentrated - enjoying it almost. Not so for DUMA (21), tall, athletic and anxious, he paces up and down, keeping a lookout.

DUMA

Hurry up man...

Zama keeps his eyes on the job. Finally he coaxes the galvanized cable out of its place.

ZAMA

Grab the pliers...

Duma moves fast and grabs a large pair of bolt cutters lying on a dirty towel. He hands them to Zama. Duma holds the galvanized cable firmly. Zama gets into position to cut the cable. Duma looks up and sees a Corolla speeding down a dirt road towards them a blue light on the roof.

DUMA

Eiiii..

Zama looks up, sees the car rushing towards them. He is unphased.

ZAMA

We got time, let's do this.

Zama cuts the cable, the force of the electricity kicks him over. He gets up and dusts himself off. The police car close now, kicking up a cloud of dust. Zama rolls up the cable.

DUMA

Let's go.

Zama finishes rolling the cable. The two men run along the railway line and then down a dusty embankment. The cop can't follow them and pulls a U turn and gives chase.

2

EXT. INFORMAL SETTLEMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

2

The two men sprint towards a ragged informal settlement on the other side of Orlando dam. They hurtle through tight spaces. They run through clothes on washing lines, jump over fences etc

3

EXT. INFORMAL SETTLEMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

3

They burst out onto a road and see a scrap horse and cart trundling down towards them, with three young kids riding it. Zama throws the cable onto the back of the cart.

ZAMA

Zorro, keep this for me.

A kid nods, mock salutes, throws a sack over the cable and they ride on. The two men disappear down an alleyway. The cop car skids around the corner. The horse and cart passes them innocently.

4 **EXT. DUSTY FIELD NEAR ELIAS - LATE AFTERNOON** 4

Duma and Zama exit the settlement and run through a dusty field where a bunch of kids play soccer. They run through the middle of the game. Duma swiftly dribbles the ball away.

KID

Heyyyyy!

Duma runs expertly with it lay it off and Zama slams the ball into the goal, marked by two old milk cartons, he lifts his T shirt in a mock celebration of the score and carries on running.

ZAMA

Laduuuuuuuuuuuma!

An argument erupts amongst the kids about the legitimacy of the goal. Zama and Duma are long gone.

5 **EXT. CLEARING NEAR ELIAS - LATE AFTERNOON** 5

Duma and Zama get to a clearing, they think they've lost the cops, they breathe hard, hands on knees but suddenly the cop car skids around a corner towards them.

DUMA

Woaaah....

Zama does not flinch, picks a new direction and goes for it. Duma follows. The cop car spins a three sixty and gives chase again. The cops in the car curse the two men.

6 **EXT. COLLAPSED BUILDINGS POWER PARK - DAY** 6

Duma and Zama run past the concrete structures being chased by the cop car. They jump into a hole and the car drives past. They jump out and run down an embankment.

7 **INT. CONCRETE PIPES AT ORLANDO DAM - DAY** 7

They jump over the concrete pipes and out onto the grid.

8 **EXT. REEDS NEXT TO ORLANDO DAM - DAY** 8

Duma and Zama run through the reeds and head for the brick structure.

Oupa watches them go and paddles closer to Duma and Zama. The cops can't see any of this. Zama hisses at him.

ZAMA
Voetsek man.

Oupa looks up at Duma.

OUPA
So this is what you up to these days?

ZAMA
Just get out of here man.

Oupa looks at him disdainfully.

OUPA
Or what? Of wat?

DUMA
Please Oupa man, toe, asseblief.
Help us out here.

OUPA
Sure I'll do it if you do something for me.

They look at him defiantly. Zama shakes his head subtly.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Or I can call these guys. The choice is yours.

He looks towards the cops as if he's going to call them.

ZAMA
Fine, fine, whatever.

OUPA
My place at five tomorrow.

Duma nods. Zama has no choice, he nods as well.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Tomorrow it is then gents.

He digs his paddle into the water and pulls hard on it. His muscles ripple as he picks up speed. The last of the afternoon sun dancing on the water as he heads off. Duma watches the water parting as the canoe slices through it. Duma and Zama let out a breath of air.

12

EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI - LATE AFTERNOON

12

In the shadows Duma and Zama walk through the bustling settlement of Elias. Zama cock a hoop, Duma still freaked.

ZAMA

I'll go see Mike with the stuff tomorrow, then we gonna be smiling.

DUMA

That was too close Zama.

ZAMA

Close what...they were nowhere near us.

DUMA

You know they getting serious on this cable thing. It was in the paper.

ZAMA

You know what your problem is, you worry too much, you don't think big you don't want to be a somebody, you don't even believe you can be a somebody. And you know what. If you don't want to be a somebody you end up being a nobody.

Duma shakes his head.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

Just relax brother, all will be good tomorrow when you have a few clips in your pocket.

They walk deeper into the community. There is no electricity so the light comes from Baragwanath hospital or small paraffin lamps and candles.

(They potentially pass Gogo with a bucket of water here)

13

INT/ EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - LATE AFTERNOON

13

Further up the road Duma enters his yard, a green stand-alone toilet to the left. A dripping tap next to it. A large shack with two smaller shacks to each side. His younger sister MANDISA (15) sits on an old beer crate in a pool of light from the floodlights shining over from Baragwanath hospital. She speaks quietly.

MANDISA

Where you been?

DUMA

Playing soccer.

She looks at him suspiciously. He indicates his head to the shack.

DUMA (CONT'D)

Is he home?

She nods possibly indicates that Duma is in trouble. He shrugs, what can he do.

DUMA (CONT'D)
How's the homework?

MANDISA
English is hard.

DUMA
You need any help?

She shakes her head, looks a bit forlorn.

DUMA (CONT'D)
Good things coming your way
tomorrow.

MANDISA
Good things like what?

DUMA
Like a new pair of those.

MANDISA
From where?

DUMA
From the shops, where else?

Then a bellow from the shack. Like a bear almost.

MANDLA (O.S.)
Dumaaaaa!

He grimaces at his sister.

DUMA
Baba...

MANDLA (O.S.)
I need more water.

DUMA
Coming.

Duma walks to the door of the shack, opens it and enters the shack. MANDLA (49) a strong but weary man washes himself, standing up in a small plastic bath. Duma enters.

MANDLA
You pushing me boy, you pushing me.
If you not earning money you need
to help out around the house.
Especially at this time.

Duma nods.

MANDLA (CONT'D)

It's not safe for your sister to be alone here all afternoon. And she has schoolwork, you need to be here, help her, cook, whatever. Just be here.

Duma takes the kettle from the stove and walks out the room.

14 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - NIGHT**

14

Mandisa washes the dishes from the meal in a plastic container. Duma pours the bath water out into the outside toilet. He steps out, puts the bath down and looks out into the night sky. He feels trapped in his life, suffocating.

15 **EXT. ZWELI'S PLACE - DAY**

15

Music blares out of a small shack. An old traffic light signals a green light next to the open door. There are various people in and out of the shack,, a few girls, a couple of guys. They're partying, drinking and smoking. Zama is pretty far gone, he stands next to a gangly looking young man called Zwelibanzi.

ZWELIBANSI

You short Joe.

ZAMA

Short what...who's been paying for drinks the whole day?

ZWELIBANSI

I'm just saying if you want four more then you short.

Zama pulls his pockets out as Duma arrives.

ZAMA

Well, there's nothing left from my money. Am I the only one who can buy drinks?

ZWELIBANSI

I got nothing....

Duma looks at Zama, Zama looks at him. He sees the disappointment in his friends face.

ZAMA

This is what I keep telling you Duma, we need to think big, we dealing with small fry here, small change, pocket money, just enough for a few beers.

He points out at a set of electrical pylons in the distance.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
That's where the real money is.
Grootman!

He sways holding his beer, he points his hand out to the pylon almost like a challenge.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
Grootman. One day is one day.

Duma looks at him, shakes his head, and walks off, upset, kicking at the dust.

16 **EXT. OUPA'S HOUSE IN POWER PARK - AFTERNOON** 16

Duma walks down the road to a house in Power park. He gets to a yard and walks into a yard of one of the uniform houses. It's a chaotic scene. Youngsters aged from 10-20, grabbing canoes, chatting, pushing each other. Duma stands off to one side, leans against the wall. He watches the scene for a while, some of the kids recognise him.

Oupa arrives in his kombi. It's an eighties classic square shape kombi half cream and half white, his pride and joy. He gets out and walks into the yard, two boys walk past with a canoe.

OUPA
You scrape my baby with that thing
you going to get it. Hurry up the
rest of you, what you waiting for?

More kids lift boats and head for the water. He walks up to Duma looking him up and down.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Where's your friend?

Duma shrugs, looks down. Oupa looks at him hard.

17 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM BANK - AFTERNOON** 17

Duma walks past the giant concrete cooling towers with a canoe balanced on his shoulder.

18 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM BANK - AFTERNOON** 18

Oupa patrols the edge of the dam shouting instructions and encouragement to the young kids.

OUPA
Work together, you chasing it!

Duma arrives at the dam. Oupa looks at him.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Ten laps.

Duma looks defiantly at Oupa. Oupa turns his attention back to the others, bellows instructions.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Better, better, better! Shaya!

Then he turns to Duma again stares at him. Duma slowly walks to the edge of the water with the canoe. He adjusts his clothing, takes off his shoes and climbs into the canoe. He easily gets his balance and starts paddling. Oupa watches him, he's rusty at first but the muscle memory kicks in. His paddle digging into water which flies off the blades.

19 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM WATER AND BANK - DAY** 19

He's finding some rhythm. He goes hard at the straight alongside the bridge.

Then something hits him in the face. A plastic bag filled with water, he gets a fright and capsizes into the water. He frantically flips the canoe over. When he comes up for air, he sees Zama, Zwelibanzi and others standing on a higher piece of land overlooking the dam. They laugh and cheer. They launch more water bombs in Duma's direction. Papsaks, milk cartons you name it.

DUMA
Voetsek man!

Howls of delight from the group. Oupa watches from a distance.

20 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - LATE AFTERNOON** 20

Mandisa sits in the pool of light peeling potatoes. She looks up at her sopping wet brother.

MANDISA
And then?

He does not answer her, takes his shirt off and hangs it up. He can't look at her.

21 **EXT. BACK OF SHOPS ELIAS MOTSOLEDI - DAY** 21

Duma sits with his back to the desolate concrete wall of the shops, lost and dispirited. Oupa drives past in his kombi Duma drops his head hoping that Oupa won't see him. Oupa's kombi stops and reverses slowly till he looks directly at Duma.

OUPA
You on your way to the dam?

Duma looks at him deadpan.

DAN (CONT'D)
He's getting better right.

OUPA
Sure.

DAN
It's not just me thinking he's
getting better.

OUPA
He's getting better.

DAN
PUUUUUUUSHHHHH IT LITTLE MAN
PUUUUSH!

Dan sees Duma who stands looking out at the guys on the water. They get to him. Dan extends a hand. Duma shakes it.

OUPA
You remember this guy?

Now Oupa smiles. Dan looks at him, trying to remember.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Duma...

DAN
Duma, yes, of course, how you
man...

OUPA
I'm OK.

DAN
We used to call you something man,
a nickname...

DUMA
Helicopter.

DAN
That's it. Helicopter. Geez Oups,
remember how fast this Oke was.

Oupa nods.

DAN (CONT'D)
You all grown up now?

Duma smiles bashfully.

DAN (CONT'D)
Where've you been man?

Duma shrugs, looks down. Dan doesn't push it.

DAN (CONT'D)

Well it's good to see you here,.
You going to paddle?

DUMA

I'm OK.

DAN

Come on, it's beautiful out there.

It does look beautiful out on the water. A wiry, angular man STEVE (44) paddles up to the bank with a young kid in the back, he moves like a pro. The young kid jumps out of the boat beaming from ear to ear.

TAPELO

Dankie Bra Steve.

Steve nods, half smiles, looks at his watch.

DAN

Steve, you got time for one more?

STEVE

I'm done Fish, I need to train.

DAN

One more lap's not going to kill you. There you go, Duma, jump in.

Duma moves over and gets into the boat with Steve. They mumble greetings at each other.

DAN (CONT'D)

You in here with the best of the best Duma.

Steve shakes his head.

DAN (CONT'D)

Okes a machine! Nine golds in the Dusi! Soon to be ten.

STEVE

Ja, ja/ we hope/ we hope.

(Must shoot Dan and Oupa's stuff in next as part of this scene)

Steve paddles slowly so that Duma can get used to it again.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Just follow me, keep in my time.

Duma nods. Steve paddles powerfully, his shoulders move with strong confident strokes. Duma tries to keep up. Dan and Oupa watch from the side.

31 **EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI - DAY**

31

Zama and Duma walk down the dusty streets. Zama hyper, jittery.

ZAMA

Easy money Joe, easy money. The building is being demolished, all you have to do is keep watch.

DUMA

Where did you hear about this?

ZAMA

From a guy I know who knows stuff.

DUMA

What's he get out of it.

ZAMA

Small piece of the pie.

DUMA

Stuff is getting too dangerous man, ask one of the other guys.

ZAMA

I don't trust those other moegoes man, I trust you

DUMA

Ja and I trusted you not to spend my money.

ZAMA

Come on Duma, sorry man, I was thirsty and Mike only gave me two hundred for that cable.

DUMA

Ja then a hundred of that was mine.

ZAMA

OK, sure, so for this one, I'll give you that hundred up front and then we split the rest fifty/fifty.

Duma looks down.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

Easiest money you ever made man.

32 **INT. DERELICT BUILDING INDUSTRIAL AREA - NIGHT**

32

Inside the building Zama is running riot, stripping the cables out of the wall, rolling them up tossing them into large black bags. Duma, nervous, looks around.

ZAMA

What did I tell you Joe, this is free money. This is going to be thousands.

He finishes pulling out the last cables.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

One more floor, then we done.

He hurtles off towards a staircase and then up into another section. Duma walks towards the stairs, he looks down. All is well. He stands at the stairwell. Then he hears a noise. He looks down, he sees a man with a gun, indicating for others to move up the stairs. Plain clothed cops, jeans, tackies, leather jackets coming up the stairs. He lifts his fingers to whistle for Zama but he sees another cop coming down the passage, he's trapped between them. He's going to be bust any second, he sees an air conditioner vent above him, he jumps up, leverages himself onto it, pushes himself flat. The cops move up the staircase and head into the room where Zama is. Duma almost jumps off but one cop stays to guard the stairwell. Then sounds, shouts, Zama bursts out the door with the cops after him, he tries to run but the other another cop waits for him. They catch him. It is the same cop from earlier.

COP 1

You want to mess with me, huh?

Zama is cuffed by the men. As he is lifted up he sees Duma, their eyes lock. A moment passes. Then Zama is led away.

33 **EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI - NIGHT** 33

Duma looking down at his street from a distance. Cops crawl around Gogo's house, blue lights everywhere. His father looks on, concerned.

34 **EXT. OUPA'S HOUSE IN POWER PARK - DAWN** 34

Oupa and some of the promising young canoeists, five of them, slightly older, 17,18,19, finish loading the canoes onto the trailer. The guys jump in, it's still dark. Oupa pulls the sliding door closed. He walks to the driver's side and sees Duma standing in the shadows.

35 **INT. OUPA'S KOMBI - DAWN** 35

Oupa at the wheel of the kombi -- most of the guys sleep in the back. Duma sits in the passenger seat, anxious.

36 **EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF JOHANNESBURG - DAWN** 36

The kombi heads out past the city as the sun rises over the city of Gold.

DUMA

Uhh...ja...

ANNIE

I'm Annie...I was just speaking to Oupa about you maybe helping me to second Steve, my sister was supposed to but she's dropped out at the last minute, food poisoning, can you believe it, Steve is freaking out. I wanted to see if you were keen to ride with me...help out...

DUMA

Uh...Ok...

ANNIE

Cool, cool, awesome. I'll see you now, now.

She runs off.

39

EXT. CAMPS DRIFT - DAWN

39

Duma watches sixty K1 canoes sit on the water in the dawn light. The expectation building. The banks lined with spectators and marshals. John Oliver gives last instructions and starts counting down. Steve jockeys for position in the front twenty. Then the recording of Ian Player's fish eagle sounds and the canon fires. There is an explosion of kinetic energy as the boats tear off. Duma is entranced by the start. Annie runs past him.

ANNIE

Let's go.

He follows her.

40

INT/EXT. STEVE'S 4X4 - DAY

40

Annie drives like a rally driver jamming the car into gear and almost wheel spinning around creating a cloud of dust. Duma puts on his seat belt nervously.

ANNIE

There are two races in the Dusi, one is on the water and the other is on the road.

She jams the car into gear and tears off down a dirt road. Other cars also heading in the same direction. Duma hangs on for dear life.

41

EXT. PIETERMARITZBURG RIVERSIDE - MORNING

41

The 4x4 barrels alongside the river.

42 **EXT. ROAD NEXT TO ERNIE PIERCE WEIR - DAWN** 42

The 4x4 pulls up into heavy traffic on the bridge looking down on the weir. In the distance we can see the front runners moving along the silver grey water.

ANNIE

Jump out here, grab the extra paddle. If he breaks his paddle, you give him the new one OK?

Duma nods.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Go, go, go...

He jumps out and runs down the embankment with the paddle. He watches as the leaders come flying over Ernie Pearce weir. He watches as Steve bounces up through the water. It's pretty wild. He hears a cry above, looks up, it's Annie standing shouting.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

He nods and runs up.

43 **EXT. ROAD LEAVING PIETERMARITZBURG - DAY** 43

The 4x4 winds its way out of the city districts heading for the sugar cane fields on the outskirts.

44 **EXT. CAMPBELLS ROAD PORTAGE - DAY** 44

Annie runs next to Steve, changing his bottle, it's difficult to keep up.

ANNIE

You doing great, fifteenth, keep going.

When the switch is done, she stops and he runs off down towards the valley. She stands breathing heavily. Duma watches it all.

45 **EXT. MISSION BRIDGE - DAY** 45

Annie and Duma stand on Mission Bridge amongst other spectators and seconds. Now Duma can see the spectacular river undulating into the distance for the first time. The leaders skidding through the rapids. Annie sees Steve.

ANNIE

Come on Steeeeevvveee!

46 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - DAY**

46

Mandisa stands outside in the yard and speaks softly into her phone.

MANDISA

What are you doing there?

47 **EXT. HOUSE OVERLOOKING THE VALLEY - DAY**

47

Duma stands near the river, talking on his phone.

DUMA

I'm here for the Dusi.

MANDISA

Are you in the race?

DUMA

No, I'm just, I'm helping.

MANDISA

Dad is freaking out. Did you hear Zama got arrested?

DUMA

Ja, I heard, what's been happening there?

MANDISA

It's been terrible, there were cops at his place, Gogo hasn't stopped crying.

DUMA

Shame...they didn't come to our place?

MANDISA

No, why...Duma you're not involved in this thing are you?

DUMA

No, no of course not, just asking...I need to go...

MANDISA

What must I tell Dad?

He looks out into the distance.

DUMA

Just tell him, tell I'm here...my airtime is up, I need to go.

He kills the call and looks out uncertainly.

DUMA
I can do it.

ANNIE
You sure?

He nods. She leans over and grabs the juice bottles.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
You saw how to do it? You have to
keep up, he doesn't slow down for
anybody.

She hands him the bottle.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Run down here, then turn left.

Duma moves out of the car. She shouts out the window.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
And tell him he's doing well!

52 **EXT. SADDLES PORTAGE - MORNING**

52

Duma runs fast past the traffic jam of cars holding the
bottle. He turns left into the grassy road down towards the
river. He passes some of the front runners, sees Steve
paddling across the river, gets out on other side, picks up
his boat and starts heading up the hill. Duma runs next to
him, his athleticism shows, he swaps the bottles. Steve nods
grunts thanks and runs off. Duma shouts after him.

DUMA
You doing good Bra Steve.

53 **EXT. DAM WALL INANDA DAM - DAY**

53

Annie and Duma crouch on a rock waiting for Steve.

DUMA
What do you do in Johannesburg?

ANNIE
I'm a doctor... An ophthalmologist, I
work with people's eye's...

DUMA
Where do you work?

ANNIE
At Bara.

DUMA
Serious?

ANNIE
Ja.

DUMA

Then we almost neighbours.

ANNIE

How come?

DUMA

I live just behind Bara in MaElias.

ANNIE

Oh, Ok... hello neighbour.

He smiles.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

What do you do in Johannesburg?

He shrugs.

DUMA

Nothing really.

ANNIE

What do you want to do?

DUMA

I just, I want to be a
somebody...you know...

She nods. Duma sees Steve pushing towards them.

DUMA (CONT'D)

Here comes Bra Steve.

He canoes hard towards them. As Steve passes them, she throws the juice into his canoe.

ANNIE

Zondi's in 11 you can catch him on
the flat water. Push it, push it!

He goes. She watches him.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Now they have the ten k's on the
flat water, into the wind.

DUMA

Eish.

An aerial view of the massive Inanda dam with the top fifteen paddlers moving to the gruelling finish of day 2.

55

EXT. HOUSE OVERLOOKING THE VALLEY - DUSK

55

Duma sits looking out at the valley, it's beautiful. Oupa sits next to him, the Soweto guys in the background, eating, talking about their day at the race.

OUPA

You see any of the guys on the river today?

DUMA

Ja, I did, looks amazing...

They sit there for a time.

DUMA (CONT'D)

Have you done it...the Dusi.

OUPA

Sure. Three times.

DUMA

Wow...It looks scary...

OUPA

It's not nearly as scary as the stuff you involved in.

Duma looks away.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Dan pushed me to do it, he always said, it's not just a race, once you have done it, you'll feel like you can do anything.

DUMA

And was he right?

He nods.

OUPA

Sure, it's a goal, something to work towards. It's easy to get lost if you don't know where you going.

Duma looks away.

OUPA (CONT'D)

These guys are all making something of their lives through the canoeing, they studying, getting good jobs, seeing the country. And you Helicopter, What you doing?

Oupa looks at Duma, challenging him.

OUPA (CONT'D)

You were better than all of them.

56 **EXT. TOPS NEEDLE RAPIDS - DAY**

56

Steve comes flying through the rapids, Duma stands with paddle waiting. Annie screams encouragement as Steve passes another paddler to move into tenth place.

ANNIE

You can do it Steve. Go, go, go.

DUMA

Come on Bra Steeeeeve!

57 **EXT. PUMP HOUSE RAPIDS - DAY**

57

The 4x4 moves through very different, urban landscapes. They drive past the shanty town at the top of the giant bridge.

58 **EXT. SIDE OF RIVER PUMP HOUSE RAPIDS - DAY**

58

Duma and Annie stand on an embankment watching Steve approaching. He comes flying down Pump house weir and then down into the fast flowing rapids. He's taken it too fast, his boat tips and smashes into a rock.

ANNIE

Nooo...

Steve swims frantically his head popping out of the water, he's holding onto his boat, the river carries him downstream to when he can get to the side. He takes his boat out and it's smashed, he shouts in frustration. He stands in the water holding his broken canoe. Duma looks on, frozen. Annie runs down towards him. She tries to talk to him he is not listening. Duma watches from a distance as Annie tells him to stop. He is in a daze, not listening. Steve picks up the canoe and starts running. Annie calls after him in frustration, he does not stop. She watches him, upset.

59 **INT/EXT. STEVE'S 4 X 4 / PUMP HOUSE- DAY**

59

Duma in the car and Annie gets in, she slams the door, fighting her emotions.

ANNIE

He is going to run all the way to Durban.

She's emotional.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Because that's just how he is!

The car spins around and hits the dirt road.

67

EXT. BLUE LAGOON - AFTERNOON

67

The last of the canoeists have long since left, banners being packed away. Few people left at the finish line. Cleaners pick up rubbish. A tired-looking Annie leans against the car talking on her cellphone, a few stragglers hang around. Duma paces up and down the side of the Blue Lagoon.

Duma sees something, a figure in the distance walking on the bank. It's Steve. Duma calls Annie, she ends her phone call.

Steve pushes his broken canoe through the water. He half walks and half swims through the water towards the finish line, he is utterly exhausted. Duma walks into the shallow water to meet him, helps him.

68

EXT. BLUE LAGOON - AFTERNOON

68

Steve sits on the open section of his 4x4 with a towel around him, broken and upset. Duma approaches with his broken boat and paddle. He holds up the boat.

DUMA

What must I do with this?

Steve speaks softly without looking up.

STEVE

It's finished, leave it here.

He nods, holds up the paddle.

DUMA

And this?

STEVE

I don't want it, take it if you want.

Duma looks at the paddle then back at Steve.

DUMA

Next year I want to do the race.

Steve looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

Maybe... we can do it together?

Steve looks at him, totally unsure how to respond.

69

EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - NIGHT

69

Duma approaches the shack, the door is open. He can hear his family inside. He holds his paddle, looks around, not sure whether to take it in. He takes it with him and walks towards the doorway. His sister is happy to see him, greets him warmly. Duma greets his father who ignores him.

Duma takes the paddle inside, it's awkward, bangs into things. He puts it down near his bed.

MANDLA

Dusi?

Duma looks at his father, nods.

MANDLA (CONT'D)

Dusi?

Duma looks down. Mandla takes Duma's paddle and throws it out of the shack.

MANDLA (CONT'D)

Dusi can voetsek man. Did your sister tell you what happened on Friday? That pervert Mogale followed her all the way home. It was only lucky Siph's looked out for her. This, after I asked you to be here, for this very reason.

Duma looks down, feels bad. Mandla looks at his son.

MANDLA (CONT'D)

You are not a child anymore. You are a man now and you need to behave like a man. We need money. I'm killing myself out there, every day waiting to be picked up on the side of the road, to earn something, anything, what are you doing to bring money into this house? You think you can live in this world for free.

DUMA

No I...

MANDLA

You want to see how easy it is?

DUMA

Tata...

He steps towards Duma and pushes him.

MANDLA

Go try living out there and see what it's like.

He pushes him out the door. He's out now. Mandla closes the door.

MANDISA (O.S.)

Tata...

MANDLA (O.S.)

No, that boy needs to grow up!
Dusi? Dusi what? Get a damn job!

His anger underscored by frustration. Duma stands in the yard. He picks up his paddle, dusts it off. He sits on a plastic beer crate holding the paddle. (Shoot some of him paddling to be used later.)

70

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

70

Annie and Steve look like they've been arguing for hours.

STEVE

I was in a race. I wanted to finish the race. Why is that so wrong?

She looks at him, shakes her head.

ANNIE

You just get this look in your eyes and it's, it's impossible to get through to you...

STEVE

Ja, when I'm racing, I do, I...

ANNIE

It's not just when you're racing Steve... and you know it.

She's touching a nerve here.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I feel like I have been saying a lot of things for a long time...

His head drops.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And you're just not hearing me and it's not OK, we are not OK.

71

EXT. KAROO ROAD - NIGHT

71

A 4x4 moves fast along the deserted tar road --two headlights piercing the darkness. The kudu stands still in the crisp night air with the fence behind it. It's ears listening to the sound of the car getting closer -- the sound increasing like a distant roar -- panic in the beast's eyes.

72

EXT. MELVILLE STREETS - DAY

72

In the darkness of pre-dawn Steve runs. His body aches from the race but he runs through the pain.

73 **EXT. ZAMA'S PLACE - MORNING**

73

Duma makes his way down the road. He sees Gogo lifting up the heavy bucket of water. It's a struggle for her. He moves towards her, takes the bucket from her and carries it to the house. She walks up behind her, she thanks him.

GOGO

They say bail is two thousand.
Where we going to get that? You
need to help us Duma.

Duma looks at her, feeling awful. She takes out a tissue from her under her watch and wipes her eye.

GOGO (CONT'D)

What will happen to him in there
Duma? Please God, let him be safe
in that place. Please God.

74 **EXT. RDP HOUSES ELIAS MOTSOALEDI - DAY**

74

Oupa's kombi stands outside one of the RDP houses.

75 **INT. RDP HOUSE ELIAS MOTSOALEDI - DAY**

75

Oupa wires up the small new house. Duma stands watching him.

OUPA

I don't have that kind of money
lying around...

Duma looks at him.

OUPA (CONT'D)

And even if I did I wouldn't use it
for that. Pass me the wirecutters.

Duma looks in the toolbox and passes them to Oupa.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Sometimes when you young you think
you are invincible, nothing can
stop you, you king of the world!
That boy needs to learn a few
things.

Oupa carries on with his work. Looks up to Duma.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Can you strip cable?

He nods.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Stupid question. Strip about this
much on both sides.

Oupa throws him the cable and Duma does it, easily

OUPA (CONT'D)

If you want to earn some money, you can help me with my work, I can't pay much but it's better than nothing.

Duma nods. Duma looks up at Oupa.

DUMA

What was it like in jail?

OUPA

Like watching your life get eaten away. (Like hell.)

76

INT. DABULAMANZI CLUBHOUSE - EARLY EVENING

76

The bar is crowded. Steve at the bar talks to Eddie

STEVE

All I had to do was stay afloat and I would have got gold, I should have just portaged pump house but you know what it's like when you're out there...

EDDIE

White water fever.

STEVE

Exactly. Just thought, it'll be cool, no problem, took it slightly on the wrong angle, next thing, waaaaa, river tunes howzit, wrapped boat...arrghhhhhh

Geoff comes past them, stops next to them.

GEOFF

I swear next Thursday I'm bringing earplugs.

EDDIE

How come?

GEOFF

No man, those Soweto okes in the changeroom, it's waaaa, waaaa, waaaaaaa, they standing right next to each other but they bellow at the top of their voices, *(He does exaggerates the accent and volume)* Hai Siphon I did not do well in time trials. Hai Vusi me neither, okes standing right there, unbelievable. You okes Ok for drinks?

They nod. He moves down the bar. Steve watches Geoff, no love lost.

STEVE
So, we going to start training for
next year?

A moment.

EDDIE
Uhhh, I dunno Steve man...

STEVE
Come on, one more. I need that
tenth gold man, I need it....

Eddie looks down.

EDDIE
Uhh, listen man...I, I can't do
next year...

STEVE
Hey? Why not? Come on man, we can
do it...

EDDIE
I told Geoff I'd do it with him.

STEVE
Geoff?

EDDIE
Ja.

STEVE
Since when is this?

EDDIE
He asked me a while ago. You
weren't sure you wanted to do it,
if you'd got the gold this time you
said you might call it quits.

This is a white lie and they both know it.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
I should have waited...

STEVE
No, no...

EDDIE
Sorry man.

STEVE
No, no...no sweat...I suppose I did
say that...

Steve's trying to put on a brave face, Eddie finding the whole thing incredibly awkward.

77

EXT. DABULAMANZI PARKING LOT - NIGHT

77

Steve comes round the corner in the dark, he's had a few drinks, drowning his sorrows. Eddie and Geoff finish off a conversation in the semi darkness. Steve stops in the shadows.

EDDIE

That was not the easiest conversation in the world...

GEOFF

Had to be done man, had to be done, the oke has become unplayable.

EDDIE

I know, I know...

GEOFF

I mean does he actually understand what pain in the arse he's become, and that's fine if you at the top of your game but he's a tired old kwagga...

EDDIE

Well, I don't know about that...

GEOFF

He's not winning any more golds, I'll tell you that much, you want to know why, because we are winning them. And it's actually going to be fun! Going to be a laugh a minute man. Leg strength tomorrow!

He slaps him on the back. They head for their cars. Steve stands in the darkness feeling abandoned.

78

INT. JOBURG BOYS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

78

Steve walks in the front of the class holding a book of poetry. He reads from it. We might feel Dan waiting outside for Steve. Looking at him teaching, the door open. (*Let him read the whole poem*)

STEVE

She washed and folded her years away. She held my tears in the cracks of her hands. She beamed my triumph thought the gaps in her grin.

He stops, looks at the boys, teenagers, distracted, fidgety.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Now that is poetry.

He reads again.

STEVE (CONT'D)

She held my tears in the cracks of
her hands. She beamed my triumph
thought the gaps in her grin.

79

EXT. SCHOOL FIELD - DAY

79

Dan and Steve walks and talk, Stone buildings behind them.

STEVE

If it were anyone else... but
Geoff! I mean, seriously...Geoff?

DAN

I am with you on that one man. Why
not partner with this Duma guy?

STEVE

Naah man.

DAN

Oupa tells me the guy is desperate
to paddle with you.

Steve shakes his head

DAN (CONT'D)

He is seriously talented, you must
have seen him when he was a kid...

STEVE

Ja, I know, it's not that Fish,
it's just, agg, I've seen how those
things play out...

DAN

What does that mean?

STEVE

You know man, these okes, they're
hard work, they're always late,
they got no bucks, they got no
transport, they got no equipment.
That's not their fault but I'm just
being honest here. I want to
compete. This is really, really my
last flipping chance for gold, I
don't want to be baby-sitting some
kid from the township.

Dan looks at him.

DAN

Ja, they don't have bucks and ja, it's a battle for them to even get to train to all but that doesn't mean they don't want to, because they do...they want it more than anything but there's, they have a lot of challenges.

STEVE

I get that...

DAN

And sometimes when someone like you reaches out and says OK boet, let's give this a try, that can be a big thing.

80 **EXT. JOHANNESBURG ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON**

80

Steve runs down the road, he runs hard. The next thing Duma is running next to him. Steve's gear, clothes and shoes are extremely professional compared to Duma's scraggly attire.

DUMA

Eita...

Steve shakes his head, keeps running. Duma keeps up with him.

81 **EXT. WESTCLIFF STAIRS - LATE AFTERNOON**

81

Steve ascends the Westcliff stairs, Duma at his heels. Steve gets to the top and he's down again, then up again, then down again, then up and down for one last time. It's a test, he's pushing himself and Duma. Steve gets back to the bottom, they're exhausted, hunched over breathing heavily.

STEVE

Why do you want to do the race with me?

Duma looks at him, speaks straight up, breathing heavily.

DUMA

Because you strong and you don't give up...I want to be like that.

Steve looks at him, still breathing heavily.

STEVE

Duma, I don't do the Dusi for fun, it's not a hobby for me, I do it to win gold...that's it.

Duma looks at him, shrugs.

DUMA

And me too I also want to win gold

Steve looks at him, something shifts.

82

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

82

Annie grabs a dog's leash from the back of the kitchen door. Their dog, a large labrador lies on the floor looking ill.

ANNIE

Look at him, does he look OK to you? I'll just have to take him to the vet in Parktown North.

STEVE

That guy is a total crook, remember the five grand...

ANNIE

I know he's a crook Steve but we don't have any option now.

STEVE

I'll take him to Pete tomorrow.

ANNIE

I don't want him to go tomorrow, I want him to see a vet today which is why I asked you to take him today and you said fine...

STEVE

I'm sorry, I was training and...

ANNIE

Ja, I know, you were doing what you wanted to do and everything else in the world went out the window.

She says the last bit with unusual intensity.

STEVE

What's going on here?

ANNIE

It's true, it's true Steve, you are on your own flipping mission, you always have been, but before, it was OK, I could deal with it but since...it's just got worse and worse, it's like every day you just get a little bit further away...and I don't want to do it anymore

This statement echoes in the space. Steve looks down.

STEVE

What do you want me to do?

ANNIE

I want you to stop running.

He looks down. Silence.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

You can't just go on as if nothing ever happened...

He nods silently.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I have the name of a psychologist for us to see, she's highly recommended...

He looks down.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

It might not work but at least it's something, some kind of...

STEVE

Ok...

She looks at him.

ANNIE

Really?

STEVE

Ja. Ja...let's go see her.

A moment of light.

83

EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM AND BANK - DAY

83

Steve paddles hard in the late afternoon light on Emmarentia Dam. He ploughs his frustrations into the exercise, he is aware of Duma on the side of the dam. He jams his paddle in and heads towards him.

STEVE

OK fine...fine...let's try it...

Duma looks up at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I'm not saying it's going to work or anything, I'm just saying let's give it a try....that's all. We start tomorrow at six.

Duma nods, suppressing a smile. Steve canoes off, now Duma smiles for real.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Listen Duma, If we're going to do this there are a couple of things you need to know about me. I'm a pain in the ass about certain things. OK? I believe in punctuality and discipline and respect. I don't do late, OK? If we say seven then it's seven. I'm not doing the African time thing. I can't do it. If you need to leave earlier, then leave earlier but make sure you get here on time, OK?

Duma looks at him.

94

EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - EARLY MORNING

94

Steve and Duma on the water together. Duma in the back of the canoe, Steve in the front. Duma's trying to impress, forcing the pace.

STEVE

You're chasing it back there, take the pace from me.

Duma tries but struggles. Steve talks to him, shouting at him, slower, slower.

CUT TO:

They're on another side of the dam. They do a drill, twenty strokes on the left then twenty on the right.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Watch my shoulder and get in time with me...no, you rushing, follow me..

95

EXT. DABULAMANZI - EARLY MORNING

95

Duma and Steve packing up the canoe.

STEVE

Singles is totally different to doubles. K1 is just you, you determine the pace, the strategy, you control the rudder, everything. K2 is about how two people combine to make the power. They almost need to become one person. You understand?

He nods.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You sure? Cos you nodding but are you fully understanding me?

DUMA

Bra Steve, I studied English at school. I don't speak to many people in English. Sometimes you speak very fast, my brain can't think that fast in English and it's worse if I'm tired.

Steve looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

I mean if you spoke Zulu as a second language and I was speaking slowly (*He demonstrates in Zulu, speaking slowly*) you would be following me but if I started speaking fast like (*He speaks very fast in Zulu*)...and then imagine you tired on top of that?

Steve looks at him deadpan.

STEVE

So I should speak slower?

96

EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - LATE AFTERNOON

96

Duma combines cooking with exercising. He gets the stove going by using paper and small pieces of wood. While the water is boiling he runs up and down the road. His sister sits in the yard doing her homework. She shakes her head at him. She sees their father coming home, she whistles. Duma hears the whistle and darts back into the shack, carries on with the cooking. His father comes in, weary after a long day's grind.

DUMA

Tata...

Mandla grunts at him and walks into his section of the shack. He sits down heavily and wearily on the bed.

97

INT/EXT. STEVE'S 4X4 - MORNING

97

Steve waiting for Duma who runs down the road, arrives breathless. They nod greetings at each other and get into the car.

Steve gets into his car, he leans over and unlocks the door for Duma. Duma opens the door. Steve sees his wallet lying in the middle between them. He takes the wallet and puts it on his side of the car. Duma notices it. Steve starts the car.

DUMA

I like this car. Maybe one day I can hear it...

OUPA

So tell Steve you want to try in front.

DUMA

Haai, no way, Bra Steve, uhuh, you can't tell him nothing. He's just like (he indicates someone who looks straight ahead)

Oupa smiles, shrugs.

OUPA

Then get used to being in the back.

He looks at Duma.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Did you get that money I mpesa'd?

Duma nods.

DUMA

Ja...dankie Oupa.

101

EXT. MELVILLE KOPPIES - AFTERNOON

101

Steve and Duma stand in the late afternoon sun. They walk holding the canoe.

STEVE

You step left, I step right, you step left, I step right.

They walk steps with the canoe holding the canoe on their shoulders. It's not easy.

CUT TO:

They jog with the canoe on their shoulders, starting to get some rhythm when a small dog runs out from nowhere barking at them. Duma gets a serious fright, almost drops the boat.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What you doing man?

The owner of the dog calls it and it disappears.

DUMA

I'm scared of those things.

STEVE

That little thing?

DUMA

Any of those things.

Steve makes light of it.

STEVE

What's that little dog going to do to you?

DUMA

Bite me.

STEVE

Don't be crazy man, look at the size of it. Imagine what you look like to it.

DUMA

They can bite those things doesn't matter the size.

Steve can't get his head around this.

STEVE

Come on, come on, let's get moving.

Duma picks up the canoe, looking anxiously for the dog.

DUMA

Those little ones have got these sharp little teeth!

Steve shakes his head. Duma talks as they pick up the boat.

DUMA (CONT'D)

In the townships we call dogs things like Gevaar, or Ingozi or Verwoerd or Hitler because we know they dangerous.

102

INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - DAY

102

Annie sits in a therapist's waiting room. She looks at a clock on the wall. It is one minute away from five. She reaches into her bag and takes out her phone. GAIL, a woman in her mid thirties opens a door. Annie stands up.

GAIL

Annie?

ANNIE

Ja, hi, Gail...

They shake hands.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry, I don't know where Steve is...

103 **EXT. MELVILLE KOPPIES - DAY** 103

Duma and Steve run across the top of the Melville Koppies, the sun setting. The Johannesburg skyline in the background, write it up, the pain.

104 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT** 104

Annie has a bag, she stands near the front door.

STEVE

You don't have to go.

ANNIE

I do, I do, I do

STEVE

You don't...

ANNIE

Do you know what it has taken for me, to just be sane, after everything, it's taken every last bit of energy that I have, but I can't do it for you as well Steve....I can't.

Steve looks down, emotional.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I'll be at my sister.

She walks out, leaving Steve standing there gutted. He sits down. (Spend some time with him.)

105 **INT. ANNIE'S CAR - NIGHT** 105

Annie gets into her car, her emotion gets the better of her. She has held it back till now. But now it spills over.

106 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - NIGHT** 106

Duma sits with Mandla and Duma. Gogo talks emotionally with Duma, Mandla looks on.

GOGO

I know there have been problems with him, but he's a good boy, he is Mandla...I promise you... What am I without him?

The emotion getting the better of her.

GOGO (CONT'D)

And now he is in that place, full of tsotsis. Bad men, what will they do to him, I cannot sleep at night thinking about that.

She can't handle it, tears come.

107 **EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - DAY**

107

People arrive for time trials. Steve stands at his canoe, he wants to get on the water, he's tightly wound, still reeling. He looks at his watch. Dan is nearby.

STEVE

Where the hell are these guys?

DAN

They're almost here, there was an accident on the highway.

Eddie and Geoff walks with their canoe past Steve.

GEOFF

African time bru.

Steve looks at Geoff with venom. Geoff and Eddie put their boat on the water and move off.

108 **EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - DAY**

108

The canoes float in the water prior to the time trials. The K1s have taken off and the K2's are ready to go. Steve and Duma in their canoe, Steve in the front, Duma in the back. Oupa and Dan watch from the bank. Ed and Geoff in their canoe. Steve going into hard-core competitive mode.

STEVE

We gonna go hard today. Time trial
or no time trial we go hard.

The hooter sounds and the K2's take off. Duma and Steve not the fastest out of the block, they struggle to get onto a decent wave. Geoff and Ed move past them easily. Duma is not feeling it. The two men struggle to get any kind of rhythm.

CUT TO:

Other canoeists seem to pass Steve and Duma at will. They look like they're paddling through mud. The effort is there but something's not working. Duma's not happy and neither is Steve. Seeing Ed and Geoff paddle so fluidly and easily together fuels Steve's frustrations.

CUT TO:

Duma and Steve finish the time trial in a very bad position. Steve shouts in frustration as they cross the finish line.

109 **EXT. DABULAMANZI - LATE AFTERNOON**

109

Duma and Steve putting their canoe away. Steve grim.

STEVE

This is just a time trial, it doesn't mean anything but that was just too hard, it shouldn't be that hard, when it's working, you get this, like this momentum, like you just want to go more and more, like you could do it forever, that was, that was, hopeless.

Duma want to say something, builds up the courage to say it.

DUMA

What if we change?

STEVE

Change what?

DUMA

Maybe with me in front.

STEVE

That's not what this is about.

DUMA

Why can't we just try?

STEVE

No, no, you okes think you can just arrive and next thing you in the front of the boat, no man, that's not how it works. I've done fifteen flipping Dusis. How many have you done?

Duma looks down. Steve speaks softly, with an air of defeat.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Listen Duma, sometimes it doesn't work, sometimes people don't gell together. It's not anybody's fault it's just what it is.

He turns and walks away.

110

EXT. DABULAMANZI PARKING LOT - LATE AFTERNOON

110

Dan and Steve in the parking lot, they have had a few drinks. Dan's getting angry with his friend.

STEVE

You asked me to try it, I tried it and it didn't work out,

DAN

Come on Steve...

STEVE

What, it's the truth, it's impossible.

DAN

It's not impossible China, but it takes effort. Ja, it does, so what? It'll pay off. You want to make a partnership with this oke work, you have to reach out, you have to get to know him, get to know his story, try understand him, what makes him tick...

STEVE

Not for me...not for me. Can't do it. Sorry Fish. Tried, failed, let's all move on.

Dan looks at him.

DAN

Is that all this is about?

STEVE

What is that supposed to mean?

He looks around.

DAN

I heard Annie moved out.

Steve glares at him.

STEVE

I don't believe this, I don't believe it, so everybody's already yakking about it...

DAN

No, Steve...that's not.

STEVE

Unflippingbelievable...

He walks off.

DAN

Steve, Stevo, come on man!

He's into his car and pulling off angry. Dan watches him.

111

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

111

Steve gets home to an empty house. He walks through the empty house and stops outside a closed door in the passage. He stands looking at the door. He reaches down to open the door but stops halfway through. He leans his head into the door.

112 **EXT. KAROO ROAD - NIGHT** 112

The giant kudu looks anxious, its eyes darting around. A large 4x4 driving soundlessly through the night, its lights shining on the road. Steve drives the car, he looks out at the road. The kudu watches the oncoming car, frightened.

113 **EXT. DESERTED SPACE NEXT TO RIVER - MORNING** 113

Duma sticks his hand into a secret hole in the ground and pulls out a dirty towel. He unwraps the towel, inside are the tools for stealing cables. Duma walks determinedly carrying the rolled up towel.

114 **EXT. RDP HOUSES ELIAS MOTSOALEDI - MORNING** 114

Oupa sits waiting for Duma. He looks at his watch. He picks up his phone and calls. The phone goes to answer, Duma's message. Oupa kills the call, he heads for his kombi.

115 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - DAY** 115

Oupa gets to Duma's place.

OUPA

Duma!

He bangs on the door. No answer.

116 **EXT. DESERTED RAILWAY LINES SOWETO - DAY** 116

Duma walks along the tracks, he looks at the cable underneath the tracks. He breathes heavily. He puts the towel down, kneels down, opens it --picks up a wooden stick with a nail on it, looks around, gets up close to the very thick live cable, pulls the galvanized cable behind it with his stick. Sweat drips off his forehead.

117 **EXT. ROAD NEAR DESERTED RAILWAY LINE SOWETO - DAY** 117

Oupa drives along a dusty road looking around.

118 **EXT. DESERTED RAILWAY LINE SOWETO - DAY** 118

Duma takes the bolt cutters, moves to stand over the cable. He takes a deep breath and is about to cut when.

OUPA (O.S.)

What are you doing?

He looks up and sees Oupa moving towards him.

DUMA

Just leave me Oupa, this is not your business...

Oupa glares at him, hard.

OUPA

I asked you a question. What the hell are you doing?

DUMA

I need money man.

OUPA

For what?

He looks away.

OUPA (CONT'D)

MONEY FOR WHAT?

DUMA

For Zama...for bail...

OUPA

This is your responsibility now? To get a criminal out of jail?

DUMA

I was also doing these things, I need to help him, he's my friend.

OUPA

Haaaa, friend, you sure about that? You need friends who lift you up not drop you down, in the dirt. You stay friends with him, you gonna land up in the same place as him, then who's gonna bail you out?

Duma looks down.

OUPA (CONT'D)

You been doing good this last time, really good. Stay with it, focus on the canoeing...do the Dusi...

He mumbles under his breath.

DUMA

I can't...

OUPA

Why not?

DUMA

Bra Steve doesn't want to do it.

OUPA

Since when?

DUMA

Last night.

Oupa takes this in.

OUPA
And what do you want?

He shrugs.

DUMA
I want to carry on.

OUPA
So tell him/ have you told him that

DUMA
Ei...Oupa....I can't tell him
nothing... you know how stubborn he
is, he does what he wants. He
doesn't need this, his life is all
sorted out, sharp.

OUPA
And you must just accept
everything, no matter what he says.

He shrugs again.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Talk to him, tell him what you
feel, stand up Duma, (you have find
something inside, that makes you
believe in yourself.)

Duma looks at him, big eyes.

OUPA (CONT'D)
You guys think you can steal power.
You can't, power comes from here...

He hits his chest hard. Duma looks at him.

119

EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE- LATE AFTERNOON

119

Duma walks determinedly down a street, looking at the numbers on the gates. He gets to Steve's house, takes a deep breath and presses the buzzer. Steve's dog runs out barking at him. He gets a fright, steps back. Steve opens the front door.

STEVE
Charlie, Charlie, inside.

The dog moves away from the gate towards him. Steve just sees a shape at the gate, assumes he's a beggar.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Sorry...I don't have anything...

Duma takes his cap off.

DUMA

Haaai, bra Steve, it's Duma.

He looks at Duma. Steve walks to the gate.

STEVE

Duma...sorry, I couldn't see...

He moves towards the gate.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Is something wrong?

DUMA

Can we talk?

STEVE

Uhhh, sure, come in.

He opens the gate. Duma steps in gingerly, looking at the dog, who growls menacingly at Duma.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Charlie stay! He won't do anything.

Duma walks slowly up the steps, looking at the dog all the time. He is relieved when he gets inside and the dog stays out.

120

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE MELVILLE - DAY

120

Duma walks in taking in Steve's house.

DUMA

I was bitten by a dog when I was a kid, since then I'm scared of them.

STEVE

The thing with dogs, is you can't show fear, they can smell it and that's when they're dangerous.

DUMA

I don't know how to not show fear.

STEVE

You just look at them in the eye and show them who's boss.

DUMA

Have you ever been bitten?

STEVE

No.

He nods, looking around.

DUMA
Is Annie home?

STEVE
Uh, no, she's, she's working late.

He nods. A moments pause.

DUMA
Ja, so I, I just wanted to talk
about the canoeing.

Steve nods. Duma digging deep.

DUMA (CONT'D)
Ja, Ja , I wanted to say that, you
know, that, I'm giving everything
to this thing, you know, I'm trying
with all I have to be a good
partner to you.

Steve looks at him. Duma battling to assert himself here.

DUMA (CONT'D)
But it's like you not trying as
hard.

STEVE
That's not true.

DUMA
It is true Bra Steve, the first
time we have a problem, we have one
bad time trial, you like, haaa,
this is useless. We giving up.

Steve looks at him.

STEVE
It's not just the time trial.

Duma surprised, takes a moment

DUMA
What then?

STEVE
...it's just everything...it just
feels too hard...

Duma looks at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I partnered with Eddie for so long
it became easy, we knew what each
other was doing and thinking,
nothing needed explaining, we had
the same language.

DUMA

Ja and that is what we trying to do, we just starting that... you always say in K2 we must become like one person...

Steve looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

But we not...not at all, you act like you know me but you don't...

STEVE

And you think you know me?

DUMA

Not everything but I know some things. I know you are Mr. Steve Andrews and you are a teacher and I know you have a lovely wife called Annie and I know where you live and I know what kind of car you drive and I can speak your language, not very well but way better than you can speak mine...

Steve's getting his back up.

STEVE

You think because you know where I live that you know me.

DUMA

No... of course not but what do you know about **me**? Bra Steve? You know where I live, you know what my situation is, my family...my sister, my father..you know anything about any of that?

Steve glares at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

You even know what my surname is?

Steve looks at him, looks down.

(Not sure we need all of below but will see how it plays in rehearsal.)

DUMA (CONT'D)

I had a feeling from the first time I was in that boat with you, that we could be something, together, something stronger than you and me on our own, and I wanted it really bad and I felt like it could help me be a somebody and I would have done anything to do it but you don't want the same damn thing so you right, let's just forget about the whole thing.

Steve looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

(In Zulu) You should be lucky to have me as a partner, no-one else wants to paddle with you because you such a pain in the ass.

He turns and walks away. He pushes the front door open. Steve's dog sits outside, growls at him. Duma stares the dog in the face and speaks firmly at the dog in Zulu.

DUMA (CONT'D)

You so much as look at me funny, I will bite your flipping ear off.

121 **EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - AFTERNOON**

121

Steve paddles around the dam on his own in the K2, the boat doesn't sit properly on the water. He stops paddling and lets the boat drift in the water.

122 **EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - LATE AFTERNOON**

122

Duma's sister is having a meltdown. She's upset, venting.

MANDISA

And then in English they say we must write about a day at home. What must I say, that I live in hell?

DUMA

Hey...come on...

MANDISA

What must I say Duma? That I live in a tin shack, that we've got nothing, that, my damn shoes are too small and broken and we don't even have any electricity and...

DUMA

What's going on with you today?

MANDISA

Even all those things I can deal
with but...it's...I don't even have
a mother anymore...

Her face crumples, he goes to her, puts his arms around her.

DUMA

Hey, hey...shhhhh....

MANDISA

I miss her....so much sometimes...

DUMA

Me too... me too...

(Duma's phone rings silently next to him, he notices Steve's name on the caller ID, he ignores it.)

123

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

123

Steve paces around, on the phone. It's ringing. The phone goes to message.

STEVE

Ja, look Duma, Steve here, give me
a call.

He kills the call stand there, feeling a bit grim.

124

EXT. JOHANNESBURG - DAY

124

Steve hits the highway past the city.

125

EXT. ELIAS MOTSOALEDI- AFTERNOON

125

Steve drives his 4x4 through Soweto, he nervously looks at directions on a piece of paper. He turns off the road towards Elias. He is in unchartered terrain.

126

INT. ELIAS MOTSOALEDI - AFTERNOON

126

Steve's 4x4 bumps along the dirt roads of Elias Motsoaledi. He's getting lost, and getting increasingly uncomfortable. He eventually pulls his car over, parks it and gets out. He goes to the little stall selling Niknaks. He shows the kid the piece of paper. She points in the direction of Duma's house. He starts walking, taking in the specifics of the area.

CUT TO:

Steve walks through the dusty streets taking it all in. The kids standing on the streets commenting.

He passes some dodgy looking guys who mutter under their breath at him, he quickens his pace.

CUT TO:

Steve passes the men drinking at the shebeen, waves to them, they look at him. Mutter under their breathes, what the hell is this Mlungu doing here? He carries on walking up the street, taking it all in.

CUT TO:

Steve asks Gogo where he should be going. She tells him. He looks a little lost and vulnerable.

Steve hits the highway past the city.

CUT TO:

Steve arrives at the shack. It's all quiet but he can see that the door is open, he walks a bit closer. He stops.

STEVE

Hellooo...

Duma pops his head out and is surprised to see Steve. They look at each other.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Howzit...

127

INT. DUMA'S SHACK - AFTERNOON

127

Steve enters with Duma in the cramped shack, Steve taking it all in.

DUMA

Sit...sit

Steve sits on one of the plastic chairs.

DUMA (CONT'D)

You want some water?

STEVE

Thank you.

He pours water from a jug and hands it to him. They sit there, it's awkward.

DUMA

How did you find this place?

STEVE

Oupa... gave me directions which were a bit rubbish...

They sit in silence, he sips water.

STEVE (CONT'D)

So this is where you live?

He nods.

DUMA

Me and my sister sleep there and my father through there...

Steve nods.

STEVE

How long have you lived here?

DUMA

Since I was about 8. My dad has his name on the list for the RDP houses, so we hope to move there one day.

Steve nods, taking in the sparse surrounds. A long pause.

STEVE

I been thinking about what you said.

Duma looks at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I think we can be good one day. And ja, we are just starting, I know that sometimes I can be a bit of an ass...everyone seems to agree on that...but I do want to try again...if you want to...

Duma looks at him, giving nothing away.

DUMA

I want to ask a few things.

Steve looks at him, nods.

DUMA (CONT'D)

I know you older then me I respect that but want you to talk to me like a man, not like a child. Like your partner.

STEVE

Of course.

DUMA

I would also like us to train on this side sometimes. It's far for me and expensive always to be going that side...

Steve nods.

DUMA (CONT'D)

I would also like us to speak in Zulu sometimes.

Steve looks a bit puzzled.

DUMA (CONT'D)

OK that one is a joke... but I do
have one more thing to ask...

Steve looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)

I want to try in front of the boat

STEVE

Duma...

DUMA

Just try.

STEVE

You don't understand...

DUMA

Let's just try, Bra Steve, if it
doesn't work it doesn't work...but
can't we just try?

128

EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - AFTERNOON

128

Everyone lined up for the time trials. Oupa and Dan watch from the side. Geoff and Eddie in their canoe. Steve and Duma sit in their canoe. Duma in the front and Steve sits in the back looking out of sorts. Ed and Geoff next to them.

GEOFF

I see you taking a back seat there
Steve...affirmative action?

Steve ignores him.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

Just be careful...before you know
it you'll be out of the boat
altogether.

Duma looks at him. Geoff looks back at him. It's tense competitive stuff. The moment comes. The hooter goes and the K2's take off. Duma and Steve take off like a rocket leaving Ed and Geoff and everyone else in their wake. Duma's hand speed is amazing and he's able to set the pace with his super fast action, Steve has to try keep up, the results are explosive. This is noticed by all the others especially Dan and Oupa who get a real kick out of it. Eddie and Geoff, taken aback trying everything to catch up.

CUT TO:

Duma and Steve win the time trial. They high five each other as they pass the finish line. Eddie and Geoff come in after them. Steve turns Geoff and shouts.

STEVE

Now that is African time Geoff!

129

EXT. ELIAS MOTSOALEDI - EVENING

129

Duma walks home carrying his lucky paddle, a spring in his step. He's shocked to see Zama lurking in the shadows. Zama has a sinister, brooding energy.

ZAMA

Eita.

DUMA

Zama...

ZAMA

Ja it's Zama, remember him?

DUMA

How did you get out?

ZAMA

My new friends I met inside paid my bail.

Duma looks down.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

Just as well I made new friends because my old friends did fokol.

DUMA

That's not true.

ZAMA

It is true, it's totally true because look at you, you Mr. Canoe guy, why would you be stressing about poor old Zama.

Duma looks down. Zama looks at him, his eyes hard. Duma looks back at him.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

You think you going to canoe your way out of the khasi, you think that stupid thing is going to make you a somebody, It's not bra, forget about it, you gonna die in this place, just like me.

130

EXT. KILLARNEY APARTMENTS - DAY

130

Steve stands outside a block of flats. Annie comes out the door and walks up to him, she's far from warm.

STEVE

Hey...

ANNIE

Hi...

STEVE

How's things?

She shrugs.

ANNIE

You?

STEVE

Ja, I, you know...

She nods. The moment becomes unbearable.

STEVE (CONT'D)

There was some mail at home...I
thought I'd bring it over...

He hands it to her.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Probably just junk...but

ANNIE

Thanks.

Another pause, he's reaching.

STEVE

Duma and I won the time trials the
other night...

ANNIE

Ok.

STEVE

We swapped positions in the boat
and something, kind of clicked, was
pretty amazing.

ANNI

Steve, I, I don't really, want to
hear about this...right now.

STEVE

Oh...OK...no, sure..

ANNIE

...I should go...

STEVE

Is this what you want?

She looks at him.

ANNIE

Has anything changed? Have you done...anything? Spoken to anyone?

He says very softly.

STEVE

I don't think I can do it, like that.

She looks at him, nods.

ANNIE

If you can't, you can't, I can't do it like it's been,

She looks at him.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Let's just be honest about what's happening here Steve, we tried to get over it and we couldn't and it's done, we're done.

He looks at her, she turns and goes back inside, he is left standing there devastated.

131 **EXT. KAROO ROAD - NIGHT** 131

The giant Kudu stands pinned against the fence, a look of terror in its eyes. The sound of the car almost deafening now. A land rover drives at night on an empty road. Steve drives the car, a young boy sleeps on the back seat.

132 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT** 132

Steve sits at the kitchen table. A wooden box in front of him. He's steeling himself. He opens the lid of the box, reaches into it and takes a photo, he looks at it. Emotion shooting through his body. He reaches for another, looks at it and immediately closes his eyes.

133 **EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI STREET - AFTERNOON** 133

Steve and Duma run through the streets of Elias both of them wrapped up in their own worlds.

134 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - AFTERNOON** 134

Duma and Steve paddle on Orlando dam, it's tough going.

135 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - EARLY EVENING** 135

Steve straps his canoe on his car. Duma helps him.

STEVE

How come you stopped canoeing, the first time?

DUMA
Ei, just...nje.

Steve doesn't push it. They carry on packing up in silence.

DUMA (CONT'D)
My Mother died...

STEVE
Oh, sorry...

He nods, thinks a bout it.

DUMA
She was like, the one who held everything together. She also encouraged me to do it, she liked it, supported me, you know. My father has never been able to understand it.

Steve nods.

DUMA (CONT'D)
Without her, everything just went upside down.

A rangy Zama appears suddenly, he's jumpy and looks a bit out of it. Steve immediately on edge. Zama talks to Duma.

ZAMA
I need to talk to you...

DUMA
Ok, just wait....

ZAMA
I need to talk to you now. It's URGENT.

STEVE
Everything OK?

DUMA
Ja it's OK, he's a friend, I'll, I'll see you tomorrow.

Steve nods. Duma goes to Zama Steve watches them go, unsettled by it all. They walk away.

DUMA (CONT'D)
What is happening?

ZAMA
I need your help, I need your help.

He keeps walking Duma walks with him.

136

EXT. DESERTED AREA - NIGHT

136

They walk through the veld, slightly ominous. Duma anxious he's walking into a trap. Zama leads Duma down to a space and there in a ditch stands Oupa's kombi. Duma stares at it.

DUMA

I don't understand.

ZAMA

I need to go and see these guys

DUMA

What guys?

ZAMA

The guys who paid my bail.

Duma is confused.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

They need to see me now and when they say now, they're not joking.

DUMA

So what is Oupa's kombi doing here?

ZAMA

I needed transport, it was the closest vehicle I could see, I drove it here but man you know how bad my driving is. I need you to take me there...

DUMA

I'm not stealing Oupa's kombi, man, are you crazy?

ZAMA

We not stealing it, we just borrowing it, we'll bring it right back, it's like a taxi.

DUMA

No, no...no....

Zama becomes extremely agitated, emotional, tears.

ZAMA

Duma you don't understand - if I don't get there now, you don't know what they'll do, they are bad people. They'll kill me, I swear. They'll just shoot me, just so, they don't care.

Duma looks at him.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

Duma, Duma, how long we known each other, we always looked out for each other, since grade two Joe when I shared my sandwich with you. You like my best friend man, I could have split on you inside but I never did, I am asking you this one thing...Please...

137 **EXT. MAIN REEF ROAD - NIGHT**

137

Oupa's kombi moves fast through the night. Duma driving, unhappy. Zama looking out the passenger window. The kombi hurtles towards the city.

138 **EXT. JEPPE'S TOWN STREET - NIGHT**

138

The kombi drives slowly in a dangerous part of town. They turn left and right. Zama giving directions.

ZAMA

Pull over here...

He does so. There are some guys standing a bit further back.

DUMA

You want me to wait for you?

ZAMA

Uh no...no..

Zama does not move, he looks down.

DUMA

So get going then, I thought there was a big rush.

ZAMA

Ja listen Duma, change of plan.

DUMA

What now?

ZAMA

The kombi needs to stay here.

DUMA

Hey?

ZAMA

I need to pay back that bail money.

A horrible realization dawns on him, the men approach.

DUMA

No, no, no, Zama no.

ZAMA

This was the only way, it's either that or they'll kill me...I swear.

DUMA

No Zama, noooo...

He frantically tries to start the kombi. Zama leans over, tries to switch it off, they struggle. Then a tapping sound, metal against glass. One of the guys taps his firearm against the window. The other guy is at Zama's side. He opens the door and Zama gets out. The other guy opens Duma's door.

HEAVY GUY

Let's go...move.

Duma sits there.

HEAVY GUY (CONT'D)

I said get out.

He grabs Duma roughly and pulls him out muttering under his breath, dog. The two men climb in and pull off leaving Duma and Zama standing on the pavement. Duma looks at Zama who cannot meet his gaze.

DUMA

We done you and me, we done.

Duma turns and walks away. He walks and walks and walks.

139

EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

139

Duma stands outside Steve's gate unsure what to do. He breathes deep and presses the buzzer. He waits and then the front door opens. Duma stands in darkness. The door opens.

DUMA

Steve...it's Duma...

STEVE

Duma... what...what's going on?

Steve comes a little unsteadily down the path.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You OK?

DUMA

Uhh, ja, ja, can I come in...

STEVE

Sure, sure, no problem...

There is something a bit strange about Steve's behaviour, he's different, out of sorts. His dog growls in the background.

140

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

140

Duma follows Steve into the house, the kitchen is a wreck. Bottles all over the place suggest heavy drinking. Boxes of photos are scattered around the kitchen. Steve walks around tidying up, putting photos into boxes.

STEVE

Sorry about this, I'm, I have been sorting some stuff out, well trying to...

Steve is emotional, drunk. Duma has never seen him like this.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You know that thing when there's stuff you just **have** to do but you, it's just, it's not easy.

Duma shrugs taking it all in. The mess, his emotional state.

DUMA

Is Annie here?

He shakes his head. He stands there, swaying, the alcohol allowing him to say things he ordinarily wouldn't.

STEVE

She hasn't been here for a while.

Duma looks at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Finally had enough of living with me...(who can blame her).

He looks down. Duma does not know where to look. Steve is emotional, tries to pull himself together.

STEVE (CONT'D)

As you know I'm not the easiest person in the world and she, she finally had enough...

Duma, uncomfortable.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What were you doing out here...

DUMA

No, I was just at a friend, wanted to say hi but I should go..

STEVE

You can stay over if you want.

DUMA

No...no...

STEVE

You not going to get a taxi at this time, it's really fine...

DUMA

No, it's OK...I can go

Steve ignores him, walks down the passage.

STEVE

We have a spare room, it's fine.

He's down the passage. Duma follows. Steve gets to the closed door in the passage, sucks in air and opens the door. He goes inside the room, like crossing a threshold. Duma follows him slowly.

141

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE SPARE ROOM - NIGHT

141

Steve stands in the middle of the room. It has the feel of a young boy's room, sports posters on the wall. Memorabilia, a few photos. It's not a mausoleum just a space where elements have remained from another time. Duma walks in the room Steve stands there, lost, taking the room in.

STEVE

See you can sleep here, no problem at all.

Steve looks around, almost in a daze. It is some time before he speaks again.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Was my boy's room...James....he, he was going to be a good canoeist, he was really...

He's trying to push back the emotion but it's getting the better of him. He walks to the bed. Sits on it. The bedspread has Arsenal insignia's on it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

He was crazy for Arsenal, I never knew where he got that from, but he loved that team, he would watch every game, he would put on his scarf and his shirt, knew all the chants. Would sit there singing, ohhh Sante Carzola...

He sits there. Duma looks at him, feeling caught.

STEVE (CONT'D)

He died, last year, a car accident...

Duma stands looking at Steve.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Coming back from a race, in the
Eastern Cape...I did the adults and
there was a kids thing for James.

He is almost mumbling to himself.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Annie wasn't with us.

He stops, gathers himself.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I wanted to get home straight
afterwards. Had stuff to do. Annie
wanted me to wait till morning,
first light. I didn't want to wait.

He takes a breath.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I made a bed for him on the back
seat, put blankets down and
everything...

Steve sits there, catatonic with emotion, his voice breaking.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Just outside Uniondale, a huge Kudu
jumped into the car, out of
nowhere, they do that, they feel
trapped between the car and the
fence and they try jump over the
headlights, I never knew this, I
just saw this eye...and then...the
bonnet smashed into the windscreen,
must have clipped it and I couldn't
see a thing, I tried to control the
car but the next thing we were
rolling...

He stops, sits there.

STEVE (CONT'D)
The car landed upright, the windows
had been smashed out, I felt in the
back for him, called him, he wasn't
there...didn't have his seatbelt
on.

He takes a moment.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It was completely dark outside...I
couldn't see anything, all the
electrics on the car were gone, I
used the light from my phone to try
find him.

This is hard, his voice low and slow, like a growl almost.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I found him...about thirty meters from the car...he was...he was bruised and stuff but he had this really peaceful look on his face, like he was sleeping and having a nice dream.....I...I sat with him...on my lap... and I...I had to phone Annie.

The tears break now. Duma listens.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What could I say, what could I say?
I have killed our child?

He shudders with emotion, he cannot hold it in any longer.

142 **EXT. POWER PARK - DAY**

142

Duma walking slowly up to Oupa's house. He stops, wants to turn and run but has to face this.

143 **INT. OUPA'S HOUSE IN POWER PARK - DAY**

143

A knocking on the door. A very angry Oupa stalks to the door and opens it. *(Could Oupa be outside here, maybe on phone ranting at someone to find his Kombi.)*

OUPA

And you, where the hell you been?

Duma shrugs looks at him. Oupa paces into the room.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Have you heard what happened here, bastards stole my kombi. My kombi. Oupa's kombi! What kind of idiot would do a thing like that?

This is a different Oupa, we seeing the harder more gangster side of him. He turns and looks at Duma.

OUPA (CONT'D)

Why you standing there like that?

He walks closer to Duma, looks at him. Duma looks down.

DUMA

Oupa I...

Oupa stands looking at him, in disbelief.

144

INT. OUPA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

144

A door smashes open to reveal a garage that has been turned into Oupa's electrical workshop. A bench with equipment being fixed, tools on the wall. Oupa has Duma by the scruff of the neck, he's furious. He slams him onto a chair in front of the bench. Duma looks terrified. Oupa gets a crate and puts it in the corner of the room, stands on top of it, punches his hand through a small trap door in the ceiling. Reaches inside and comes out with a handgun. He walks over to Duma and holds out the gun.

OUPA
Take the gun.

He shakes his head, looks down. He speaks softly.

OUPA (CONT'D)
I said take the gun.

Again he does not. Oupa screams at him.

OUPA (CONT'D)
I SAID TAKE THE GUN BEFORE I
DESTROY YOU!

Duma picks it up.

OUPA (CONT'D)
Point it at me.

Duma closes his eyes. 18

OUPA (CONT'D)
Point the gun at me.

Duma shaking, points the gun at Oupa.

OUPA (CONT'D)
You want to shoot me?

He shakes his head.

OUPA (CONT'D)
You want to live by the gun?

He shakes his head.

OUPA (CONT'D)
I can't hear you.

DUMA
No...

OUPA
But you took my kombi, without my
permission, you stole my Kombi.

DUMA

I'm sorry Oupa, Zama, he...

Oupa flips out.

OUPA

ZAMA WHAT. ZAMA WHAT.

Duma looks down.

OUPA (CONT'D)

I AM SICK AND TIRED OF YOU TELLING ME WHAT ZAMA DID AND DID NOT DO. I don't care about Zama. (I care about you) WHAT DO YOU WANT? HOW DO YOU WANT TO LIVE? Stand up man, show me who **you** are Duma?

Oupa looks at him.

OUPA (CONT'D)

You need to be strong in this life sonny. Because the forces that want to take you down are strong. You say you want to be a somebody, what kind of somebody you want to be? I was a somebody years ago but it landed me in jail. A somebody is who you are inside. I also had to choose between what is right and wrong/ good/ evil and what I believe in. And I don't believe in the gun, I believe in you guys, in helping you guys be the best you were created to be. (*You say you want to be a somebody, then be a somebody and stop being influenced by nobodies*)

DUMA

I'm sorry Oupa.

Oupa looks at him walks away, hurt.

OUPA

I loved that kombi. You know how much I loved that kombi.

Duma nods.

OUPA (CONT'D)

I don't care if you work for me till you a hundred years old but you will pay it off. You will pay me every damn month until I can buy another 1983 cream and white Volkswagen microbus. You get me!

Duma nods.

145 **INT/EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - DAY**

145

Duma's father watches as Duma packs his things and leaves the shack with his paddle and a small bag of clothes. Mandisa runs out after him, upset, follows him.

MANDISA

Where will you stay?

DUMA

I won't be far.

She fights back tears, he comforts her, then sends her back into the house and walks into the night.

146 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - LATE AFTERNOON**

146

Steve and Duma paddling hard around the dam, Duma distracted, can't get any kind of rhythm. Steve calls him.

STEVE

Hey, hey woaaaaah...

He jams his paddle into the water, they glide through it.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What is with you today?

DUMA

I'm OK...I'm fresh.

Steve turns around again then turns and looks at him.

STEVE

No you not, I can feel something is not right with you.

Duma looks out ahead, closes his eyes.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Duma, we can't do this if we don't talk.

147 **INT. ORLANDO DAM/ STEVE'S 4X4 - LATE AFTERNOON**

147

Steve and Duma sit in the semi darkness as Duma finishes his story. Steve sighs deeply.

STEVE

That's when you came to my place.

He nods.

DUMA

I was going to tell you then but...

They sit in silence. Steve nods.

STEVE
And where you staying now?

DUMA
With a friend in Elias.

They sit there in silence.

STEVE
Have you got food? Money?

DUMA
Ja, I have some.

They sit there.

DUMA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry Bra Steve...

Steve looks at the young man.

STEVE
You don't need to apologise to me.

Duma looks down.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Mistakes are part of life, that's
the truth, it's how you, how you
handle them, that's what counts.

Duma nods. Steve is talking as much to himself as he is to Duma. The two men sit in a soulful silence.

148 **INT. ZAMA'S PLACE - DAY**

148

Zama with his granny, he is wild and out of control, grabbing, things, throwing them.

GOGO
Please my child.

ZAMA
No, I'm saying please Gogo, I have
been saying please for twenty five
minutes now, I need a hundred rand
and I need it now.

GOGO
What do you need it for my child?

He flips, kicks out at the table smashing things.

GOGO (CONT'D)
My God, please help this child.

He gets close to her threatening her.

ZAMA

This has got nothing to do with
God. Just give me the damn money
before I do something really bad!

She looks at him terrified and sad, praying silently.

149 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - AFTERNOON**

149

Duma canoes on his own around Orlando Dam. He is focused.
Zama sits on the bridge and smokes a nyaope joint. His glazed
eyes watch Duma moving gracefully around the dam.

150 **EXT. DABULAMANZI - DAY**

150

Canoeists warm-up on the lawn. Steve is there as well as Dan
and Geoff and Eddie and a few others. Geoff is closest to
Steve but talks to Eddie. They head for the water.

GEOFF

Let's try get a couple of laps in
before the township arrives.

Eddie looks at Steve to say, what is it with this guy.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

Cause next think it's going to be
shouting and yelling and...

STEVE

What is your problem Geoff?

GEOFF

Huh?

STEVE

What is it with all your little
comments, your little jokes all the
time?

GEOFF

Sorry, was I talking to you Steve?

STEVE

No but I am forced to listen to the
crap that comes out of your mouth
and I'm tired of it.

GEOFF

Jeez Steve just because you going
multiracial in your boat don't get
your panties in a twist.

Steve looks at him hard. Dan and Eddie looking on edgily.

STEVE

You know what Geoff, if you don't like what is happening here why don't you go find another club.

GEOFF

Hey..hey, why don't you just get out of my face Steve..

Steve looks at him, steely.

STEVE

You think I am in your face?

GEOFF

Ja, you in my face.

STEVE

You want to see me really get in your face.

This is getting intense.

DAN

Hey guys...

Geoff looks at him. Now Steve makes his move, he leaps over his boat and heads for Geoff. Geoff gets a hellova fright, maybe falls in the water.

GEOFF

Heyyyy...heyyyy...

Dan and Eddie both move fast to intercept Steve. Geoff comes up, wet.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

Okes crazy man.

DAN

Ok guys, Ok, leave it, Leave it....come on...this is not the way we do things...

GEOFF

Ja...it isn't, okes's mad man.

DAN

No he's not, he's dead right, enough with your rubbish Geoff, there's a thing happening here and it's important and it's actually quite lekker if you weren't convincing yourself how kak it was all the time. Get in or get out. You know what I'm saying.

A wet Geoff looks at him.

151 **EXT. EMMARENTIA DAM - DAY**

151

Duma and Steve moving through the water, they work in synch and look good. Dan and Oupa watch from the side of the dam.

DAN

Man they looking good? Is it just me or are they looking good?

OUPA

They looking good.

DAN

If they do all the qualification races they can start in the front row man.

OUPA

Ja.

DAN

And once you in the front you got a chance of Gold.

Oupa looks at Dan.

DAN (CONT'D)

Just saying, it's not impossible. That's all I'm saying.

Oups finds Dan extremely amusing.

152 **EXT. MELVILLE KOPPIES - AFTERNOON**

152

Duma and Steve practice portaging up the side of Melville Koppies, they come flying down the side of the koppie carrying the canoe, working in harmony.

STEVE

That's it, that's it...

Suddenly Duma cries out.

DUMA

Aaaaaghhhh....

He drops the boat. Steve puts the boat down, concerned.

STEVE

What is it?

DUMA

No, just my, just my foot...something's not right...

He moves his foot around.

STEVE

Is it OK?

DUMA

Ja...it's OK.....

STEVE

You sure?

DUMA

Ja, ja, I'm fresh let's go.

They pick up the boat. Duma tries to run through the pain but it's too much, he can't. He hobbles, puts the canoe down and sits on the floor. Steve looks on, worried.

153 **INT. X-RAY ROOM HOSPITAL - DAY** 153

Duma has his foot in an X-ray machine, the machines are scary, the noises loud.

154 **INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY** 154

Steve sits on his own in the ward looking worried.

155 **INT. CASUALTY WARD - DAY** 155

In a small curtained cubicle a young doctor stands talking to Steve and Duma.

DOCTOR

This is called a stress fracture...it's not an actual break but it's almost like a tiny tear in the bone...

Duma and Steve looks at her.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

It often happens to runners or athletes who put repeated pressure on their joints.

They look at her.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

The only way to fix it is to rest it, take the pressure of it, we'll put it a walking boot.

DUMA

For how long must it rest?

DOCTOR

Six to eight weeks, maybe more.

Their faces drop.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
It's not going to work out with the
Dusi this year guys...I'm sorry.

156

INT/EXT. STEVE'S 4X4 - LATE AFTERNOON

156

Steve has stopped his car in the middle of Elias. They're both freaked out. The mood grim.

STEVE
We'll speak.

DUMA
Ja.

STEVE
Let me know if you need anything.

He nods, gets out, Steve watches him hobbling using his crutch, still holding his lucky paddle.

157

EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI - LATE AFTERNOON

157

Duma walks along the street. Sitting on the wall of a derelict building is Zama. He's a bit out of it.

ZAMA
And now?

Duma keeps walking.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
You see what happens when you play
with white man's things?

He walks away. Zama jumps off the wall goes towards him.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
Hellos! Come on Duma, Duma, Laduma,
you can't even say hello to me...

Duma looks down, wanting to get away.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
I know you angry with me about that
kombi man, I didn't have any
choice, I swear...

Duma stands there, impassive.

ZAMA (CONT'D)
I'll make it up to you man.

He looks over at the giant pylon, speaks softly.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

I am going to the Grootman tonight, then everything will be sorted, you can buy Oupa another kombi.

DUMA

Just leave it Zama.

ZAMA

Met a guy from Eskom, he's going to drop the switch on one line, then we away. Come on Duma, Dum dum, it's a two person job, come on, like old times.

DUMA

Don't do this...please...

Zama's just talking he isn't listening.

ZAMA

You know what that could pull in one night, ten twenty grand and I'll cut you in, fifty, fifty...

Duma looks at him,

ZAMA (CONT'D)

I'll do that for you because you my chommie, you like my brother. Fifty fifty.

Duma looks at him one last time, he turns and walks away. Zama watches him go for some away, he's upset and it turns to rage lets rip at him, anguish and pain.

ZAMA (CONT'D)

Ja well then voetsek, hopalong, voetsek. You carry on with that canoeing you'll break your other leg. I don't need you for this. You nothing to me, you dog!

Duma keeps walking with his crutch. He walks until Zama can't see him and catches his breath.

158 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE GARAGE - NIGHT**

158

Steve taking the canoe off his car, putting it on the wall brackets. He looks at a section of the wall where his gold medals hang on a clothes hanger.

159 **INT. ZWELI'S PLACE - NIGHT**

159

Duma lies on the floor with a simple blanket, trying to sleep when the door bursts open. It's Zweli, he's freaked out.

ZWELIBANSI

Duma, Duma...

Duma sits up.

ZWELIBANSI (CONT'D)

You need to come now, it's Zama,
he's acting crazy. He won't listen
to anybody, come now!

160 **EXT. GIANT PYLON - NIGHT** 160

Zama climbs up the huge pylon.

161 **EXT. ZWELI'S PLACE - NIGHT** 161

Zweli and Duma run out of the settlement. Duma battling to
run with his foot in the walking boot and crutch.

162 **EXT. GIANT PYLON - NIGHT** 162

Zama reaches the top level of the giant pylon. We sense the
huge drop below him. He talks to the Pylon, as if it's a
person. He is not in his right mind, feels shaky and erratic.
He has a small bundle of tools with him.

ZAMA

Vanaand is vanaand Grootman.

163 **EXT. ELIAS MOTSOLEDI STREET - NIGHT** 163

Duma hobbling on his crutch, Zweli in front of him as they
run towards the pylons.

ZWELIBANSI

Hurry!

DUMA

I can't... this foot...

He carries on but it's hard going.

164 **EXT. GIANT PYLON - NIGHT** 164

Zama stands precariously on the edge of one of the steel arms
of the pylon, leaning out towards one of the large cables. He
edges closer and closer to it. He gets out his large bolt
cutters. He positions himself so he can get them around the
cable. He mutters under his breath to the pylon, like an
animal he is about to slaughter.

ZAMA

OK Grootman, just relax, this is
going to be over quick quick.

He puts the giant bolt cutters around the exposed cable.

- 165 **EXT. SOWETO STREET - NIGHT** 165
- Zweli and Duma run along a street lit up by street lights or past a shebeen lit up. Suddenly all the lights go out. They have the same horrible thought that somehow this is connected to Zama.
- 166 **EXT. ZAMA'S PLACE - NIGHT** 166
- Duma with Gogo who stands outside in her gown, confused. Zweli arrives carrying Zama's lifeless body. She lets out a cry of sorrow as she goes to him. She is inconsolable as she looks at the lifeless body of her grandson. A little child pops his head out the door of the shack to see what the commotion is.
- 167 **INT. THERAPIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY** 167
- Steve sits in the small nondescript waiting room looking anxious. Gail comes into the room. They shake hands.
- 168 **EXT. ZAMAS'S PLACE - DAY** 168
- Mourning rituals take place. Gogo sits on the mattresses while the community gathers round to show their support. Women sing.
- 169 **INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - DAY** 169
- Steve sits in a very long silence.
- STEVE
...you will just have to be patient
with me...
- GAIL
It's fine.
- 170 **EXT. ZAMAS'S PLACE - NIGHT** 170
- A night vigil is held for Zama. The community gathered around, standing, sitting. Gogo still sits inside on the mattresses but she can hear the words about her grandson. A priest speaks, other members of the community speaks./ Duma speaks about his friend. Zama's younger sister speaks. It's sad and moving. People sing.
- 171 **INT. THERAPIST'S ROOM - DAY** 171
- Steve sits with Gail, talks softly with great difficulty. He can barely utter the words, they're embedded with pain and guilt. His face closes in a ball of pain.
- STEVE
If I had waited...left a few hours
later, that Kudu...wouldn't have
been there...

He sucks in air.

STEVE (CONT'D)
if I had just...done that...if I
had put his seatbelt on...maybe...

He stops, can't go on.

GAIL
It wasn't your fault Steve...

He looks down.

GAIL (CONT'D)
It was a horrible, freak accident
...it wasn't your fault...

172 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE MELVILLE- NIGHT**

172

Steve has the box of pictures on the table again. He looks at pictures of his son, forcing his way through the pain.

173 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - LATE AFTERNOON**

173

Oupa and Duma sit on the old steel remnants of the power plant looking out over the dam.

DUMA
You know what the doctor told
me....about this injury?

Oupa looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)
That it comes from weak bones,
which is often caused by bad
nutrition. Is that fair? That I
have weak bones?

Oupa looks at him.

DUMA (CONT'D)
Here we eat to survive, not to be
athletes.

OUPA
Hey...come on...

DUMA
It's true Oupa, it's true, this
thing is not for us...since we are
kids, we are born into this.

Oupa shakes his head.

DUMA (CONT'D)

Zama was right, we don't have what it takes to be anything in this world...to get out...we don't

Oupa looks at him, talks softly.

OUPA

Hey, heyyy, you listen to me, you give up on this you give up on life. And you will end up like Zama, you will...

He's firm.

OUPA (CONT'D)

So you can't do the Dusi this year, when your foot has healed, you keep training, you do it next year or the year after, you keep going because it's good for you and because you're good at it Duma. God gave you a talent for this and it's giving you something, something good, something to live for.

Duma looks at him, tears in his eyes.

DUMA

I want to do it this year Oupa, I want to...

174 **INT. ZWELI'S PLACE - DAY** 174

Duma has taken the walking boot off, he straps up his leg heavily with bandages/cloth. He winces as he tightens it. He pulls his trousers over the bandages, then puts his shoes on.

175 **EXT. ROAD TO EMMARENTIA DAM - AFTERNOON** 175

Duma tries to walk normally with his strapped up foot, hobbles a bit, trying to pretend it's OK.

176 **INT. DABULAMANZI CLUBHOUSE - AFTERNOON** 176

Duma stands talking to Steve and Dan.

DUMA

See, I can do it, I'm fresh.

He moves around to demonstrate. 9

DUMA (CONT'D)

Maybe I can't run as fast but I will paddle faster, I can do it, I promise I can.

They can see his desperation.

DAN

Duma, you can't run on a stress fracture.

DUMA

I can, I'm telling you I'll be OK.

DAN

No you can't. Forget about it, you'll permanently damage your leg. (Second opinion?)

Duma looks at him, big eyes, looks down.

DUMA

Maybe the doctor...maybe he made a mistake...

177 **EXT. BARAGWANATH HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON**

177

Duma walks with his crutch on the way back home. He stops outside the main entrance.

178 **INT. OPHTHOMOLOGY UNIT BARA - AFTERNOON**

178

Duma stands with his crutch in a waiting area. Annie comes out, someone has called her, told her there is someone.

ANNIE

Duma...

He smiles at her.

DUMA

Hello neighbour...

ANNIE

Hey...what happened...

DUMA

It's...I hurt it and I need to get it fixed so we can do the race... I was wanting to know if there were any doctors here who could maybe help me...

179 **INT. ORTHOPEDIC UNIT BARA - DAY**

179

Annie stands to one side as a BARA DOCTOR, black man in his forties, examines Duma's leg. He gets Duma to do certain things, he winces when he pushes and twists.

BARA DOCTOR

This is definitely a stress fracture.

Duma looks down.

BARA DOCTOR (CONT'D)
And like the casualty doctor said,
the tear in your bone can only heal
if you don't put pressure on the
leg..

Duma's head desperate.

DOCTOR
...but

Duma's head lifts.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
There are some new techniques that
allow you to keep training without
putting any pressure on your leg...

Duma looks confused.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
I can give you some exercises to
do, there are things we can do here
but there is also a machine that
could help you but there is only
one in the country and it's not
here...

Duma looks at him with big eyes.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Let me make a few calls.

180

INT. SPORTS SCIENCE CENTRE GYM - LATE AFTERNOON

180

Duma is with the SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR, a white man in his
late forties. They stand next to the alter G treadmill.

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR
It's called a zero gravity
treadmill.

Duma looks at it.

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
It allows you to keep running,
without putting any pressure on
your leg...

DUMA
I don't understand...

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR
Give me your crutch and get on
here.

Duma hands it to him and apprehensively gets on the treadmill. He zips up the suit around Duma. Starts punching buttons. Air pumps in, Duma looks perplexed.

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

It will seal off this area so that
it can completely support your body
weight.

He looks perplexed. The suit has pumped up around him.

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

OK, start running...

Duma looks confused. He starts running, it's a strange sensation. He smiles. Runs a bit harder.

DUMA

...it's like I'm running on air...

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR

That is exactly what you are doing.

Duma runs, his face breaking into a smile.

DUMA

You think maybe I could be OK by
Dusi time?

SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR

Impossible to say but it's worth a
shot isn't it?

Duma cannot help but smile as he runs.

181 **EXT. JOBURG BOYS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

181

Duma back in his walking shoe finds Steve at work, he is teaching a class but Duma insists he comes outside. Steve has to excuse himself. Duma tells him the news, miming the running machine, Steve trying to get his head around it.

182 **EXT. POWER PARK - DAY**

182

Oupa and MIKE, the swimming teacher, teach swimming. While Steve and Duma train in the pool at power park.

183 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - DAY**

183

Steve and Duma work on upper body exercises.

Steve holds Duma round the shoulders as they hop on one leg.

Duma has stood on his leg and is pain. Steve holds him up.

- 184 **EXT. SPORTS SCIENCE CENTRE GYM - DAY** 184
- Duma gets used to the strange feeling of zero gravity running, the doctor watches him.
- 185 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - DAY** 185
- Steve and Duma paddle, their rhythm is good.
- 186 **EXT. JOBURG BOYS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY** 186
- Duma sits in Steve's classroom, Steve draws different parts of the river on the board, he explains different parts of it. Duma sits, making notes. At a certain point Duma finds the whole thing very funny, how seriously Steve takes himself.
- 187 **INT. SPORTS SCIENCE CENTRE - DAY** 187
- The doctor checks on Duma's progress on the Alter G. He punches in different coordinates into the computer.
- SPORTS SCIENCE DOCTOR
We keep adding a little bit more of
your body weight every session.
- Duma nodding.
- 188 **EXT. VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS - DAY** 188
- Aerial shots of the river, we are gliding above it.
- 189 **EXT. DABULAMANZI - DAY** 189
- Steve and Duma sit inside the canoe on the lawn at Dabulamanzi. Their eyes are closed. Steve talks them through the different parts of the river. The sun sets in the background.
- STEVE
We move out of Maritzburg, we get
to pine tree take out...Then it's
Campbell's Portage, up, up and
over...down into the Valley...
- 190 **EXT. CAMPBELLS ROAD PORTAGE - DAY** 190
- The aerial shot continues up to Campbells and over the hill flying down, down, down to the valley.
- 191 **EXT. DABULAMANZI - DAY** 191
- They're still in the boat, eyes closed.
- STEVE
Then we burn it through Tegwaan and
son of a Gun all the way to Guinea
fowl portage...

192 **EXT. ZWELI'S PLACE - AFTERNOON** 192

Mandisa help Duma with his exercises. Again maybe we feel some pain from Duma, he has to stop, hard.

193 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE MELVILLE - AFTERNOON** 193

Steve does pull-ups on a bar in his garage.

194 **EXT. ORLANDO DAM - DAY** 194

Steve and Duma sit in the canoe. Now they have two bungee cables strapped to their paddles they work slowly at being completely in synch. The sun sets in the background.

195 **INT. ORTHOPEDIC UNIT BARA - DAY** 195

Duma being examined by the Doctor again. The mobility in his leg is much better. Steve stands watching anxiously. He seems to take forever. Finally he looks up.

DOCTOR

You have had an injury and if there are places where you can stay in the water as opposed to running then you must do that...

They look at him, this is sounding good.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

But besides that I'd say... you good to go.

Steve and Duma look at each other, overwhelmed.

196 **EXT. DUMA'S STREET - DAY** 196

Duma comes running up his street. He shouts to Gogo that he is going to do the race. She's happy for him. He continues up, finds his sister, his father is also there, chopping wood. He enters the yard. He stands there.

DUMA

The doctor said I can do the race!

Mandisa screams, runs towards him. His father picks up some wood and walks into the house. He watches his Dad wishing things were different but gets pulled into the excitement with his sister. He runs around jumping up and down to prove how strong his leg is. It's joyous and exuberant.

197 **INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT** 197

Steve packing his clothes in the bedroom, he hears the front door open. He stops what he is doing and walks through the house. He gets to the living room. Annie stands there looking at a picture of Daniel on the wall. His heart skips a beat.

STEVE

Hey...

ANNIE

Hi...

He stands, looking at her. She motions to the picture.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Where did you find this picture?

STEVE

In that big kist thing, somehow it landed up in an album with your matric dance pictures.

ANNIE

It's beautiful.

STEVE

Ja.

ANNIE

I forgot how blonde his hair used to go in the sun.

He nods. Silence. They both feel the emotion of it.

STEVE

I...I have been saying Gail...

She is shocked, looks at him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

It's not easy but she has been helping me.

She nods.

ANNIE

That's great Steve..

He nods/ shrugs. Another silence.

STEVE

Did do you need to get something?

ANNIE

No, uhh, Duma asked me to come.

STEVE

Hey?

ANNIE

He told me that I had to come and see you, that you wanted to talk to me about something incredibly important.

Steve smiles shakes his head.

STEVE

So, he told you we going to race?

ANNIE

Yes.

STEVE

We couldn't do any qualification races so we starting right at the back.

She nods.

STEVE (CONT'D)

There's no chance of getting gold from back there...but we gonna do it anyway.

ANNIE

And you're OK with that.

STEVE

Ja...I want to do it, we both do. A lot.

A moment.

ANNIE

So, what did you...

STEVE

So, ja, well, Duma, kind of thinks of you as the Michael Schumaker of seconding. He feels like we cannot possibly do the race without you.

ANNIE

Ah...OK.

STEVE

And of course I...

She looks down.

STEVE (CONT'D)

How many Dusi's have we done together?

ANNIE

Fourteen.

STEVE

When I'm in the race, you know...when I'm on the water, it's hard and difficult but when I look up and I see you there, shouting for me, encouraging me, it's...it's what makes me get through it...you know....

He looks up at her.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I just don't think I can do this without you.

She looks at him.

198 **EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING** 198

The 4x4 hits the highway.

199 **INT. STEVE'S 4X4 - DAY** 199

Duma, Dan and Annie sit in the back. Oupa and Steve in the front. Oupa driving. A small look from Duma to Annie.

200 **EXT. RIVER AT CAMPS DRIFT - DAWN** 200

Camps Drift is packed with people as the sixty K2's line up in three rows of twenty. Steve and Duma in the back row. They are ready. We see some of the Soweto guys in the rows in front of them. Mothusi and Vusi. Ed and Geoff are in the front row looking super focused. (*Might be nice to get some of the real top canoeists into shots like this.*) One last high five from Duma and Steve. We hear the call of the fish eagle and then the canon fires and they're away. Steve and Duma make a great start and immediately make up a few places. It's frenetic and fast and we are inside the boat with them, feeling the water spraying in the intensity of the start.

201 **EXT. ERNIE PEARCE WEIR - MORNING** 201

The front runners glide through the early morning mist towards Ernie Pearce Weir. They fly down the Weir plunging in and out of the water. Annie, Oupa and Dan watch from the side. More K2s come flying down the weir. Steve and Duma not far behind them. This is their first big moment, the first test. They head down the weir, they plunge into the water and out again, water flying everywhere, they did it, they're both elated as they move off down the river. They're watched by Annie, Dan and Oupa.

ANNIE

Come on guuuuuuuuuuuuys!

They head off down the windy river through Maritzburg.

202

EXT. WITNESS WEIR - DAY

202

The canoeists are bunched up going down the weir, most of them moving through it with ease. Steve and Duma approach the weir, they're close behind another boat which capsizes at the bottom of the weir making them lose their balance as well. Their canoe flips over plunging them into the water. They swim, when they come up, Duma realises that his paddle has snapped. Annie's shouting instructions to Oupa who has a spare paddle, he starts heading down but Duma has panicked and run off looking for them. Steve tries to call him but it's too late. Steve has to watch all the canoeists that they passed, now pass them. It's a disaster. Steve screams at him. Oupa gets there, Annie runs to Duma, sends him down and he gets the new paddle. They get in, now coming last. They both have a look of almost maniacal determination about them.

STEVE

Let's go, let's go...we're coming
stone last now!

DUMA

Sorry, sorry!

STEVE

Not your fault, let's go...

They tear off, like demons, starting to find some rhythm. They find an unspoken focus and intention in this section, all the training paying off.

203

EXT. CAMPBELLS ROAD PORTAGE - DAY

203

Duma and Steve get to pine tree take out, they get out of their boat and start portaging. Their speed in the portaging is incredible, helping them overtake several other pairs. Dan stands and shouts at them.

DAN

You're smoking them in the running,
keep pushing. You've made up ten
places already

Oupa and Annie run with them, sponging them down, giving encouragement. They run away from her. Dan joins them, he's hyper.

DAN (CONT'D)

Man they looking good? Is it just
me or are they looking good?

OUPA

They looking good Fish.

Duma and Steve running hard taking over more pairs, they're pushing hard as they head down to the valley.

DUMA
Sambeni Bra Steve, Sambeni!

204 **EXT. MISSION BRIDGE - DAY** 204

They paddle under Mission Bridge, Oupa, Dan and Annie shouting encouragement and their positions to them.

205 **EXT. DAY ONE FINISH - DAY** 205

They make a big finish and end day one in an astonishing 26th place. High fives all around. *(We can always use the VO of Dougie Bird, the race announcer to announce positions when we feel it's necessary)*

CUT TO:

The team meets up. Oupa and Dan giving big encouragement.

DAN
Twenty sixth place, from sixtieth,
unbelievable, I am serious.
Unbelievable!

The two men nod.

OUPA
How's the leg Duma?

DUMA
It's OK, it's feeling OK. I'm
fresh.

OUPA
You guys were great today.

DAN
Flipping amazing!

Annie smiles. Duma beams. Steve still in race mode.

206 **EXT. PIETERMARITZBURG HOUSE - EARLY EVENING** 206

Duma and Steve sit doing a kind of meditation in the garden going through some of the key elements of day two. We see the aerial shots as Steve talks through the plan for day two.

STEVE
Now we'll come into the confluence
of the two rivers, you will feel
the Umngeni river flowing strongly,
the water is clean and beautiful,
we move through Washing Machine
rapids...we keep close to the right
bank and just before Willem's
shute, we take out and re-enter
before Gauging Weir...you with me?

Duma nodding, his eyes closed.

207 **EXT. DAY TWO START - MORNING** 207

The K2's in front of them start according to their times. Geoff and Ed are way up front. Vusi and Mothusi also in there. Duma and Steve explode out of their start, pumped.

208 **EXT. DUSI BRIDGE - MORNING** 208

Oupa, Dan and Annie watch from the Dusi bridge shouting encouragement. The bridge is full of locals, taxis etc. Duma and Steve do the quick portage around Dusi bridge and re-enter and they're off paddling at pace down the widening river. Steve shouting encouragement from the back of the boat.

STEVE

Let's go, let's move!

209 **EXT. SADDLES PORTAGE - DAY** 209

The men run hard down the one side of Saddles, they paddle across and exit the river again. Annie runs with them.

ANNIE

You doing great, great! Come on guys.

Oupa and Dan stand a bit further up.

OUPA

Twenty two, mova mova.

The two men disappear up and over the precarious contours over the hill back towards the river.

210 **EXT. WASHING MACHINE RAPIDS - DAY** 210

The men fly into Washing Machine rapids. Local kids stand on the rocks shouting encouragement. The look on Duma's face is sheer exhilaration, Steve shouts encouragement and instructions. The potentially overtake Ed and Geoff here.

STEVE

Good, good, great, you doing great...

211 **EXT. WILLEM'S SHUTE - DAY** 211

Duma and Steve are approaching Willem's Shute, a rocky channel that they have agreed to bypass.

STEVE

Ok pull in here...

Duma only focused on the rapids ahead, caught up in it.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Duma...Duma...what

At the last minute Duma makes a different decision. Steve is caught out.

STEVE (CONT'D)
WHAT YOU DOING!

But it's too late, Duma goes for the rapids, Steve's hesitation pulls their boat sideways and they wipe out. Steve is furious, they are caught in the fast flowing river.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What the hell where you thinking...

DUMA
Sorry...

STEVE
That wasn't the plan. That wasn't the plan!

They're in the water trying to get their boat upright, empty it, get back in. Other boats pass them.

DUMA
Let's just go...let's go...

They lose a few places, they climb back in, Steve is furious. They get back in and head off. Geoff and Eddie overtake them again which frustrates Steve even further.

212 **EXT. GAUGING WEIR - DAY** 212

Duma and Steve have got some of their rhythm back. They emerge over the top of Gauging Weir and fly over it, making up some of the places they lost.

213 **EXT. NOMULENI HILL PORTAGE - DAY** 213

They're out at Nomuleni Hill and gunning it, making up more and more places. They climb the steep hill.

They run through the villages and head down into the valley again. The strain starting to tell on Duma's leg.

214 **EXT. START OF INANDA DAM - DAY** 214

Annie, Oupa and Dan stand on the rocks near the bridge. Duma and Steve come moving in unison towards them. Annie times her throw to perfection and tosses the bottle into their canoe.

ANNIE
Twenty, you're number twenty..

DAN

Mooova! You can take more on the flat water.

OUPA

Shayaaaaaaaa!

They head towards Inanda Dam.

215 **EXT. INANDA DAM - DAY**

215

They hit the giant flat water of Inanda Dam and send it with everything they have got, they are exhausted but their fitness is kicking in. They overtake more canoes. Possibly get into a good diamond here. Beautiful aerial views of the massive piece of water.

216 **EXT. DAY TWO FINISH - DAY**

216

Steve and Duma put their boat down. Steve is still angry, irrational, adrenalin still pumping.

STEVE

What the hell was that man?

DUMA

I'm sorry I just...

STEVE

How many times did we talk about it?

DUMA

I know, I know...I just.....

STEVE

You could have cost us the whole damn race man.

DUMA

I know...I

STEVE

That is exactly why I wanted to be in the front.

Steve walks off. Duma looks at him. Oupa, Dan and Annie watching this all from a distance.

217 **EXT. DAY TWO FINISH - DAY**

217

Dan sitting with Steve, later that day.

DAN

You're in 16th place...from 60th. That's incredible Steveo.

Steve looks out nods, his rationality improving.

DAN (CONT'D)
You push hard tomorrow, who knows
what could happen...

He nods, his mind far away.

DAN (CONT'D)
You just, you can't have any
negative stuff tomorrow,

Steve looks out, inscrutable.

218 **EXT. VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS - DUSK** 218

The sun sets on the valley. Beautiful.

219 **EXT. PIETERMARITZBURG HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON** 219

Duma and Steve getting their gear ready.

STEVE
Remember we need to take more
liquid tomorrow, there's large
sections that the seconds can't get
to us...

They work in silence for some time.

STEVE (CONT'D)
How's the leg?

He shrugs.

DUMA
So so...

Steve nods.

DUMA (CONT'D)
When I saw it in front of me, I
dunno why but I thought about the
dog, you know, just looking at it
in they eye and I just thought, we
can do this...easy...

Steve smiles.

STEVE
I know that feeling, trust me, if I
had known, I would have followed
you. There was just no time.

DUMA
Yeah I know, sorry...

He nods. Steve looks at Duma.

STEVE

You are paddling like a champion
out there.

Duma looks at him, shaking his head.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You are, you are. We make up six
more places we can get gold. From
the back row, it's unheard of...

Duma looks at him. Steve holds up his hand. Duma slaps it and
the men pull each other into a clinch.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Tomorrow we move like one.

220 **EXT. DAY 3 START - DAY**

220

The top placed canoeists set out on day three. Duma and Steve
in their canoe, super focused.

STEVE

How's your leg?

DUMA

It's OK, bit stiff.

Steve looks at him concerned.

Their interval start comes and they bullet off, the old
helicopter moving like the blazes. Steve trying to keep up.

221 **EXT. INANDA DAM WALL - MORNING**

221

Steve and Duma are burning it towards the dam wall at the
start of say three. Other canoeists in front and behind them.

222 **EXT. PORTAGE INANDA DAM - DAY**

222

Steve and Duma run down the dirt road towards Tops Needle,
pulling their boats behind them. The strain on Duma's leg
showing on his face

223 **EXT. TOPS NEEDLE RAPIDS - DAY**

223

Duma and Steve come flying down Tops Needle rapids. They make
it through the rapids, tearing into the river ahead.

224 **EXT. BURMA ROAD PORTAGE - DAY**

224

Duma and Steve run with the canoe through the bushes,
suddenly they realise they have lost their path. They see an
old Zulu woman with firewood on her head.

DUMA

Ma, where is the path to the river?

MAMA

That way my child.

She points and explains, they thank her, and head off. Not much time lost. They're back on the path. It's clear that Duma's leg is hurting but he is pushing through the pain.

225

EXT. RIVER - DAY

225

They move in total unison as they climb back in their canoe and move off. They pass Annie, she screams.

ANNIE

You're in thirteenth!

226

EXT. RIVER APPROACHING PUMPHOUSE RAPIDS- DAY

226

Steve and Duma hurtling along the river towards Pumphouse Rapids.

STEVE

That's Pumphouse up ahead, we'll get out just before!

He nods. They paddle frantically. They can see the people ahead of them getting out to portage the rapids. Duma turns to Steve.

DUMA

Maybe we should shoot it.

STEVE

Hey?

DUMA

We never gonna catch these guys if we run it, my leg is not feeling good.

Steve looks at it, worried.

STEVE

I dunno...that's where I wiped out last year...

Duma shouts out.

DUMA

Maybe we need to look the dog in the eye and show it who's boss!

Steve nods, can't help smiling he looks at the approaching rapids. A decision has to be made, make or break.

STEVE

OK, let's do it.

DUMA

You sure?

STEVE

I'm sure, I'm sure, let's go. Stay left on the weir and then hold on tight...

DUMA

Sambeeeeni.

They work in total unison as they head for the rapids.

CUT TO:

Annie, Dan are on the side

DAN

They're shooting pumphouse!

ANNIE

What? Why they shooting pumphouse?,

Dan freaking out.

DAN

I dunno but they shooting Pumphouse?

Duma and Steve hit the rapids at high speed, a moment of sheer exhilaration, teamwork and control as they fly into the white water, the boat disappears for a moment we think it's over and then it shoots out of the water, they have done it.

DUMA

Yehaaaaaaaaaah.

DAN

Yesssss please!

Water pours off their faces. They have made up a few places, the other canoeists emerge putting their boats back in the water, shocked at seeing them ahead. Annie and Dan delighted.

227

EXT. RIVER NEAR DURBAN - DAY

227

Duma and Steve move through the industrial areas of the river. They fly along, all their training coming together. Majestic aerial shots fly over them in the river in slow motion. They pass another canoeists. They are now in 11th place. Annie shouts at them.

ANNIE

Eleven!

STEVE

One more. One more.

DUMA

Let's do it.

Duma nods, his arms pumping hard.

228

EXT. BLUE LAGOON - DAY

228

Duma and Steve head into the beginnings of Blue Lagoon. The finish line and massive crowds lie ahead. They need to make up one more place. They're closing on the canoe in front of them. It is Ed and Geoff.

STEVE

Come on, we can do this.

They're digging into their last reserves. Their muscles aching, their lungs bursting but their speed is incredible. They overtake them with the finish line up ahead.

All the people are gathered at the finish line, screaming. Annie, Dan, scream their lungs out. Duma and Steve cross the finish line in tenth place. It's a great moment, they finish claiming the last gold. Their arms go up in unison holding their paddles. Duma turns around and hugs Steve. They fall out of the boat. They get mobbed by race officials and Hansa girls. They come out of the water exhilarated. The crowds are cheering them. Duma hears a voice calling him. He looks up and he sees his sister waving at him. He's totally shocked. Next to him stands Oupa and next to Oupa stands Duma's father. Annie and Dan are there too. His sister waves, his father looks at him, fighting his emotion. He can't believe that they are there. He walks over to them on unsteady legs. They embrace him over the fence.

Steve comes up next to them and is engulfed by Annie and Dan, it's a hugfest. It's a brilliant moment of achievement, teamwork and togetherness.

229

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE GARAGE - EVENING

229

The cheers have all died down. Steve unpacking his car. He goes to the area where his gold medals hang. He hangs up his tenth gold, has an emotional moment. Annie comes into the garage to get more stuff. She sees him, he looks up his eyes filled with tears. She steps towards him and embraces him. He holds her like he never wants to let her go.

230

INT. DUMA'S SHACK - EARLY EVENING

230

Duma has put up some nails to hold his paddle above his bed. On another nail he hangs his gold medal. He has a silent moment of achievement and accomplishment. His sister sits on one of the plastic chairs trying on a brand new pair of school shoes. He walks over to her.

DUMA

Do they fit OK?

She looks up at him, smiles.

MANDISA

They're perfect, thank you.

He smiles at her. Then his fathers voice outside.

MANDLA (V.O.)

Duma...

DUMA

Tata?

MANDLA (V.O.)

Will you put out the bath water?

231

EXT. DUMA'S SHACK - EARLY EVENING

231

Duma gets outside, lifts the bath up, heads for the toilet, pours out the water into the outside toilet. Then he emerges puts the plastic bath down.

He stands outside and looks at the sunset. His external circumstances have not altered but he is forever changed by this experience.

It might be worth having Mandla in the background in this scene. Looking at his son, a changed man.

The camera moves up, up, up over him, over the informal settlement revealing all the shacks, the RDP houses on the other side, and the greater Soweto on the other side of that.

Slow fade to black.

While the credits roll we see pictures of Siseko and Piers and all the SCARC and DABULAMANZI guys.