

CROSSING THE LINE

by Malcolm Hart

EXT. THE OCEAN. DAY.

SUPER JANUARY 1954

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

EXT. SHIP'S SWIMMING POOL. DAY.

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

PAN DOWN

A porthole on a lower deck of the ship.

INT. A CABIN. DAY.

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

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

LIZ

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

PETE

You're kidding.

LIZ

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

They both laugh. Liz draws on the cigarette

PETE

Where were they heading?

Liz exhales.

LIZ

Lord knows. They were crew.

PETE

Oh?

LIZ

Mum was a laundress...

Long pause

PETE

What was your dad?

LIZ

D'know... assistant soup chef or
something.

Long pause. Liz is dealing with bitter thoughts.

Mum heard he'd settled in Australia.

Liz takes a long drag at the cigarette.

BEGIN TITLES

EXT. SEASCAPE TABLE MOUNTAIN. DAY.

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

EXT. BOAT DECK. DAY.

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

EXT. CAPETOWN DOCKS. DAY.

A vibrant bustling scene of noise and colour. Passengers on the Athlone Castle bidding each other hasty farewells. Raggedly dressed Coloured porters struggle against the tide of disembarking passengers to get on board for their luggage. Liz and Pete follow a porter carrying their bags down to the quayside.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM, QUAYSIDE. DAY.

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

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT. DAY.

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

PORTER

Baie dankie my Baas.

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

EXT. STATION PLATFORM. DAY.

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

EXT. HEX RIVER VALLEY. DAY.

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

INT. COMPARTMENT. DAY.

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

EXT. THE KAROO DESERT. NIGHT.

The train hurtles across the vastness of a desert, flat beneath an immense, star-decked sky.

INT. COMPARTMENT. NIGHT.

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

END TITLES.

EXT. PARK STATION, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

Pete oversees the loading of their luggage into a taxi.

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

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

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

INT. TAXI. DAY.

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

LIZ

Are we going to your house now?

Pete squeezes her shoulder.

PETE

Our house.

EXT. A QUIET, LEAFY SUBURBAN STREET. DAY.

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

LIZ

Oh Petey. Is this ours?

She laughs with delight. Pete wallows in her happiness. The cab driver unloads their luggage, Pete pays him. The cab drives away.

INT. HOUSE. DAY.

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

PETE

Bit classier than Holloway Road...

LIZ

You said it was furnished.

PETE

It is.

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

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

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

LIZ

Aw... Pete...

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

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE. DAY.

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

PETE

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

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

LIZ

Have you brought me to your garden of
Eden my Pete my Adam my lover my
husband?

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

LIZ

What's that?

PETE

What?

Pete turns.

PETE

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

A telephone starts ringing in the house.

I'll be right back.

Pete trots back to the house.

Liz walks slowly down the path to the servants' quarters. They are two shabby, one-roomed apartments built of breeze-block in the shade of a Plain tree. Liz wanders around them, peering through small grimy windows into empty, disused rooms. The walls are stained with damp. She shivers, walks back into the warm sunlight and, soberly, thoughtfully, back to the house.

INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

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

PETE

Ask her yourself when you see her.

He listens patiently. Winks at Liz.

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

He puts down the telephone.

LIZ

When's the interview?

PETE

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

LIZ

Harder for you?

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

INT. THE BALCONY OF A MODERN APARTMENT. NIGHT.

A view of the Johannesburg night-skyline. Pete and Liz sit together on a couch. ARTHUR SIMMS, a bespectacled, middle-aged man, sits in an armchair across from his wife, MILLY, the same age as her husband, a comfortable looking woman. She concentrates on her knitting. None of them speaks. They sit listening to the clack of Milly's needles. Inside the apartment, beyond the sliding glass doors, a middle-aged African woman, SELMA, is clearing the dinner table.

MILLY

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

She looks up, unsmiling, from her knitting for a moment.

Pete and Liz exchange glances. She scarcely hides her impatience. He offers her a cigarette and they light up.

Arthur smiles at Liz. Liz smiles back.

LIZ

What will they be?

MILLY

Yes.

PETE

Leave off mum. She's just got here...

ARTHUR

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

LIZ

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

ARTHUR

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

LIZ

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

Arthur is reassured, mildly pleased.

ARTHUR

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

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

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

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

MILLY

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

Doris brings the tray to Liz.

LIZ

Thank you. What's your name?

Liz's question galvanises attention. Doris glances at Milly, lowers her eyes, smiling shyly.

DORIS

Doris madam.

Liz takes the coffee.

LIZ

Thanks Doris.

DORIS

Yes madam.

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

MILLY

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

She sighs.

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

She raises her eyes to Liz.

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

LIZ

We're not going to have servants.

MILLY

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

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

ARTHUR

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

EXT. BUSY JOHANNESBURG STREET. DAY.

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

INT. SOAMES AND STYMAN ADVERTISING AGENCY. DAY.

Pete gets in the lift with a bunch of people.

INT. LIFT. DAY.

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

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr Simms. Welcome home.

PETE

Thanks Brenda.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

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

PETE

Early days yet Mr Vorster...

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

INT. CREATIVE DEPARTMENT, DAY.

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

SANDY, smartly dressed, forty, pink and plump, has a pronounced English midland accent. ANDREW, fifty five, tall with a stoop, drawls upper-middle class English.

ROD DYER, twenty two, sharply dressed, clean shaven and crew cut, speaks with a guttural South African accent.

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

They all look up as Pete enters.

PETE

Morning all. What's the score?

Andrew turns to Sandy.

ANDREW

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

SANDY

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

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

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

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

PETE

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

ROD

Great Pete. Congratulations. Welcome
back.

FLIPPY

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

ANDREW

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

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

PETE

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

INT. TONY FARQUARD'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

FARQUARD

Ergol want to introduce themselves to
the natives...
strange really...

Anyway... what we need is a gimmick...
a concept... something simple and
memorable that will make the native
population feel good about Ergol petrol.

Your not dealing with the most
educated of minds here. Nothing too
sophisticated.

Will you think about that for me?

PETE

Certainly.

Pete stands, walks to the door.

FARQUARD

How's the wife dear boy? Settled in?

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

The garden looks fairly orderly. The grass is cut and some of the flower beds have been dug over. It's late afternoon. Liz, deeply tanned, sunbathes in a bikini.

A towel, sun-tan lotion, cigarettes, books and newspaper scattered around her. She rouses herself, yawning and stretching. She gets up and wanders towards the house.

INT. THE KITCHEN. DAY.

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

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

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

INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

PETE

How was your day?

It's some moments before she replies.

LIZ

I finished the book. Wrote to mum. Did my nails. Got a bit browner. And yours?

PETE

Farquard handed me the Ergol account.

Liz is silent. She pushes her plate from her.

They're the biggest oil producers in
Africa

LIZ

Bully for you.

Pete looks up.

PETE

What's that supposed to mean?

Liz lights a cigarette.

LIZ

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

Pete finishes eating. Pushes his plate away and refills the wine glasses.

Liz inhales, exhales. Sips her wine.

PETE

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

LIZ

Too bad. How's your mum?

She notes Pete's look of impatience.

How's *our* mum?

PETE

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

LIZ

You mean she's firing her.

PETE

Yes.

LIZ

What'll she do?

PETE

She's got Selma.

LIZ

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

PETE

Yes.

LIZ

What a bloody idiotic country this is!

Liz drains her glass. Sits back.

LIZ

Your mum's always telling us to take a servant... We'll give Doris a job? Not a real job...

(MORE)

LIZ (cont'd)

She could help out if she likes... that way
she wouldn't have to leave
Johannesburg.

Pete considers it.

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

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

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

DORIS

Good evening master...

Liz, dancing, laughs.

LIZ

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

Doris retreats shyly. Liz dances up to Pete.

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

Pete is annoyed and ill at ease.

DORIS

I will go see to the dinner.

LIZ

Thanks pet.

Liz picks up her drink and cigarette from the kitchen counter, takes Pete's arm and kisses him on the cheek. He doesn't respond. They walk into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete and Liz sit at the table laid for dinner. Silence. Pete, moody, pours himself wine.

LIZ

What's up.

PETE

Nothing.

LIZ

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

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

PETE

Has she been drinking?

LIZ

A sip of cooking sherry. Nothing.

Calling out

You all right Doris?

PETE

You shouldn't do that.

LIZ

What?

PETE

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

LIZ

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

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

PETE

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

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

LIZ

I'm sorry. Cheers.

PETE

For chrissake...

LIZ

I said sorry. Let's drop it.

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

DORIS

I'm very sorry about the plate.

Liz smiles and touches Doris's arm.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. DARKROOM. NIGHT.

Pete is converting a small bedroom into a photographic darkroom.

INT. ART STUDIO. DAY.

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

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

SANDY

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

Pete doesn't look up.

PETE

You'd get done under the Immorality
Act.

SANDY

Can't stop a man thinking. Can they?

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

INT. TONY FARQUARD'S OFFICE. DAY.

Farquard sits behind his elegant desk. He and Pete are drinking coffee.

FARQUARD

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

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

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

PETE

How was your day?

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

LIZ

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

PETE

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

LIZ (INCREDULOUSLY)

Sandy's Doreen?

PETE

Why not?

LIZ

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

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

DORIS

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

LIZ

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

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

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

DORIS

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

LIZ

He's not your master...

PETE

Night Doris.

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

LIZ

I'm sorry. I don't know how much more
of this I can take. It's beginning to get
to me. I can't sleep. I can't eat. I'm bad
tempered. I really don't mean to be pet.

Pete is conciliatory.

PETE

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

LIZ

I have such conflicting feelings about
this place. I hate it with a passion yet
in some unaccountable way I feel ... I
dunno... as though I've come home.

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

LIZ

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

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

PETE

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

Pete shakes his head. They both laugh.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Liz opens the wall cabinet and takes out a contraceptive diaphragm. She puts it in her vagina. Switches off the light.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

DOCTOR

Sit down Mrs Simms.

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

There's absolutely nothing wrong with
you.

LIZ

Thank god for that.

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

DOCTOR

Do you have orgasms Mrs Simms?

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

Well do you?

LIZ

(Almost inaudible)

No.

DOCTOR

With your husband?

LIZ

Not now.

DOCTOR

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

LIZ

Yes.

The doctor is unimpressed.

DOCTOR

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

Liz is nervous. She replies quietly.

LIZ

No.

DOCTOR

Why on earth not?

LIZ

I don't know. We just...

DOCTOR

Sex is not something to be ashamed of. Orgasm is simply a question of mechanics. Anyone can do it. Bring this husband of yours in. I'd like to talk to him.

Liz stands, picks up her purse. She nods.

EXT. DRUM OFFICES. DAY.

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

INT. DRUM OFFICES. DAY.

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

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

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

BLOKE MODISANE, 35, medium build, fedora, american-style summer suit too large, white shirt, abstract tie, sits on the corner of Peter's desk reading an American film magazine.

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

BOB GOSANI, 18, is watching JURGEN.

JURGEN SCHADEBERG, 25, blond good-looking, German, working on a camera with a screwdriver.

BLOKE

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

Can looks up

POLLY

Hello handsome. What can I do you for?

Pete smiles.

PETE

Pete Simms for Mister Stein. I have an appointment.

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

POLLY

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

Polly puts down the phone.

He's in the glass cage.

Pete smiles. Polly swings around watching him walk across to the editor's office.

The journalists are in a downbeat mood. Pete passes between them. They raise their heads from sombre thoughts, pause from their stories, from their negs and prints, their eyes following him curiously. No one smiles or greets him.

Apart from Jurgen the entire staff is black except SYL STEIN the editor. A shoulder-high glass partition divides his office from the rest of the warehouse.

INT. SYL'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

Syl is in his late thirties, lean, average height, clean-shaven, short greying hair, a face that depends largely on its personality for its good looks. It's a far from humourless face but, like a clown's, it rarely actually smiles. He wears a suit. His shoeless feet, in unmatched socks, are on the desk. He is deep in thought. He surfaces and stands as Pete approaches, waves him in. They shake hands.

SYL

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

He wracks his brain.

PETE

Simms.

SYL

Simms. Of course. The beauty competition.

They both sit, Syl behind his desk.

Related to the Durban Simmses are you?

PETE

I don't think so.

SYL

No. Look. You caught us at a bad time. Where you from? London?

PETE

Yes.

SYL

Yes. Look. We've had some really bad news.

PETE

I'm sorry.

SYL

How long have you been here then?

PETE

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

SYL

It's my deputy editor. Went missing a couple of days ago.

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

Two years? How come we haven't met?

PETE

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

SYL

Come over here.

Pete joins him at the window.

That fellow in the mack.

THEIR POV THE STREET.

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

SYL

See him?

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

PETE

Who is he?

Syl and Pete move away from the window and sit down.

SYL

A cop. Special branch. Monitors
everyone that comes and goes.
Thought you ought to know.

A beauty contest. Let's see...

Syl stands and shouts across the partition.

Bloke?

Bloke Modisane, looks up. Everyone looks up. Bloke wears a fedora tipped to the back of his head, braces over white shirt and flamboyant American tie.

BLOKE

Ja my baas. Ek Kom. Ek kom.

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

SYL

William Modisane our social editor.
Pete Simms.

PETE

How do you do?

BLOKE

Hi.

Pete and Bloke shake hands. They all sit down.

SYL

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

INT. ARTHUR & MILLY'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Traditional, candle-lit, family Ceder. Pete and Liz and numerous other related men, women and children, around the table. Arthur intones Hebrew prayer.

INT. DARKROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. PETE'S CAR. EVENING.

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

PETE

Did you go to the doctor?

LIZ

Yes.

PETE

What did he say?

LIZ

She said there was nothing wrong with
me.

EXT. PETE'S CAR. NIGHT.

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

EXT. A FARM HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. FARM HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

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

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

HATTIE

So you're the overpaid advertising man
from London?

PETE

Yes.

HATTIE

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

PETE

Regent's Park just by the zoo. You know
it?

HATTIE

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

Pete laughs.

PETE

How did he figure that?

HATTIE

He was in the Airforce and I was a
WAAF. He picked me up coming out of
the open-air theatre.

PETE

What had you been to see?

HATTIE

As You Like It.

Pete laughs.

PETE

Hardly the sort of play to get the juices
flowing.

HATTIE

No? What gets your juices flowing
then?

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

JUDITH

Please don't let me interrupt.

HATTIE

Meet Judith van der Broek. Pete Simms.

PETE

Hello Judith.

JUDITH

Syl told me all about you. Where's this
wife of yours? I hear she's a honey.

PETE

Here somewhere.

Pete and the two women look around the room.

JUDITH

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

Polly Nessim moves in on them.

POLLY

OK Engelsman. Let's dance.

Polly takes Pete away.

JUDITH

He's cute.

HATTIE

Where's that bloody Syl?

EXT. STEIN'S GARDEN. NIGHT.

Liz and Syl are walking away from the house, talking and laughing.

INT. STEIN'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

LIZ

Hello Pet...

Pete is uneasy.

PETE

Where've you been?

LIZ

Dancing with Bloke. Didn't you see us?

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

HATTIE

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

SYL

What are you talking about Hats?

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

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

CAN

Care to dance?

Liz looks at Pete. Pete looks at his watch.

PETE

I think it's time we got going.

Liz shrugs and smiles at CAN.

LIZ

Thanks anyway. Bye Bloke.

She kisses Bloke on the cheek.

BLOKE

Bye Liz. Bye Pete. See you next week?

PETE

I'll phone you. Bye.

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

BLOKE

Quite a cherry eh?

Can nods, sad-eyed.

CAN

Didn't even ask my name.

INT. LIZ AND PETE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

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

EXT. A MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE. DAY.

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

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

HATTIE

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

PAULY

Yes I can.

MAIVA

No you can't.

PAULY

I can.

MAIVA

Mummy says you can't.

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

HATTIE

I didn't tell you to bloody hit him!

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

INT. SYL'S STATION WAGON. DAY.

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

HATTIE

Where the hell are they?

PETE

They've probably taken shelter.

Hattie looks dubiously at Pete then at her watch.

MAIVA

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

Hattie drags nervously at her cigarette.

HATTIE

I know sweetheart.

EXT. THE ROAD OUT OF THE MOUNTAINS. DAY.

Syl's station wagon speeds along.

INT. SYL'S STATION WAGON. DAY.

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

MAIVA

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

SYL

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

HATTIE

Charlie's such a smart bloody dog.

MAIVA

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

LIZ

Smarter than average.

MAIVA

Pete? Do you think Charlie's

HATTIE

For god's sake shut up Maiva!

Maiva starts to cry.

SYL

Now look what you've done.

Hattie gives Syl a blistering look.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG SKYLINE. DAY.

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

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. LOUNGE. NIGHT.

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

PETE

Want a drink?

LIZ

Thanks.

Pete pours one for Liz and hands it to her.

PETE

Where did you and Syl get to?

Liz turns on him viciously.

LIZ

Don't you start for Christ's sake!

She slams the glass on the table and strides out of the room. Sounds from the bathroom of the shower being turned on. Pete looks glum. He sips his drink.

INT. DRUM RECEPTION. DAY.

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

POLLY

Give this to Bloke Modisane beautiful.

Polly looks up at the young woman next in line.

Name age and place of birth sweetie?

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

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY

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

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

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

BLOKE

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

GIRL

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

BLOKE

Not naked. In a bathing costume.

GIRL

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

BLOKE

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

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

GIRL

He's a bit like Rock Hudson.

She disappears into the cubicle.

PETE

Is there a problem?

BLOKE

She thinks you look like Rock Hudson.

INT. DARKROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. SOAMES & STYMAN BOARDROOM. DAY.

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

PETE

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

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

ROADS

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

Hannes Styman smiles.

STYMAN

We think it fits the bill.

ROADS

Stoffel?

VAN RIEBECK

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

Everyone looks at Pete.

PETE

When I said Johannesburg I meant black Johannesburg.

VAN RIEBECK

So where would you hold it then?

PETE

In Sophiatown.

VAN RIEBECK

In the township?

ROADS

Is it legal Hannes?

STYMAN

We've double checked with the police.

ROADS

Then let's get on with it.

ROADS stands. Everyone stands.

EXT. SOPHIATOWN. EVENING.

The sun is setting behind the decrepid, corrugated iron shacks of the township.

Smoke from the fires of street vendors, cooking and selling cobs of roast corn, hangs like a thin veil across the landscape. A car, recognisably Pete's, rocks and rolls its way down the rutted, litter-strewn street. Passers-by watch it, curious. Some call out insults in Zulu.

INT. PETE'S CAR. EVENING.

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

BLOKE

Stop at the red door. You can park here.

The car will be safe.

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

EXT. BLOKE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

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

CHILD VO

Who?

BLOKE

Bloke. Come on Josh. Open up.

CHILD VO

OK.

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

BLOKE

Greetings Josh. How goes it?

JOSHUA

It goes well Bloke.

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

EXT. BLOKE'S BACK YARD. EVENING.

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

BLOKE

This is my little brother Josh.

He addresses Josh in Zulu.

These are my friends from England Pete
and Liz. Greet them in English. Go on.

You can do it.

Joshua smiles shyly and runs into the house.

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

MA BLOKE

You are early.

Bloke leads Liz and Pete up to Ma Bloke.

BLOKE

This is Liz. This is Pete.

And then in English to Liz and Pete.

Meet my mother. Ma Bloke.

They shake hands. Bloke addresses Ma Bloke in Zulu.

BLOKE (CONT.)

Has Gerhard arrived yet?

MA BLOKE

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

She smiles at them. Bloke makes a wry face.

BLOKE

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

Ma Bloke shrugs and goes indoors.

LIZ

What did she say?

BLOKE

She was offering you African beer. She brews it herself and sells it. Illegal but it's a living.

INT. BLOKE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

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

BLOKE

It ain't much folks but it's home. Make yourselves comfortable. Let me have your coat Liz.

She hands Bloke her jacket. He hangs it behind the curtain with his hat. Goes to the refrigerator and takes out a bottle of wine, opens it and pours three glasses. He hands them around. He switches on the record player and out comes Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

BLOKE

Cheers.

They all drink and start breaking into the food. A knock on the door and Bloke's on his feet. He lays his head close to the door.

BLOKE

Yes?

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

SHORTSTRAW

Saw the car.

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

What's that noise man?

Shortstraw points to the record player.

BLOKE

Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Shortstraw makes a wry face.

SHORTSTRAW

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

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

GERHARD

Sorry I'm late. Got held up.

BLOKE

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

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

GERHARD

How goes it?

SHORTSTRAW

Nice to see you Gerhard. How's tricks?

BLOKE

Meet Liz and Pete Simms. Gerhard

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

GERHARD

I've seen you before.

Liz looks at him, smiling quizzically.

LIZ

Where?

GERHARD

Main Stream Records.

LIZ

Small world.

PETE

Where are you from Gerhard.

GERHARD

Planet Earth.

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

BLOKE

Thanks. Have something to eat.

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

BLOKE

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

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

GIRLS

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

DISSOLVE TO
LATER TIME.

Charlie Parker is trilling up and down the be-bop scales at a pace. The room has filled with numerous Africans, young men and women, dropping by to see what's happening at Bloke's. They sit around the room sipping wine, Brandy, beer, smoking, some of them chatting, some of them staring curiously at Bloke's white guests. Everyone is a little drunk. The food is finished and a number of bottles empty. Gerhard is in conversation with Liz and Pete.

GERHARD

Bloke tells me you're organising the
beauty competition in Drum.

PETE

He's doing the organizing.

GERHARD

It's ironic.

PETE

What?

GERHARD

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

PETE

I hadn't looked at it like that.

LIZ

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

GERHARD

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

LIZ

What can we do about it?

GERHARD

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

A girl remonstrates with Bloke in Zulu.

GIRL

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

ANOTHER GIRL

Give us some Kwela Bloke.

BLOKE

OK girls. You asked for it.

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

SHORTSTRAW

Wheee! That Liz! She's like an African girl!

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

LIZ

Didn't you want to dance?

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

CONSTABLE

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

BLOKE

Just a few friends.

CONSTABLE

White friends eh?

BLOKE

Nothing illegal in that.

CONSTABLE

What is this everyone's drinking?

He picks up an empty glass and smells it.

BLOKE

Like a spot? It's very good.

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

CONSTABLE

Always said you were a gent Bloke.

Don't mind if I do.

Liz and Pete watch them apprehensively, not understanding the exchange between the cop and Bloke. Can, unperturbed, twirls the matchstick in his mouth. Bloke sits the cop in the easy chair, his handcuffed prisoner still attached to him squatting at his side, and pours him a stiff drink. And then another. Everyone watches in silence.

CONSTABLE

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

Bloke puts the African jazz music on again.

Smokes?

Bloke finds him a cigarette and a light. The CONSTABLE drains his glass and stands, his prisoner with him. He cocks his head, eyes closed, rocking to the music. He smiles and starts dancing. He and his prisoner dance handcuffed together. Liz and Can join them. Then Bloke, Pete and the girls and Gerhard, still wearing his beret, everyone dancing and having a good time again.

INT. STUDIO AT SOAMES & STYMAN. DAY.

A middle-aged African in white jacket, NATHAN, collects empty coffee cups. Everyone is bent to the drawing board, working.

Pete is at ROD's desk looking at photographs of a happy African family in a gleaming new Chevrolet, filling up with Ergol at a petrol station.

PETE

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

Sandy, at the desk in front of Rod's, turns around.

SANDY

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

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

NATHAN

Haikona baas.

SANDY

What petrol do you use in your car Nathan?

Nathan smiles, shakes his lowered head.

NATHAN

Oooh. Ek het ni a car ni my baas.

SANDY

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

Laughter. Nathan shakes his head as he leaves.

It's irresponsible running ads like that.

(MORE)

SANDY (cont'd)

Gives these monkeys ideas above their station. What d'you say Andrew?

Andrew replies without looking up from his work.

ANDREW

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

SANDY

Not bloody likely.

Pete and Rod exchange looks of resignation.

EXT. A MAIN STREET, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

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

ROAD GANG

Ubulungu goddam....
ubulungu goddam goddam!

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

LIZ

What are they singing?

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

AFRICAN

They sing "Whiteman goddam" missus.

He hurries off smiling, shaking his head.

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY.

Liz walks through the fire doors.

POLLY

Morning Liz.

LIZ

Morning Polly. Syl at home?

POLLY

Go right through sweetheart.

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

Liz smiles, pauses at his desk.

LIZ

That was quite an evening at Bloke's.
It's a pity we didn't get a chance to talk.
Syl says you write poetry.

CAN

He was kidding you.

LIZ

He says they're good. Can I read some?

CAN

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

INT. SYL'S OFFICE. DAY.

Through the glass partition, Syl, moody, watches Liz talking to Can.

SYL'S POV.

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

Liz walks into Syl's office smiling. Closes the door behind her.

SYL

Hi.

LIZ

You look glum. What's the matter?

SYL

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

LIZ

Shush. Poor Syl. Are you jealous?

SYL

Maybe.

LIZ

Are you serious?

SYL

Maybe.

Liz sits down, smiles at Syl sympathetically.

LIZ

You know I'm a respectably married woman.

Syl looks at his watch.

SYL

What about lunch? I'm starving.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. DAY.

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

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

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

CAN

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

PETE

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

CAN

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

He drains his glass and gets to his feet.

I've got to get going...

He scratches his head, grimaces.

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

Pete's embarrassed. He gets a piece of paper and a pen.

PETE

What should it say?

CAN

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

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

LIZ

How will you get home?

CAN

Walk.

LIZ

It's miles! Pete'll run you.

PETE

Sure.

CAN

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

PETE

Take care.

LIZ

I'll see you out.

Liz and Can exit. Pete picks up the empty brandy bottle.

EXT. LIZ AND PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

LIZ

I wish you'd let Pete drive you home.

CAN

Thanks. I'll be OK.

Silence.

LIZ

So you think everyone should leave?

CAN

Everyone but you and me.

They embrace and kiss.

INT. KITCHEN, SYL'S HOUSE. DAY.

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

HATTIE

Want a cup Matilda?

MATILDA

No thanks.

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

HATTIE

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

Syl grunts from behind the newspaper.

SYL

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

Silence.

HATTIE

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

No reply from Syl.

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

SYL

Don't be so foolish woman.

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

HATTIE

(With growing suspicion)

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

Syl lowers the paper.

SYL

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

HATTIE

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

SYL

What party?

HATTIE

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

SYL

Hats...

HATTIE

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

SYL

Nonsense.

HATTIE

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

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

SYL

There was something but it's over.

Hattie puts down the telephone and bursts into tears.

HATTIE

You really are a fucking bastard. You're
always doing this to me.

Syl gets up, shrugs and goes out into the garden. Hattie, through her
tears and cigarette smoke, can see him playing with the dog and
children. Matilda is still hanging up the washing.

INT. HANNES STYMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

STYMAN

Our research has found the campaign to
be an unmitigated success. The
advertisements scored above average
for brand name recall.
The beauty competition running in
Drum Magazine, however, surpassed all
known figures.

(MORE)

STYMAN (cont'd)

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

Styman lays the letter gently on the desk.

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

PETE

The Odin cinema sir. It'll be a Sunday. I've agreed a fee of a hundred and fifty pounds for the day including rehearsal time. I'm talking to someone at Drum about getting bands and singing groups together. It should be a good party.

STYMAN

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

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH-RISE. NIGHT.

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

INT. 11TH FLOOR HALLWAY. NIGHT.

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

OTHER COUPLE'S POV

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

GIRL

(Eyes lowered.)

Ja my baas?

PETE

Mister Gerhard is expecting us.

GIRL

Wait a moment please.

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

GERHARD

Hello. Go in.

Gerhard looks up and down the hall.

PLOTZ'S POV.

The door down the hall closes.

INT. PLOTZ'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

The room is plain and unpretentious. There's an absence of pictures or plants. A table with ash trays and two half-empty glasses.

The kitchen door is open, the African girl can be seen pottering around making coffee. Gerhard waves Pete and Liz to sit. Gerhard sits down and offers them cigarettes which they take and light. Liz leans over, smiling, her voice low.

LIZ

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

GERHARD

You would be right. I don't.

Pause while Liz tries to put two and two together.

LIZ

Who's the lady in the kitchen then?

GERHARD

Miriam Moketsi.

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

MIRIAM

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

GERHARD

They thought you were the servant.

MIRIAM

It's OK. You thought what you were meant to think.

(MORE)

MIRIAM (cont'd)

The performance was not for you it was
for that couple down the hall.

Liz, grinning with admiration, sticks out her hand.

LIZ

I'm Liz.

MIRIAM

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

LIZ

We bought your latest record. It's
tremendous.

PETE

I'm Pete. It's an honour.

MIRIAM

What nice friends you have Gerhard.

Gerhard is at the hi-fi selecting a record.

Why don't you put on the new one?

Gerhard puts it on.

MIRIAM

I just finished recording this afternoon.

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

GERHARD

Keep it down girls.

The girls dance together while Gerhard and Pete watch.

PETE

I suppose you have to be pretty careful?

Gerhard shrugs.

GERHARD

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

PETE

But right here in the middle of town?

GERHARD

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

PETE

Where are you from... on the planet?

GERHARD

Zurich.

PETE

Why did you leave?

GERHARD

The draft.

PETE

Why Africa?

GERHARD

I'm crazy for African women.

EXT. LIZ AND PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

A warm summer's afternoon. Liz and Pete are entertaining Pete's mother and father, Arthur and Milly Simms, to tea. An umbrella-shaded table and chairs. Tea and cake on the table. Liz is serving. Pete is taking snaps. Milly is facing down the garden towards the servants' quarters. She looks up from her knitting.

MILLY'S POV.

Doris comes out of the servants quarters to hang up her washing.

MILLY

Doris not working today?

PETE

It's her day off.

MILLY

She's pregnant you know.

LIZ

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

MILLY

Just look at her.

Everyone turns to look.

EVERYONE'S POV.

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

MILLY

And there's the father.

The young African goes back into the house.

LIZ

Zack? He's Doris's cousin.

MILLY

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

PETE

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

MILLY

Get rid of him.

LIZ

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

ARTHUR

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

MILLY

You think you're doing them a good turn and look what happens.

(MORE)

MILLY (cont'd)

If I were you I'd send them packing
before you have a whole tribe camping
at the bottom of the garden.

PETE

More tea mum?

LIZ

I'll get some hot water.

Liz, seething, goes back to the house.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

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

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

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

LIZ

Are they still here?

Pete sits beside her.

PETE

Come on. They'll be gone in a little
while.

LIZ

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

PETE

Liz...

LIZ

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

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

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

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

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

TIME DISSOLVE

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

LIZ

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

PETE

Where the hell've you been?

LIZ

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

PETE

Until this hour?

LIZ

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

PETE

You might have called.

LIZ

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

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

LIZ VO

I asked Miriam about doing the Ergol finale.

PETE

And?

LIZ VO

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

PETE

I can't.

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

LIZ

Why not?

PETE

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

LIZ

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

Liz sips her tea.

PETE

It's best I go on my own.

LIZ

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

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

Oh. You mean they wouldn't like it.

PETE

It's only for one night for chrissake. It's hardly worth making a fuss about.

LIZ

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

PETE

Come off it Liz...

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

INT. AN OFFICE RECEPTION ROOM. DAY.

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

PETE

Hi. It's me. I'm sorry. Yes. I'm desperately bored and missing you. I want to come with you to Durban. I think I can make it. There's a plane that gets me back by six. I'll be home by seven at the latest. What time are they picking you up?

(MORE)

PETE (cont'd)

They can wait a few minutes can't they?

I'll be as quick as I can OK? I love you.

Bye.

Pete replaces the telephone, a little anxious.

INT. BOARDROOM. DAY.

A meeting in progress. Pete plays impatiently with a pencil. Looks at his watch.

MAN

Time has flown and our visitor from the Johannesburg office also has to fly... I think you've all met him. Pete?

EXT. BULAWAYO AIRPORT. NIGHT.

Pete leaps from a taxi as it pulls up in front of the terminal. He dashes into the Terminal.

INT. BULAWAYO AIRPORT. NIGHT.

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

EXT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT, JOHANNESBURG. NIGHT.

A passenger plane lands.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT. NIGHT.

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

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

Liz sits at the desk writing a note. She looks at her watch. An overnight bag sits by the door. Outside, the sound of a car pulling up.

It blows its horn. Liz bites her lip. Hurries around. Places the note she's been writing by the table lamp. Looks at the telephone. Shrugs. Picks up her bag. The car outside blows its horn. She grabs her purse, switches out all the lights except the table lamp and leaves. The car can be heard driving away. Under the table lamp is the note.

NOTE

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

The telephone starts ringing.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT PHONE BOOTH. NIGHT.

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

EXT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Pete switches on the light and opens the bathroom cabinet. He pulls everything out on to the floor. He can't find what he's looking for.

He slams the cupboard closed, cracking the mirror. The telephone rings. The darkroom phone is nearest.

INT. DARKROOM. NIGHT.

Pete moves quickly to the phone.

PETE

Hello? Oh. It's you.

CUT BACK AND
FORTH TO

INT. SYL'S HOUSE. NIGHT

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

SYL

You sound down in the dumps boy.
There's a party here. Why don't you two
come over?

Hattie's complaining we never see anything of you.

PETE

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

SYL

Right. One of our guys went down with
her.

PETE

Who? Did Bloke go?

SYL

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

CUT TO

Pete stares off into space.

SYL VO

Hello? You still there?

PETE

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

Pete replaces the phone. Miserable, he wanders into the sitting room.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pete pours a large brandy and downs it.

INT. SYL'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

SYL

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

PETE

Liz's fucked off.

SYL

You're kidding? Left you?

PETE

Not exactly. I think she's screwing
around.

Syl is uncomfortable.

SYL

Any idea who it is?

PETE

Could be anyone. Probably Can. I
thought it was Bloke.

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

HATTIE

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

SYL

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

HATTIE

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

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

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Hattie staggers and clings on to Pete.

PETE

You all right?

HATTIE

Never felt better. Come on... over here...

I want to show you something.

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

PETE

What?

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

HATTIE

Fuck me.

PETE

Hattie...

HATTIE

You can fuck can't you?

PETE

Come on Hattie. What about Syl?

HATTIE

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

PETE

I'm sorry Hattie. I can't.

Hattie is irate. She sits up glaring at Pete.

HATTIE

You bastard! What you mean you can't?
I bet your good friend Syl didn't have
such fine feelings about you when he
was fucking Liz!

PETE

What?

HATTIE

Come on Petey...

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

PETE

Liz and Syl...

HATTIE

Come on. Fuck me you beautiful
bastard.

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

INT. THE HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Syl stands unsteadily watching the receding lights of a car as it bumps away down the drive. He turns and looks around into the darkness.

SYL

Hats?

He can hear someone sobbing.

Hats? Is that you?

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

INT. LIZ & PETE'S HOUSE. DAY.

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

LIZ

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

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

Pete is unresponsive, unsmiling. Liz is concerned.

LIZ

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

PETE

Did you have a good weekend?

LIZ

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

PETE

You said you'd call.

LIZ

It was just impossible. I couldn't find a phone. You know how it is in these places. How was Bulawayo? How did the meeting go?

Are you feeling all right luv?

PETE

You couldn't wait could you?

Liz hesitates.

LIZ

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

PETE

Was Can there?

LIZ

Yes. He was on an assignment for Drum.

PETE

Did you sleep with him?

LIZ

What's this all about?

PETE

You slept with him didn't you?

LIZ

Don't be rIdiculous. Of course not.

PETE

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

LIZ

Syl?

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

PETE

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

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

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

LIZ

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

PETE

I don't give a shit what you do.

LIZ

I'm sorry.

PETE

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

LIZ

I'm sorry.

PETE

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

You've turned our marriage into a fucking obstacle course. Not a day goes by I don't wonder when you'll hit me with the next fucking problem.

LIZ

I said I was sorry.

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

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

I?

Pete remains immobile, silent.

Can't we...

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

I guess not.

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

EXT. ODIN CINEMA, SOPHIATOWN. DAY.

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

INT. ODIN CINEMA. DAY.

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

PETE

What are these guys doing here?

He looks at Bloke for answers but Bloke, absorbed in MIRIAM's performance, hasn't heard him. Pete turns to Gerhard.

What the hell's happening?

EXT. ODIN CINEMA. DAY.

The crowd applauds as Miriam comes to the end of her number. They listen to the voice from the PA loudspeakers.

VOICE

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

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

INT. ODIN CINEMA. DAY.

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

MAJOR

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

A submissive murmur runs through the crowd.

EXT. A SHABBY OLD SUBURBAN APARTMENT BLOCK. NIGHT.

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

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK. NIGHT.

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

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

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

LIZ

What happened to you?

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

CAN

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

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

LIZ

You didn't get far with the story.

Can scratches his head.

CAN

The bottle got empty and the muse
departed.

Liz starts taking off her clothes.

LIZ

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

CAN

Hell no. What happened?

LIZ

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

CAN

Was he there?

LIZ

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

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

CAN

Did you pick up any booze sweetie?

Liz doesn't answer immediately.

LIZ VO.

In my bag.

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

LIZ

Do you really love me?

Can kisses her.

CAN

How can I make it plainer?

LIZ

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

CAN

Brandy's just a platonic friend.

LIZ

Some friend.

Can drains his glass and puts it on the table. He unwraps the towel around Liz and makes love to her. Liz enjoys making love to Can. She becomes loudly vocal in the throes of her passion.

There's a sharp knock at the door. They freeze. Liz jumps out of bed, goes to the door, pulling on a bathrobe. She lays her head to the door, anxious.

LIZ

Who is it?

MAN'S VOICE. VO.

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

LIZ

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

MAN'S VOICE VO.

Just turn it down.

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

LIZ

Let's go to London. You'd love London.
I can get a good job there. You could
write. We'd be free. None of this
paranoia. Wouldn't you like that my
love?

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

INT. TONY FARQUARD'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

FARQUARD

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

PETE

Are you sacking me?

FARQUARD

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

Pete turns to go.

One thing I would say to you as a friend
Peter. Steer clear of getting too
involved with the Africans. They won't
thank you for it and you'll be the loser
in the end.

PETE

I'm sure you're right Tony.

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

INT. STUDIO. DAY.

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

SANDY

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

PETE

So they say.

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

SANDY

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

PETE

I suppose you could.

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

I have to go. See you later.

Pete leaves. Andrew shakes his head.

ANDREW

Poor old Pete's not taking it too well.

SANDY

I told him Liz was doing him a favour.

ANDREW

You're so right old man. That big mouth of hers would've landed him in it sooner or later.

SANDY

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

ANDREW

All out for ninety eight old boy.

Sandy claps his hands with delight.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD. DAY.

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

MILLY

Is Selma looking after you?

ARTHUR

Don't worry about a thing. Just get yourself well again. I spoke to the surgeon. Everything went fine. He says we'll have you home in a week.

Milly turns her head slowly to Pete.

MILLY

Is Liz looking after you?

PETE

Yes mum.

MILLY

She's a good girl really.

PETE

Yes.

Pete gazes out the window.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. DAY.

Pete and Arthur walk slowly towards the entrance, Pete has his arm around his father's shoulders. Arthur has tears in his eyes. They walk slowly down the corridor to the exit.

EXT. PETE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

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

PETE

Hello Doris.

DORIS

Good evening Pete. I heard the car.

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

PETE

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

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

Where's Zack? I want to talk to him.

The garden's a mess.

DORIS

I don't know where he is.

PETE

You mean he's not home?

Doris smiles shyly.

DORIS

He has left home.

PETE

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

DORIS

No.

PETE

Well we'd better find him.

DORIS

It doesn't matter.

PETE

Of course it matters. What are you
going to do? What about the baby?

Doris shrugs and goes to the door.

DORIS

We'll go back to Natal to my family.

PETE

When's the baby due?

DORIS

I don't know exactly. Not yet awhile.

Doris closes the kitchen door quietly behind her.

EXT. TOWNSHIP. NIGHT.

SUPER DECEMBER 1956

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

NEWSREADER VO.

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

Early this morning police raided homes across the republic arresting one hundred and fifty six people. The Public Prosecutor in an unprecedented move issued warrants for the arrests after a meeting with the chiefs of internal security yesterday afternoon. Prisoners are being flown from Durban Capetown Port Elizabeth to Johannesburg where they will be charged...

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY.

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

INT. SYL'S OFFICE. DAY.

Syl is on the telephone.

SYL

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

He puts down the phone and turns to the news editor Zeke

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

Zeke shakes his head.

ZEKE

Did you check the shebeens?

Syl shrugs, dismissively. He picks up a photograph.

SYL

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

Syl turns a page.

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

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

Sure. Silver Beck at one. Totsiens.

Syl, thoughtful, replaces the phone. Back to Zeke.

SYL

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

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

INT. SILVER BECK BAR. DAY.

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

SYL

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

PETE

No.

SYL

At least they didn't give you the sack.

PETE

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

SYL

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

Silence.

PETE

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

SYL

Right...

PETE

Yeah. It's about Liz and...

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

MAN

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

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

SYL

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

Pete heaves a sigh. Silence. Syl fiddles with his glass.

SYL

Sorry. You were saying? Yes. Liz...

Have you seen anything of her?

PETE

No. Have you?

SYL

No.

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

What'll you do? Going to stay?

Pete shrugs.

PETE

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

SYL

I've been talking to Hattie about moving out. I don't even know if I could get a passport.

I don't really want to leave with the trials coming up... everyone's arriving. All the London papers... the New York Times. And you know what? We my boy are the only ones who really know what's going on here.

We've got to stay. History's happening right before our eyes. Why don't you take pictures for us? Carry your camera around with you. I'll pay you for anything we use.

Pete considers it. Syl stands, picks up their empty glasses.

Same again?

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. DAY.

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

LIZ'S POV.

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

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

LIZ

Syl called this morning while you were asleep.

Can stares at the ceiling.

CAN

What did he want?

LIZ

You.

CAN

How did he get this number?

LIZ

Gerhard.

CAN

What did you tell him?

LIZ

I said you were drunk.

CAN

Thanks a lot.

LIZ

I said I hadn't seen you...

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

You shouldn't get out of bed.

CAN

I have to piss.

He stands and walks unsteadily to the bathroom.

LIZ

I'll make some coffee.

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

Jesus Christ!

Liz rushes to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

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

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

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

CAN

What would I do without you?

LIZ

Drink this.

CAN

No booze left?

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

LIZ

Sure. You can lap it off the bathroom floor.

Can takes her hand.

CAN

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

LIZ

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

CAN

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

LIZ

And when did 'being serious' become such a bad thing? Is everything so trivial to you? What about your poetry? What about Africa? What about me? Doesn't anything matter to you any more except the fucking booze?

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

CAN

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

(MORE)

CAN (cont'd)

Find yourself another fucking martyr.
Get me a fucking drink or leave me
alone.

Liz is hurt. They both sulk in silence.

LIZ

Do you hate me so much?

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

CAN

Come here.

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

Hate you girl? You're the only light in
my life.

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

EXT. DRILL HALL. DAY.

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

PA. VOICE

This is a police warning! This crowd must disperse. This is an unlawful gathering. You must all go home.

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

PA. VOICE

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

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

FREEZE FRAME

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

PULL BACK

INT. HANNES STYMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

STYMAN

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

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

INT. PETE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

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

INT. BATHROOM. DAY

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

INT. DARKROOM. DAY.

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

EXT. FRONT OF PETE'S HOUSE. DAY.

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

INT. DRUM OFFICE. DAY.

Pete walks in, camera slung over his shoulder, packet of photographs in hand. Everyone greets him. He goes over to Bloke.

PETE

Syl busy?

Bloke makes a face.

BLOKE

He's in with Jim.

PETE

Jim the publisher?

BLOKE

Our lord and master.

PETE

Something up?

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

PETE

What's the matter with it? It's great.

It'll sell a million.

BLOKE

Jim doesn't think it's great. Jim thinks it stinks.

Jim thinks it'll get him into trouble.

Jim wants to withdraw it.

PETE

And Syl?

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

BLOKE

Don't keep us in suspenders. What happened?

SYL

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

EXT. JEWISH CEMETERY. DAY.

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

INT. ARTHUR & MILLY'S APARTMENT. DAY.

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

PETE

What are you going to do dad?

Arthur sighs. He stares out of the window.

ARTHUR

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

PETE

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

ARTHUR

Why don't you come home with me?

PETE

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

ARTHUR

Liz?

PETE

Yes.

ARTHUR

Things never seem to work out the way
you think they will do they?

Arthur starts weeping.

I'm sorry. Everything seems so
meaningless now without Mum.

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

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT LOUNGE. NIGHT.

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

HATTIE

I could do with a drink.

Pete looks around.

PETE

There must be a bar.

HATTIE

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

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

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

PETE

Suppose not. I have to stay.

HATTIE

You amaze me.

PETE

Why?

HATTIE

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

Pete shakes his head.

PETE

It's not like that.

HATTIE

No? Mark my words. Where the hell's that Syl? You should get out while you have the chance.

(MORE)

HATTIE (cont'd)

While she's someone else's problem. But
you won't because you're a fool.

Syl and the CHILDREN saunter up to them, loaded down with sweets
and comics.

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

SYL

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

PUBLIC ADDRESS VO.

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

The PA message repeats in Afrikaans.

HATTIE

Come on children.

MAEVA

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

PETE

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

MAEVA

I will.

PETE

You too Syl. Write Charlie a postcard.

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

INT. PETE'S HOUSE. DAY.

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

1ST MAN VO.

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

PETE VO

(calling out)

Who is it Doris?

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

2ND MAN

Mr Simms?

Pete nods.

PETE

It's OK Doris.

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

1ST MAN

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

2ND MAN

Is she a live-in maid Mr Simms?

PETE

Who are you? What do you want?

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

1ST MAN

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

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. DAY.

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

LIZ

Oh. Hello. How are you?

She listens, looks across the room at Can.

What about?

Listens. Looks at her watch.

OK. I'll see you there. Goodbye.

EXT. CAFE. DAY.

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

LIZ

Hello Charlie.

PETE

What'll you have?

LIZ

Nothing for me thanks.

PETE

How have you been?

LIZ

Not so dusty. And yourself?

PETE

I've missed you.

LIZ

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

PETE

I love you.

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

LIZ

I'm sorry about the way I've treated you.

Liz puts her hand on his.

I heard about your mum. I'm so sorry.

It must have been a shock for you.

How's your dad taking it?

PETE

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

LIZ

Even after all this?

PETE

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

LIZ

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

PETE

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

LIZ

Still?

PETE

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

LIZ

I can't.

PETE

Why not?

LIZ

I can't. That's all.

PETE

Is it Can? Are you still seeing him?

LIZ

Yes.

PETE

Are you in love with him?

LIZ

Love? I don't know.

PETE

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

LIZ

When are you going?

PETE

Soon. I haven't fixed a date.

They are silent for a few moments.

Come home with me .

LIZ

I can't. I'm home already.

Liz stands. Pete stands. She kisses his cheek.

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

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

INT. PETE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

Pete goes down the path towards the servants quarters. A light is on in Doris's room. Pete knocks at the door. Another cry of pain. Pete opens the door and goes in.

INT. DORIS'S ROOM. NIGHT.

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

PETE

My god Doris. What's happening?

DORIS

The baby.

Pete is flustered.

PETE

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

Doris arches her back in pain.

DORIS

Too late. He's coming now.

PETE

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

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

DORIS

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

EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT.

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

INT. TAXI. DAY.

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

EXT. PARK STATION, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

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

PETE

Your ticket and your wages.

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

Well then. I'd better say goodbye.

Pete chucks the baby under the chin.

'Bye little fellow.

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

'Bye Charlie. Take good care of 'em.

DORIS

Thank you.

PETE

'Bye Doris.

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

INT. BLOKE'S ROOM, SOPHIATOWN. NIGHT.

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

BLOKE

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

PETE

I feel like a rat leaving a sinking ship.

BLOKE

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

They chuckle. Bloke pours them another drink.

PETE

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

BLOKE

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

PETE

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

A knock on the door. Bloke stands. Pete hides the brandy bottle.

BLOKE

Don't panic. I have a surprise for you.

Bloke goes to the door, listens, opens it. POLLY NESSIM walks in.

POLLY

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

She kicks off her shoes and starts undressing. Bloke walks to the door, smiles at Pete and waves. He leaves closing the door behind him.

POLLY stands in her slip in front of Pete. Pete smiles sheepishly as she starts undressing him. They make love on Bloke's bed.

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

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

POLICE

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

One of them slaps Liz in the face.

You fucking whore bitch!

Another pulls Can by the arm dragging him onto the floor. Can doesn't resist. They kick him as he lies inert on the floor. The flash fires continuously. Liz screams and cries. Can is kicked again and again.

POLICE

Get up you blicksem!

LIZ

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

She struggles loose from a policeman's grasp and flings herself on top of Can to protect him. A police boot kicks Can in the head. Can has an unseeing look in his eyes, a St Sebastian kind of smile on his lips.

POLICE

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

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

LIZ

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

She breaks into hysterical weeping.

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

The flash freezes this horrific scene.

EXT. PETE'S GARDEN. DAY.

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

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT, JOHANNESBURG. DAY.

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

SHOPKEEPER

Are you going to pay for that?

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

PA. VOICE.

South African Airways flight five seven seven to London is ready for boarding. Passengers should proceed immediately to gate number three.

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

END