

# **A DRY WHITE SEASON**

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Revised First Draft

**FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PURPOSES ONLY**

"IN THE WHOLE WORLD  
THERE IS NOT A SINGLE  
POOR DEVIL WHO IS LYNCHED,  
NOT ONE MISERABLE MAN  
WHO IS TORTURED IN WHOM  
I TOO, I AM NOT MURDERED  
AND DEGRADED."

Aime Cesaire

PRE-TITLE:

FADE IN:

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR BOYS - DAY

Dan Pienaar school is a typical Johannesburg Afrikaan school. The students are mainly from middle-class families. School athletics are in progress. The students, in their smart school uniforms, are cheering enthusiastically a relay race on the immaculately-kept sports ground.

GORDON NGUBENE, a 47-years-old African laborer is working in the school garden. A few feet away is his 15-years-old son JONATHAN leaning against a wall watching the games.

BEN DU TOIT, a 50-year-old Afrikaaner history teacher, is enthusiastically cheering his son JOHAN, a 15-years-old, who is leading neck-and-neck with another boy in the last leg of the race. The excitement increases as they approach the tape. Ben is beside himself, egging his son with shouts. The young teacher, VIVIERS, standing next to Ben, is shouting "come on Johan," and slapping the father on the back.

Johan breasts the tape just ahead of the other boy. The ground is invaded by boys running to congratulate Johan.

Ben hurries towards his happy but exhausted son; the proud father pushing his way through the animated boys. As he reaches Johan he pats him on the back.

BEN

This was your best race.

JOHAN

(excited)

I beat him, Papa.

BEN

(proudly)

You did son. Come on, shower.

They walk happily towards the school buildings in conversation, Johan being slapped on the back by friends. Ben stops to talk to Gordon who jumps to his feet.

BEN

I'll be expecting you. There isn't much to do, only weeding the marigolds and watering the lawn and flowers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON

We'll be there, Mr. Ben'sir,  
Jonathan come to help me.

Ben hadn't seen Jonathan. He turns to him.

BEN

And how's the algebra? Still  
giving you trouble?

JONATHAN

(with respect)  
Just a little, Mr. Ben'sir.

JOHAN

Me too.

GORDON

(straightening himself)  
He's working hard, Mr. Ben'sir,  
and your money will not be  
wasted. Emily and me will always  
thank you.

BEN

(as he leaves)  
See you both later.

Gordon returns to his work a little distance further. A group of students are laughing and pushing each other boisterously. As they near Jonathan, two nudge each other and giggle. Then, one of them trips Jonathan. He falls to the ground and jumps up aggressively, about to attack the boy. Gordon shouts "Jonathan."

The headmaster, MRS. CLOETE, aged 65 years, has observed the incident, but takes no action.

Jonathan stands panting with rage. He suddenly strides away towards the gate in a rage.

GORDON

(shouting angrily)  
U ya phi?  
(Where are you going?)

Jonathan turns to look at his father and continues to walk off.

TITLES.

EXT. SOWETO BEER HALL - AFTERNOON

The beer hall is a large complex with a drinking area with long rows of low benches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Men sit drinking African beer in one-half and one gallon plastics containers. The place buzzes with noise. Several people are touting wares for sale.

Suddenly a group of about twenty youths walks into the drinking area, obviously to cause trouble. The LEADER starts to address the clients.

LEADER

Your children are starving and you are drinking. We demand freedom and our fathers are drunk. We ask you to boycott these beer halls. Revolution and drink don't work together!

A large MAN WITH SIDEBURNS, obviously drunk, stands up, a stick in his hand.

MAN WITH SIDEBURNS

Since when do children talk like this to their fathers? They need thrashing.

The man and several others advance on the boys. The boys run into the serving area, close the doors and start breaking up the place. Two police Land Rovers SCREECH to a halt outside. The boys run out through a side entrance. They are chased by the police who are black.

Jonathan and his best friend Wellington, also 15 years, are walking towards the beer hall when the boys come running out chased by the police. It is prudent for them to run down the street. The boys and police are bearing down on them. Their escape is cut off by the appearance of another police Land Rover. Two policemen, two blacks and two whites join in the capture. Jonathan, Wellington and about ten of the boys are arrested.

As they are huddled into the vehicle, they protest their innocence without success and are driven away.

INT. SOWETO POLICE STATION - CHARGE OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The charge office is sparsely furnished with a long bench along a wall. There is a reception counter with Sgt: Van Zyl in charge. The boys are lined up against a wall. The sergeant stands with a tall blond man with a scar on his chin, CAPTAIN STOLZ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The sergeant reads out a name and looks at Stolz; if he nods the boy stands aside. After this ritual, the ones that Stolz has chosen are marched to a waiting police van and driven away. The others are taken to the cells at the police station, these include Jonathan and Wellington.

EXT. DUTCH REFORM CHURCH - DAY

The MUSIC STOPS. The doors open. The 40 years-old-minister Bester comes to the door, then stands and greets his parishioners as they file out of the church.

Amongst them, Ben Du Toit -- his wife, SUSAN, a clean-cut, immaculate, "toe-the-line" beauty and his son, Johan -- the blond, blue-eyed, tanned and torsoed fourteen-year-old every father dreams of. Susan greets friends and acquaintances, pausing to chat... mostly formalities. Johan, his eyes on a girl his age. She is with her father, Mr. Cloete, the headmaster -- she smiles at Johan from a distance; he waves awkwardly as she drives off with her parents.

SUZETTE his daughter, sophisticated -- groomed. She takes her baby from the black nanny waiting in the car, carries the child to the group chatting with CHRIS, her husband. She shows it off proudly. Ben is chatting, concerned, to a WOMAN. She looks drawn and worried.

MRS. COETZEE (WOMAN)

He won't come to church. He lies in bed all day, listening to his headphones.

BEN

I wondered why he wasn't at school. Would it help if I came to see him? He's always seemed a good kid to me.

MRS. COETZEE

Oh, would you?

BEN

Of course. I'll phone and we can fix a time.

Mrs. Coetzee smiles her gratitude.

SUSAN

Ben! Ben!

She's waving impatiently at him. He crosses back to her. Suzette's BABY is HOWLING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She rocks it back and forth, holding it at arm's length. The BABY SCREAMS. The nanny comes forward -- Suzette hands it over.

SUSAN

Mrs. Coetzee. She looked worried.

BEN

She's having trouble with her boy. He won't come to school.

SUSAN

So you said you'd have a word with him?

BEN

Yes!

She smiles and walks him to the car affectionately.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - BARBECUE - DAY

The Du Toit family.

Susan is bringing out the salads. Chris, her son-in-law, is at the barbecue, stinging his eyes. Ben is bouncing his grandson, little Hennie, in a small, portable pool. The black nanny sits in attendance in the shade, a towel at the ready. The good life...

... Suddenly disturbed by... Gordon and Jonathan standing uncertain at the far side of the garden; Gordon's hat pressed flat against his chest, Jonathan defiant.

Susan looks up -- as do each in turn -- curious at the intrusion... then the black nanny -- and finally Ben. After a moment, Ben walks up to Gordon.

BEN

Gordon! What are you doing here?

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Six cuts, like six knife gashes, revealed on the blood-stained buttocks of Gordon's son, who stands in painful, truculent embarrassment.

Ben is shocked by the severity of the canning.

GORDON

That's not why I'm complaining, Mister Ben, sir. If he did wrong, I'd beat him myself. But he didn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON

He did nothing and they wouldn't listen. They wouldn't believe him.

BEN

I'm sorry, Gordon. But there must be a reason.

GORDON

He says he wasn't doing anything wrong, Mister Ben, sir. And I believe him, I know my son! It's an injustice!

BEN

What about the court? Didn't he state his case?

GORDON

What does he know about court? Before he knew, it was all over.

BEN

I don't think there is anything we can do about it now.

Outside, peering through the half-opened door, is Johan, shocked at what he sees. Ben tapes Jonathan on the head, he pulls up his shorts painfully, yet fiercely, anxious to cover himself up again.

GORDON

We can get a lawyer to appeal.

BEN

A lawyer? That won't heal Jonathan's buttocks.

Susan appears at the door.

SUSAN

Ben!

BEN

I'll be out in a minute.

She nods, ushering Johan away from the door back outside.

GORDON

You don't understand, Mister Ben, sir. I don't want him to have a police record.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON (CONT'D)

It will be there for the rest of his life and make it difficult for him to get a job in the future.

BEN

Don't worry, Gordon. I'm sure there'll be no record, it's such a minor case. Please don't worry.

Ben calls Johan from the outside.

BEN

Johan, get some iodine from the cupboard.

Johan rushes in the house.

GORDON

I'm not worried about the wounds. They'll heal in time, Mister Ben, sir. It's the wounds here.

(slaps his chest)

I worry about. Injustice... it festers.

Johan comes back with a small bottle of medicine.

BEN

(to Gordon)

Rub it on the wounds and it will help.

EXT. BEN'S GATE - DAY

Ben watches the black man and his son trudge down the long drive, the father's arm on the son's shoulder. At the foot of the drive the nose of an exotic Soweto cab can be seen waiting... a large butterfly painted on the hood.

EXT. BEN'S GARDEN - DAY

Ben takes his place at the table. Susan brings a piece of boerwors and a mug of beer.

SUSAN

Trouble?

BEN

Jonathan has been caned, by the police.

She places the boerwors and the beer before him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

He probably deserved it.

EXT. SOWETO SCHOOL - SOWETO UPRISING - MORNING

School grounds of the Orlando Secondary School. Students are milling around in high spirits. One group is putting finishing touches to a banner reading: "no to apartheid education."

There are two other banners being carried around the school yard, followed by the younger children. They read:

"No to the Oppressor's language"  
"Bantu education is slave  
education."

A BOY, one of the eldest, aged about 18 years calls for silence. The STUDENTS immediately obey.

STUDENT LEADER (BOY)

You all know why we are going to  
march.

The crowd shouts:

STUDENTS

'No to Bantu education'  
'No to apartheid'  
'Freedom Now'...

STUDENT LEADER

There must be discipline. We  
start marching from here and we'll  
join up with the others at the  
main road. Please take care of  
the younger ones. Let's go.

The Students start marching led by one of the banners, singing a freedom song.

Amongst them is Jonathan and Wellington. They are singing. The march turns round one of the streets.

CROSSROAD

Several groups of students marchers converge to join the march that has already started, including Jonathan's group. There are several banners condemning Bantu education, apartheid, etc.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Examples: "EQUAL EDUCATION NOW"  
 "ONE MAN ONE VOTE"  
 "FREE OUT LEADERS"  
 "NO TO THE AFRIKAANS LANGUAGE"

There are chants of slogans as they march:

STUDENTS  
 'If we learn Afrikaans vorster  
 must learn Zulu.' 'Bantu  
 education! Stinks! Stinks!  
 Stinks!' 'Equal education! Now!  
 Now! Now!'

They also start singing a freedom song.

FURTHER UP STREET

Three police Jeeps block the route of the march. A little distance behind are police troops carriers ('hippos'). About six police-dog-handlers in camouflage uniforms stand across the road waiting for the march to approach.

As the march gets closer the students' singing increases in volume.

The Soweto police COMMANDANT steps forward with a loud-speaker in hand. He confronts the lead of the march. He signals for them to stop. The dogs are straining at their leashes and their handlers taunt the leading group.

COMMANDANT  
 Now listen to me, this is an  
 illegal demonstration. I order  
 you to disperse immediately.

The Students start singing the African national anthem 'Nkosi Sikelele.'

Children of 8, 9, 10 years singing lustily with their fists clenched as everyone else.

Jonathan and Wellington singing.

Camouflaged police scrambling out of Jeeps with guns and tear gas grenades. They stand with the rifles pointing at the marchers. The singing continues.

The Commandant confers with a junior officer who hurries to the group of policemen and gives them instructions. The ones carrying tear gas move towards front. The police start donning gas masks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMANDANT

This is the last warning.  
Disperse immediately or I will  
take action.

A voice in the crowd shouts "Banutu education..."

The crowd shouts back "Stinks, Stinks, Stinks."

The Commandant gives a hand signal.

Tear gas canisters are thrown into the crowd, the dog-handlers attack. There is panic with Students running in all directions, several choking.

Some of the students start throwing stones at the police, hitting one in the face; he is helped away by a black policeman.

Without warning, SHOOTING STARTS.

Children drop, wounded; friends trying to help the dying and seriously wounded, others helped away.

Some boys appear with dustbin lids as protection and they pelt the police with stones.

The police in the 'hippos' are jumping off and pursuing Students, some SHOOTING.

Woman grabs two of the running children age about 9/10 and hustles them into house.

Jonathan and Wellington are running with a group. In the distance the sound of an AMBULANCE SIREN. A Jeep cuts off their escape, they turn back running as SHOTS are FIRED towards them, a little girl drops, shot in the back. Jonathan shouts to Wellington who is ahead of him.

JONATHAN

Wellington! Wellington!

Wellington looks back, sees Jonathan trying to help the little girl. He runs back to help. Another girl, aged about 17 years, is also trying to help.

Two policemen suddenly appear from behind a house, they are about 18 years old.

The girl straightens up and confronts the two policemen shouting hysterically.

GIRL

Shoot me! Come on, shoot me!  
Shoot me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She slumps to the ground crying.

Jonathan, Wellington and the Girl are hustled into a crowded van amid punches and kicks from the police. The van drives off leaving the injured Girl on the road, neighbors run to assist the Girl.

As the van is passing, see a burning car, in the distance a building on fire; another AMBULANCE SIREN.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

A) EXT. AFRIKAANER SCHOOL

B) The screams, the laughter of white kids playing at their school, massed in conviviality, Johan one.

C) Behind, aboard a mower, motors Gordon, in the blue overall of a groundsman, intent in his task.

OVER this white pacifist content, hear...

... GUNSHOTS, SCREAMS, TERROR.

D) EXT. SOWETO - AFTERNOON

The carnage, the dead, the wounded. The stunned bewilderment of blacks and police alike... even the latter unnerved by their own brutality.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG SUBURB - LATE AFTERNOON

Soweto train rushing through suburb of Johannesburg.

REVERSE SHOT FROM train.

INT. SOWETO TRAIN CARRIAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

The third-class carriage is crowded with African commuters returning to Soweto. The passengers represent all the social and economic strata of Soweto: laborers, factory workers, domestic servants, clerk secretaries, the unemployed, etc. In the carriage, Gordon, returning from work, standing.

A LARGE middle-aged WOMAN is standing in the crowded aisle at one end of the carriage. She suddenly shouts:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARGE WOMAN  
 (to man in front of  
 her)  
 Careful with your bag. Can't you  
 see where it's touching?

MAN #1  
 (standing half-way  
 down carriage)  
 Can I see where it's touching?

LARGE WOMAN  
 Men of today only like looking.

Laughter in the carriage. Gordon is also enjoying the  
 joke.

MAN #2  
 (standing by a door)  
 It's the electricity.

MAN IN KHAKI UNIFORM  
 What has electricity to do with  
 it?

A few voices also ask same question.

MAN #2  
 Today with the electricity they  
 say:  
 (in an affected  
 voice)  
 'Darling let's not switch off  
 the light.'

Laughter and voice saying "that's true."

WOMAN #1  
 (standing very near  
 Gordon)  
 I hope you have electricity with  
 those thick glasses of yours.  
 With your eyes you couldn't find  
 anything.

More laughter.

MAN #3  
 Tell us, does your wife also wear  
 thick glasses?

MAN #2  
 (quickly)  
 You should know, she's your  
 sister.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is more laughter.

Suddenly a MAN jumps on his seat waving his arms -- he's about 40 years old -- in BLUE OVERALLS. He cannot take it any more.

MAN IN BLUE OVERALLS  
Quiet! Thulani! Thulani!

The noise goes down.

MAN IN BLUE OVERALLS  
They are killing our children  
and you are making jokes...

VOICE (O.S.)  
They say hundreds of children have  
died and Soweto is burning.

CLOSEUP - GORDON AND WOMAN

talking about the information.

SMARTLY-DRESSED MAN  
The white people, they will pay,  
and soon.

YOUNG WOMAN  
'They will pay, they will pay.' Since  
when have they been killing us, putting  
us in jails, starving our children to  
death, taking our land? Hundreds of  
years. And what have you men done?  
Only talk, talk, talk. You are not  
men. Sis. (Shit.)

The conversations in the carriage become muted and serious.

The train enters Soweto, there is smoke hanging over several parts of the township, and official buildings are on fire.

Suddenly, the passengers are gripped by the seriousness of the situation.

There are snatches of conversation such as:

"That's the superintendent's office  
on fire."

"I hope the children are home."

"We have to dodge bullets tonight."

"Vorster must hang for this."

"I hope the world hears about this."

INT. GORDON'S HOUSE - EVENING

Silence.

A small three-room Soweto brick house -- The living room is modestly furnished.

EMILY, Gordon's 40-year-old wife, is sitting on a narrow iron bedstead against the wall, clutching her youngest 2-year-old son -- Her mind is preoccupied. Sitting next to her is a ten-year-old daughter.

Gordon is sitting on a chair at the table with his second eldest son, Robert -- aged 14 years -- standing by the side of the table -- sitting on an old easy chair is a Soweto resident with his 15-year-old DAUGHTER standing beside him.

GORDON

(to girl)

Are you sure it was Jonathan they took away?

The girl glances at her father. He coaxes her to talk.

GIRL (DAUGHTER)

Yes, baba, with Wellington.

INT. SOWETO POLICE STATION - DAY

Black parents, waiting. At the counter with Gordon, a large black man, STANLEY, a friend -- his big easy smile is working hard on a white policeman, the station SERGEANT VAN ZYL, about to run out of patience.

STANLEY

No, no, I understand, Baas, but is that all the names? There's no other list somewhere?

SERGEANT VAN ZYL

I'm telling you. He's not in custody. Have you tried the hospital? Have you tried the mortuary?

Gordon sucks in his breath audibly.

SERGEANT VAN ZYL

I'm only suggesting the possibilities.

STANLEY

But, what about John Voster Square?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SERGEANT VAN ZYL  
Look, I've tried to help you.

STANLEY  
Thank you.

Stanley walks up to a WOMAN.

STANLEY  
You're here too, sis Paulina, who  
are you looking for?

WOMAN  
They picked up my girl -- 13-year-  
old girl!

STANLEY  
(comforting her)  
We are all searching.

The policeman calls her -- she hurries to the counter.

CUT TO:

INT. BARAGWANATH MORTUARY - DAY

A white-uniformed assistant leads a line of African  
parents, reeking of sadness, into a cool room where metal  
drawers open from the walls.

Stanley and JULIUS their black lawyer -- the two men seem  
to be very well-known, people shake hands with them,  
salute them --

Gordon and Emily's sadness is tinged with anger -- they  
have dignity, defiance, bowed with grief as they are.

Stanley's large hand is placed gently on Emily's shoulder  
as they examine the dead faces before them.

They belong to children, some in torn, dirty clothes,  
others naked, some mutilated, others whole and seemingly  
unharmful, as if asleep, until the small, neat hole in  
temple or chest and the small crust of blood is brought  
to our attention.

A woman behind them starts to scream. They look around  
to see her holding onto a drawer, her legs buckling.

Another woman pulls her close to grieve with her. The  
assistant approaches them and after a soft exchange he  
writes a name on a tag and ties it onto the body. The  
woman can't, won't leave her dead child. Her friend has  
to pull her away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crowd parts to let them through. Other women reach out to touch her.

Gordon looks into the last drawer, Jonathan is not there. They make their way out past the other parents and a group of mourning women sitting.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

Gordon, Emily and their friends cross to Stanley's great white elderly Dodge, this "etembalami" with the big butterfly. For, amongst other things, he is the owner and driver of a pirate taxi.

They get in. Stanley pauses -- looks across at a small red VW Beetle parked nearby, waiting. He shakes his head -- the VW flashes its lights and drives off.

INT. STANLEY'S TAXI - DAY

Inside they sit in silence... recovering from the ordeal. Only Emily silently whispers "Thank God, thank God."

After a while...

STANLEY

What now?

GORDON

He is our son... we must find him.

JULIUS

I'll make more inquiries -- John Vorster Square -- the special branch -- but I don't hold out much hope.

GORDON

You're a lawyer, Julius!

STANLEY

(laughs)

A black lawyer! Those Boers... the bastards'll kick him around till they lose him.

EMILY

What about the Baas? If he asks, they will give him an answer.

GORDON

(bitterly)

When the boy was flogged he didn't help. Why should he help him now?

EXT. BEN'S GARDEN - MORNING

Gordon is at work already -- 8 AM -- mowing the lawn. He's intense, unsmiling, burdened as he goes about his task, expertly.

Sounds of BEN and JOHAN LAUGHING coming from inside.

INT. BEN'S DEN - MORNING

Ben and Johan, in robes, their hair still wet from their showers, having an imaginary boxing match. Johan has Ben on the ropes, backs him out of the house.

EXT. BEN'S GARDEN

Ben adjusts the sash of his robe and takes the offensive towards Johan, as he sees Gordon.

JOHAN

Hi, Gordon.

No response. Ben does a double-take and stops playing.

BEN

(to Johan)

Hold it, champ.

He crosses the yard to Gordon, fluffing his hair dry, Johan follows behind.

BEN

Gordon, you okay?

No response again. Gordon continues to work. Ben and Johan exchange puzzled looks.

JOHAN

Isn't this Jonathan's day to help you?

BEN

How is he, recovering?

Gordon stops, switches OFF the MACHINE, stands not looking at Ben.

GORDON

I don't know, Mister Ben, sir -- the police took him.

BEN

Again?

JOHAN

What for?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON

They arrested many. They even deny they've got him. He's disappeared...

BEN

Disappeared? He's a child -- why didn't you tell me?

Gordon just looks at him, sadly, patiently.

BEN

Okay! I'll see what I can find out.

Ben walks off with Johan as Gordon STARTS the MOWER.

INT. BEN'S STUDY - MORNING

Ben is talking on the phone.

BEN

Our gardener, yes. Probably nothing, but he's worried.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sumptuous lawyer's offices, Johannesburg. They're lush-carpeted. A black woman cleaner is finishing off her early-morning chores, packing up as white staff are beginning to arrive. They're fresh, shining, attractive -- whipping the covers off typewriters.

A young black girl, smart, well-groomed, is carrying a tray of coffee, desk to desk. FOLLOW her as she approaches her employer's open office door.

We hear his voice -- see him on the phone in the b.g.

LEWINSON

... And when was this?

He nods, makes notes. He's in shirtsleeves. At his post early, ready for action.

LEWINSON

Ngubene -- Jonathan Ngubene.

INT. LEWINSON'S OFFICE - DAY

The coffee girl enters, places a cup on Lewinson's desk, and retreats.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWINSON

I'll get on to them straight away...  
Not at all -- I think better this  
time of morning -- after lunch,  
man, I'm a zombie.

(laughs)

Sure -- let you know straight away  
-- love to, Susan... Cheers!

(puts down phone;

presses his intercom)

Freda! Open an account... Du Toit.  
Benjamin Du Toit... Subject...  
Jonathan Ngubene.

MONTAGE - SEARCH FOR JONATHAN

A) TYPEWRITER

-- CHATTERING out -- on Lewinson's headed note paper:

To the Commissioner of Police  
Police Headquarters  
John Vorster Square

Dear Sir,

On behalf of our client, Gordon Ngubene,  
we are anxious to discover the whereabouts  
of his son...

B) INT. POLICE HQ. (JOHN VORSTER SQUARE) - INTERROGATION  
ROOM

Wellington, Jonathan's friend, is sitting alone in  
fear. Through the wall he can hear MOANING -- SCREAMS.  
He closes his eyes tight as if to shut out what he  
is hearing.

C) POLICE TYPEWRITER

-- CHATTERING out -- on police headquarters note paper:

To Lewinson & Partners Solicitors

Dear Sirs,

With reference to your enquiry concerning  
Jonathan Ngubene, we suggest you take the matter  
up directly with the particular officer in  
charge...

## D) HOSPITAL (JOHANNESBURG)

Young black nurse carrying bedding -- corridor -- startled by moaning, screaming figure of black boy, being hustled on trolley into private ward. Boy is deposited on bed as policeman is posted outside.

## E) TYPEWRITER

-- Lewinson's headed paper:

... the whereabouts of Jonathan Ngubene, aged 15, who was apparently detained by you...

## F) 2ND POLICE TYPEWRITER

-- Second heading:

The type keys hesitate, tremble, for a considerable number of seconds, on and on, as if deliberately delaying or uncertain how to answer.

## G) MATRON

confronted by Gordon and Emily. She shakes her head vigorously, denying all knowledge, shows them the door.

## F) FINALLY:

Dear Sirs,

With reference to your enquiry seeking the whereabouts of Jonathan Ngubene, we are sorry to inform you we have no record of anyone of that name...

## I) HOSPITAL - WHITE SUPERINTENDENT FACING JULIUS

SUPERINTENDENT

It's preposterous. I would have known -- of such a case... I mean... in my hospital. You people! You're always raking up trouble!

## J) STANLEY

At the back of police headquarters, John Vorster Square. An elderly black cleaner, emptying garbage, is being shown Jonathan's photograph. He looks -- and nods -- pointing down as meaning the basement.

## K) CLOSE ON STANLEY'S FACE

END MONTAGE.

INT. LEWINSON'S OFFICE - DAY

He is with a client. He pushes a button on the intercom.

LEWINSON  
 ... Freda -- I said no calls...  
 Oh... Right... put them through.  
 Hallo! Yes! How are you?...  
 that is correct.

He listens -- his face slowly becoming solemn --

LEWINSON  
 Very well. Thank you for finally  
 letting us know.

He replaces the receiver... looks at it for a long second  
 ... before lifting his eyes to the client.

LEWINSON  
 (to client)  
 Sorry.

He dials a number.

INT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - STAFF ROOM - DAY

Tea break for the teachers, Ben among them. He is enjoy-  
 ing a laugh with his colleagues -- maybe in Afrikaans --  
 we should hear the language here where we need not com-  
 prehend. An African serves the tea.

There's a KNOCK -- a monitor comes in and talks to Ben  
 who follows him outside.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Ben at the phone.

BEN  
 Hello, Dan... No... it's all  
 right...

INT. LEWINSON'S OFFICE - DAY

LEWINSON  
 I'm sorry. They have just  
 officially informed me. The boy  
 was never in detention. He died  
 ... the day of the riots and  
 as nobody came to claim the corpse  
 he was buried a month ago.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Ben at the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

Thanks a lot, Dan... I'll tell  
Gordon. 'Bye.

Ben hangs up and stays there... thinking... until the  
BELL snaps him out of his thoughts.

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - PLAYING FIELDS - DAY

The playing fields, not of Eton but as good as...

... Cries and whistles rise through the still, warm air  
from a game of schoolboy rugby being played below us by  
immaculately-fitted teams.

On another part of the field Gordon's lawnmower off to  
the side -- two figures pace -- slowly -- one white, one  
black --

A VOICE overlays all this... strange... ironically  
African.

GORDON

Mister Ben, sir. If it was me,  
all right. And if it was Emily,  
all right. We are not young. But  
he's out child. My time and your  
time, it's passing. But the time  
of our children is coming. And  
now if they kill our children --  
if we let them -- what is it that  
we lived for?

BEN

(places a hand on  
Gordon's shoulder --  
comforting)

What can we do, Gordon? You or  
I... We can't change it.

GORDON

That day, Mr. Ben, sir, when they  
whipped Jonathan, you also said we  
can do nothing. But if we had...  
if someone heard what we had to say  
this would not have happened.

BEN

It's a terrible thing, Gordon --  
God knows I'm sorry. But you have  
other children to live for... I'll  
help them too with their schooling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON  
 (interrupting)  
 How did he die, Mister Ben, sir?

BEN  
 I told you, Gordon... He died on  
 the day of the riots.

GORDON  
 That's what they say. But I got  
 to know for certain. How can I  
 have peace? I must know how my  
 son died and where they buried  
 him.

The game on the next pitch finishes with a pierce of the  
 whistle. The kids run off past Ben and Gordon. Gordon  
 climbs onto the small lawn mower and STARTS the ENGINE.

BEN  
 Gordon. The police -- if they've  
 said...

GORDON  
 I don't care what they say. He is  
 my child. God is my witness today:  
 I cannot stop before I know what  
 happened and where he lies. His  
 body belongs to Emily and me.

And drives away -- chugging across the field... leaving  
 Ben -- helpless -- behind him -- watching.

From his:

OFFICE WINDOW

in the school behind -- a worried headmaster watches.

We hear his voice over.

CLOETE (V.O.)  
 ... This business of Gordon's son.  
 Be careful, Ben. These are not  
 normal times -- one has to make  
 allowances.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR PARK

The car park. He and Ben are getting into their cars at  
 the end of the day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

Don't worry! I'm no crusader.  
I've known Gordon a long time,  
that's all.

CLOETE

I understand -- it's your  
Christian duty to your neighbor.

BEN

Something like that -- yes.

CLOETE

Just don't get too close.  
Teachers must stay out of  
politics. Love to Susan!

And drives off, leaving Ben watching him, shaking his  
head at the man's obtuseness.

EXT. NGUBENE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Emily is watering a tiny vegetable plot in the yard, with  
a bucket and a pierced tin.

Robert is playing nearby with the youngest child.

Robert sees Gordon walking slowly to their house and says  
playfully to the baby:

ROBERT

Look who's coming? It's baba!

Emily turns to look. She immediately realizes that some-  
thing is wrong. She drops the tin and walks a few steps  
toward the gate.

Gordon sees her and stops.

Emily starts to break down.

EMILY

Oh, no... oh no, Lord.

Gordon hurries to embrace her.

EMILY

(sobbing and repeating)  
Please don't tell me...

Gordon starts to lead her to the house.

Margaret, Emily's neighbor, comes, hurries, helps her,  
comforts her, escorting them to the house.

EXT. SOWETO MAIN ROAD - DAY

Stanley and Gordon are driving along Soweto main road.

A 10-years-old BOY stops the car.

INT. STANLEY'S CAR - DAY

BOY  
(to Stanley)  
Baba, I heard you're looking for  
Wellington. He's out, Baba.

STANLEY  
Where is he? Where is he?

BOY  
He's with some boys at Dube's  
shop.

STANLEY  
Thank you very much. You've  
worked like a man.  
(turning to Gordon)  
Let's go.

Stanley turns the car round and drives off at speed.

EXT. DUBE'S SHOP - DAY

Wellington and a few pals are standing outside the shop  
-- they greet Stanley as they see the car -- Stanley  
shouts back greeting.

STANLEY  
Take it easy, boys. Hey  
Wellington!

Wellington comes to the car. He's limping, wearing  
sunglasses.

As he's approaching the car, Stanley opens the back door  
for him.

He enters and removes the glasses.

Stanley notices a deep scar from the forehead to the  
cheek.

STANLEY  
What happened... Don't tell me...

GORDON  
Did they do that to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wellington has a nervous arm-twitch... and nods to the question.

GORDON

(anxiously)

I want to know what happened to Jonathan.

WELLINGTON

Isn't he out yet?

(pause)

I last saw him weeks ago.

STANLEY

Jonathan is dead.

GORDON

I have to know how he died.

INT. BEN'S DINING ROOM

Sizette and Chris with the family at dinner. Suzette is passed the Rand Daily Mail newspaper by Chris, folded at an article headlined: "WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO JONATHAN NGUBENE?" by Melanie Bruwer.

SUSAN

Isn't that tragic? Jonathan was such a nice boy. Even played with my Johan when they were small, God.

BEN

And he was such a nice boy, well-mannered.

SUSAN

You said he was very bright at school.

Chris helps himself to more. Suzette looks at the paper.

SUZETTE

Well, this kind of journalism doesn't help the situation. Look at her face? What does she look like?

CHRIS

The Rand Daily Mail always exaggerates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She passes the paper to Ben. He looks at Melanie's picture: she looks 30 years old, long black hair, large dark eyes with a fierce, unsettling, uncompromising stare, a small nose and a generous and sensual mouth.

BEN

Looks quite attractive to me.

Chris and Johan laugh.

BEN

(he surveys the article; then with a serious tone)

'... Is only the latest in scores of black youths who have disappeared whilst in police custody.'

CHRIS

What does she expect? They're out of control. Give them an inch and they take a hundred miles. It's in their nature. The only language they understand is force.

JOHAN

Chris, Jonathan was fifteen, like me. Would you use force on me?

CHRIS

You're not a terrorist. If you were -- like an increasing number of them, you'd deserve it. Look, every time you pick up the newspaper...

BEN

(interrupts; focusing on the paper)

My God, one hundred shot! They didn't have to kill them.

SUSAN

This bloody Bruwer woman reports one hundred shot, but the radio said only twenty and the police were attacked first.

SUZETTE

I thought the idea was to give them their own areas, banstustans. Let them live with their own kind. No chance of conflict then. Everybody's happy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHAN

And who would do the work?

SUZETTE

Pardon?

JOHAN

The work, who'd do it?

SUSAN

You for a start. Come on! Help me clear these dishes.

As Johan stands, to clear the table. He turns to his father with a smile, and shrugs -- an irritated Suzette joins them.

INT. GORDON'S HOUSE (SOWETO) - NIGHT

The small dark room is crowded. The one oil lamp -- on the table -- At the table sits Gordon... his glasses on the end of his nose.

Emily is sitting by the stove. Robert stands beside her chair, watching, listening.

The youngsters are sleeping in opposite directions on the iron bed.

Wellington is sitting beside Gordon at the table. There is something wild in his manner. He looks everywhere as if he is scared of being attacked unawares.

The black cleaner from John Vorster Sq. stands near the table. Gordon is reading aloud from a handwritten document.

GORDON

'On the second day of our detention at John Vorster Square we were taken to one of the top floors. We were ordered to undress and they started to beat us with fists and sjamboks. This for a long time.'

Wellington nods and gets more paranoid. The black cleaner puts an understanding hand on his shoulder.

GORDON

'On one day me and Jonathan...'

Gordon pauses... steadies himself... pushes his glasses up his nose... clears his throat...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON

'... We were asked questions for the whole day and night by Capt. Stolz and different policemen -- they never stopped. They tried to force us to say we were the leaders at our school, that we were working for the A.N.C. and got money from overseas. Capt. Stolz wanted to know the names of the students committee and where he can find Toni Mtimkulu -- Everytime they asked question, they beat us. It was bad beating.'

Wellington nods again. Emily closes her eyes to shut out the image.

GORDON

'We told them we had done nothing and didn't know about all the things they are asking us; on two occasion they put a wet bag over my head and I -- couldn't breathe -- I thought I was going to die. One day I heard Jonathan being beaten. He was screaming and crying, and then a noise like tables and chairs being knocked down, and Capt. Stolz shouting "you bastard, get up, do you hear me?" Ngubene, don't pretend here, get up." Then the next day I heard he had gone to hospital and I never saw him again.'

There's a long silence. Gordon closes his eyes and struggles with his grief. Emily sobs, Robert looks on in anger. Then, finally, Gordon offers a pen to Wellington, who is about to sign the foot of the statement, when...

... Suddenly there is the sound of a TRUCK APPROACHING. Wellington rushes to the front window and peers outside; then panics, fear in his eyes, he runs into a bedroom and jumps through the window.

Everyone in the room is bewildered.

The front door bursts open. Emily sits impassively looking at the five policemen (two whites and three Africans).

The youngest child startled from his sleep starts to cry. Emily goes to the bed and picks the child up and returns to her chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIEUTENANT VENTER

Stay right where you are.

He notices the papers on the table and picks them up. He looks at them and realizes their importance.

Capt. Stolz walks into the room and surveys the room and its occupants. Lieutenant Venter hands him the papers. He goes through them, nodding to himself as he reads silently. He folds them neatly and puts them into his inside jacket pocket. He walks up to Gordon.

STOLZ

(to Gordon)

On your feet! So, you must be  
Gordon Ngubene?

Gordon doesn't answer.

He turns to the cleaner who automatically stands.

STOLZ

We know each other, don't we?

Calmly, he paces round the room looking around, then when he reaches the bed where the 10-years-old girl is watching terrified, he pulls off the blankets, yanks the girl off the bed by her arm and frantically searches the bed. The child cries. Robert the brother goes to his sister and hugs her as he glares at Stolz with anger and hatred.

STOLZ

(turning to Venter)

Gert, in daardie kammer.

(Gert, that room)

(turning to the other  
one)

Jaimie, in die ander.

(Jamie, the other room)

LIEUTENANT VENTER

Niks, Kaptein.

(Nothing, Captain)

STOLZ

Take the bastards away.

The other policeman appears from the other bedrooms empty-handed. Gordon and the cleaner are roughly handled as they are handcuffed by the African Security Police.

Over his shoulder Gordon manages to give Emily one last look, as he's hustled out of the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Emily sits motionless, anger in her face. She can hear the sound of the CARS DRIVING AWAY.

Margaret (her neighbor) appears at the door.

INT. BEN'S STUDY - NIGHT

Behind Ben's house, are the servants' quarters attached to the garage.

Ben has adapted what would have been a maid's room into his study and the adjoining room into a do-it-yourself workshop.

The study has photographs of Ben's past as a provincial rugby player, of his family, school staff and TRECHIKOFF reproduction.

On a cupboard are trophies of individual sports at university.

He works off a plain desk on which is a handsome pipe-rack with several pipes. His indulgence is a comfortable easy chair.

Ben's study, containing only the figure of Ben. He's hunched over his desk, looking blankly at the newspaper.

His shirt is unbuttoned, his jacket slung across his chair. He draws heavily on his pipe, wreathing his head with smoke in the beam of the single desk light.

He sits in his chair:

Gordon's voice rises in his thoughts.

GORDON (V.O.)

That day, Mister Ben, sir, when they whipped Jonathan, you also said we can do nothing. God as my witness today: I must know what happened and where he lies. His body belongs to Emily and me.

He mutters -- more a prayer than a curse.

BEN

Jeezus -- Jeezus -- Jeezus Christ.

JOHAN

Good night, Papa!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Johan is entering, knocking on the half-open door. He's in his pajamas and dressing gown, ready for bed. Ben looks up at him. Johan kisses his father who suddenly clasp his son hard, clinging to him for dear life.

The boy throws his arms around his dad's neck.

JOHAN

Oh, Papa!

Susan appears at the door with a cup of coffee. She's had a bath -- her hair is wet -- and she's in her housecoat.

Ben and Johan don't notice her approach.

She watches sympathetically for a moment, then...

SUSAN

Coffee! Come on, Johan. Time for bed.

Johan pulls back from his father's arms.

BEN

Yes, son. Go and get some sleep.

The boy nods and leaves.

As Susan rests the cup of coffee on the desk before Ben. She notices the Rand Daily Mail.

SUSAN

I'm proud of you, Ben... what you've done for that family. But darling, you shouldn't take these things to heart so much. What more can you do about it?

BEN

I don't know. I'm just tired, I suppose.

SUSAN

(stroking his hair  
gently)

Come, come to bed.

Her housecoat has fallen open. He lifts his face to hers and kisses her.

BEN

I will, in a minute. I'll just put the thoughts of Standar Six away. They mustn't be lost to posterity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She chuckles, satisfied, leaving him.

He picks up his cup and drinks. He thinks again for a moment. Then he removes a photocopied letter from an envelope and reads:

OFFICE VOICE (V.O.)  
'... Seeking the whereabouts of a certain Jonathan Ngubene, regret to inform you we have no record of anyone of that name...'

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Afrikaan boys in uniform hunching over their desks writing... On the blackboard: the date and history test:

What year did the first white man arrive in South Africa?  
When was the Battle of Blood River?  
Who was the Zulu chief who was defeated at the battle of Isanadlawana?  
Who was the president of the first Afrikander Republic?  
Give the route of the Voortrekkers from the cape?

Ben walks through the aisles and from time to time opportunities to glance at the window at Gordon's motionless tractor sitting in the field.

He turns back and notices a boy focusing on the ceiling. His pen in his mouth, trying desperately to find the answers. Ben has a smile, then crosses to him, bends down and strikes a similar pose.

The class breaks up into laughter.

BEN  
(slapping the student's back)  
All right, time up! Hand in your test.

Moans from the students.

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - VERANDA - DAY

Ben appears on the other side of the veranda. He is in Cloete's company -- the little big man... grey hair... 65 years old. The headmaster.

They stop in before Ben's colleague, Vivier, passing, shakes hands with him. A woman arrives and waits. Cloete says something to Ben, then laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben smiles and Cloete goes into the office.

The woman approaches Ben... talks to him... they both turn back to see...

... Emily standing there, a soaking headscarf tied native-style around her head.

Ben thanks the woman and crosses the yard.

BEN

What's happened, Emily?

EMILY

(calmly)

I'm sorry, Baas... but it's Gordon.

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - DAY

... Stanley is waiting in his car. His sunglasses on his nose...

... The SCHOOL BELL RINGS to give the end of the tea interval. Ben walks out with Emily to Stanley's car. Stanley gets out, they stare at each other. Finally Stanley breaks the silence.

STANLEY

(putting out his hand)

How's it? I'm Stanley! I heard about you!

Ben feels a little uncomfortable.

EMILY

This is Stanley Makhaya... He helps us all the time.

Stanley opens the door to Emily.

BEN

Don't worry too much, Emily, I'm sure Gordon will be home in a few days.

Stanley slaps the door with a big laugh. He gets into the car and drives away.

CLOSE ON BEN

perplexed.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - JOHN VORSTER SQUARE - DAY

Gordon stands facing the wall, his arm raised. He has wetted his trousers.

Captain Stolz is pacing behind him. Lieutenant Venter, sitting on the edge of the desk, is smoking.

STOLZ  
Come on, Kaffir, talk!

GORDON  
Please, I've done nothing. All I  
tried to do was to find...

Stolz interrupts him with a blow to his face. As Gordon drops his hands, the officer shouts to him.

LIEUTENANT VENTER  
Up with those bloody arms!

STOLZ  
We don't like gramophone records  
here! Now who has been giving  
you informations?

Gordon doesn't answer.

The Lieutenant walks slowly to him, calmly removes his fag-end of cigarette from his lips and stubs it on Gordon's neck.

LIEUTENANT VENTER  
(very calmly)  
Why don't you answer the Captain,  
han?

He walks back to his place.

Captain Stolz opens the door and shouts:

STOLZ  
Johannes! The bag!

Gordon has a look of terror.

Immediately a black security policeman walks in with a bag.

STOLZ  
All right.

Johannes goes to wet the bag in a bucket in a corner.

Lieutenant Venter grabs Gordon, throws him onto a chair and handcuffs his hands behind the chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stolz is supervising.

The Lieutenant places the wet bag over Gordon's head and ties it.

Gordon starts groaning and wriggling.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS (JOHN VORSTER SQUARE) - DAY

Under the gaze of a uniformed POLICEMAN in a bulletproof glass cage, Ben fills in a slip, then hands it to the Policeman, who then makes a phone call.

Whilst waiting, Ben notices a video surveillance camera.

Just then, a 20-year-old African girl, Afro-style hair, is brought in held on both sides by two white policemen.

She is taken into a lift.

Ben watches them enter the lift and follows the progress of lift to the 10th floor.

The Policeman stamps the slip and gives it to Ben.

POLICEMAN

Somebody will meet you on second floor.

Ben enters a lift.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM (JOHN VORSTER SQUARE) - DAY

Gordon's still sitting on the chair, slumped -- Johannes removes the handcuffs as the Lieutenant removes the wet bag.

Gordon is breathing heavily and semi-conscious.

Suddenly Captain Stolz punches him heavily on the face. Gordon drops on the floor with blood gushing from his nose and mouth. Captain Stolz grabs him by his collar.

STOLZ

(hysterically)

Come on you bloody black bastard.  
Who has been telling you lies?

The PHONE RINGS. Stolz drops Gordon and walks to answer.

STOLZ

(calmly)

I'll be down immediately, Colonel.

CUT TO:

INT. VILJOEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Behind the large desk, Colonel VILJEON replaces the telephone receiver; there is a KNOCK on the door -- and a young policeman ushers in Ben. Colonel Viljoen stands and extends a hand.

VILJOEN

Come in, Mr. Du Toit, come in.  
How do you do?

They shake. He's a large, friendly man, ruddy face, gray crew cut.

BEN

Nice to meet you, Colonel Viljoen.

VILJOEN

I used to watch you play for the Transvaal. You were one of the great wing forwards.

BEN

(grinning)  
Long time ago.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

VILJOEN

Come in.

The door opens revealing Captain Stolz.

VILJOEN

Captain Stolz, Mr. Du Toit.

Captain Stolz nods correctly, unsmiling, comfortably dressed, English-style. He shakes hands with Ben. Then walks toward the window and stands there.

As he's watching Ben, he begins to clean out his pipe with a silver penknife;

VILJOEN

(to Ben)  
Do sit down.

Ben sinks into a low leather chair before the desk. Behind him he can feel Stolz's eyes.

Viljoen peers through his half-moons at the letter in front of him. The pipe scraping continues behind Ben's ear.

VILJOEN

All right now, Gordon Ngubene.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

Well... to put it simply, Colonel...

VILJOEN

(smiling)

I'm always grateful for that.

BEN

I thought there might have been some kind of misunderstanding I could help straighten out.

VILJOEN

Like what?

BEN

I know him, Colonel. He works at my school. He's done work for me too.

VILJOEN

And you feel you know him enough to vouch for him.

BEN

Yes, after so many years... 10 years. Gordon's not the type to get himself in trouble. He's an honest, hard-working, church-going man.

VILJOEN

Ha! You'd be surprised how many honest, decent, church-going men we come across during a working day.

He leans back comfortably in his chair.

VILJOEN

It's routine, Mr. Du Toit -- a routine enquiry. Cleaning up these townships we must leave no stone unturned.

BEN

I appreciate that -- but Gordon would never...

VILJOEN

(interrupting)

Not an easy task either -- the press screaming blue murder -- especially the English.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VILJOEN (CONT'D)

And they'll be the first to squeal if the Reds took over, make no mistake. Rushing back overseas clutching their bloody British passports. Have you any idea what will happen here if we don't follow every lead? We have a duty -- obligation. You have your job -- we have ours.

Ben hastens to reassure him.

He looks directly at Ben, frank, open, trustworthy.

BEN

Colonel -- believe me, I'm with you all the way. But in this case -- I'm sure that in your worthy pursuit of the guilty you have, unwittingly, involved the innocent. After all, we're all human. We all make mistakes sometimes.

Viljoen laughs again.

VILJOEN

We are indeed, Mr. Du Toit -- we are indeed. Though there's many who might need persuading as to that fact.

Then... authority.

VILJOEN

Mr. Du Toit. While you're here, would you mind if I asked you a few questions about Ngubene?

BEN

(genuinely)  
Colonel, I'd welcome it.

VILJOEN

Good!

There's another pause. The Colonel takes out a fountain pen -- unscrews it -- and arranges a sheet before him before speaking.

VILJOEN

Shall we start with his son?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

Jonathan.

VILJOEN

The eldest.

BEN

Yes. He died some time ago.

Viljoen doesn't react.

VILJOEN

What do you know about Gordon's activities since Jonathan's death?

The noise stops behind.

BEN

Nothing, Colonel.

VILJOEN

Did Gordon ever discuss the death with you?

BEN

Of course he did -- he was upset.

The Colonel pauses.

VILJOEN

But he accepted the truth?

BEN

He is a religious man... in the end he would have resigned himself to it.

VILJOEN

Would have? You mean he didn't? Was he angry? Rebellious?

BEN

Come on, Colonel! If one of your kids died...

(nods to family picture on desk)

... and nobody would tell you how it happened or where his body is buried, wouldn't you be upset?

STOLZ

We told him how his son died, Mr. Du Toit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben turns back, surprised.

VILJOEN

You have a son, Mr. Du Toit?

The Colonel looks up at him... the first sign of steel in his eyes... then back to the papers.

The noise starts again behind Ben.

VILJOEN

Does he burn and destroy -- everything he can lay his hands on?... No -- and neither does mine. That's what I can't understand... after everything the government does for them.

(looks straight at Ben)

Think about it, Mr. Du Toit. We're for you, not against you.

BEN

(irritably)

I've never doubted it, Colonel. It's you who appear to be doubting me. These questions. You're making me feel like a criminal.

There's a moment's pause -- then a burst of laughter.

VILJOEN

I'm sorry, Mr. Du Toit... I'm sorry. It's force of habit. Once a policeman, always a policeman, eh?

More laughter -- Ben joins in. Viljoen stands, signalling an end to the meeting.

EXT. BEN'S CAR - DAY

Johan is sitting, waiting, in the parked car... the RADIO ON. He's bored.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE

VILJOEN

... As soon as we're satisfied he's innocent, he will be released. We know what we're doing, Mr. Du Toit. You want your wife and that boy of yours to sleep safe tonight, don't you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben nods, smiles, makes for the door, turns.

BEN  
One last favor, Colonel?

VILJOEN  
Fire away!

BEN  
Gordon's wife -- she's very worried. May she bring him some food and a change of clothes while he's still here?

VILJOEN  
No problem! Thank you for your help...

BEN  
Thank you. I'll rely on you, then.

VILJOEN  
Will you find your way out?

BEN  
I think so. And thanks. I feel much happier now.

VILJOEN  
Good! And give my regards to your father-in-law -- tell him we'll have a drink sometime -- maybe go to a game.

BEN  
I will. Goodbye.

And the door shuts behind him.

There's silence for a moment... Viljoen staring at the closed door -- Stolz looks expectantly at him.

VILJOEN  
(pointing up)  
Is the little bird singing yet?

STOLZ  
I'm working on it.

VILJOEN  
Good.

Stolz leaves, shutting the door behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. JON VORSTER SQUARE

Ben opening his car. Johan is sitting in the front seat. As Ben gets into the car, he glances at the John Vorster Square building.

INT. BEN'S CAR - DAY

Ben is motoring through and out of Johannesburg. Johan is silent beside him, impatient.

BEN  
I talked to them. Gordon will be released soon. The colonel was very understanding.

JOHAN  
Did you see Gordon?

Ben suddenly realizes that he didn't ask to see Gordon.

BEN  
(embarrassed)  
No.

JOHAN  
Did they say anything about Jonathan?

BEN  
No, but... Johan, he is dead. We can't do anything for him. Don't mention this visit to your mother. Okay?

INT. DU TOIT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Suzette and Susan in the kitchen arranging the dessert tray. The kitchen is surprisingly neat. LAUGHTER is coming from the dining room.

SUZETTE  
What extra-mural interest?

SUSAN  
Champion of political detainees!

Ben comes in to open extra bottles of wine, hears Susan's line.

SUZETTE  
(laughing, turns to Ben)  
Is that right, Papa?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN  
That's right, Suzette. But, only  
one detainee: 'Gordon!'

SUZETTE  
Our Gordon?

BEN  
That's right.

SUZETTE  
(disbelieving)  
My God. What on earth for?

Susan leaves the kitchen without a word, with the dessert plates on the tray to the dining room.

INT. DU TOIT HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Susan reaches VIVIERS and the minister DOMINEE BESTER, with their dessert plates. The candles have burned down amid the detritus of dinner: glasses disarranged and dirty, the cloth spotted with food and wine and ashes. In addition to Viviers, dateless, and Bester and his wife, the school's headmaster, Cloete and his wife.

INT. DU TOIT HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ben hastily uncorking a bottle of wine while talking to Suzette.

SUZETTE  
It must be a mistake, Papa.

BEN  
Of course it is. I went down  
there, told them. They're looking  
into it.

SUZETTE  
Went down where?

BEN  
John Vorster Square.

Suzette giggles, amazed.

SUZETTE  
You old devil you. Does Ma know?

BEN  
No. And you're not going to tell  
her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A pause. She looks at him.

SUZETTE

Be careful. I don't want my  
favorite Papa in trouble, Gordon  
or no Gordon.

She ruffles his hair, smiles, kisses him. They go back  
into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

BEN

More wine? Viviers?

VIVIERS

Not for me, Oom Ben. I'm drunk  
enough.

BEN

Mrs. Cloete?

MRS. CLOETE

Please!

Ben serves her.

Susan passes to fetch milk jug and sugar basin from the  
chine cupboard.

MRS. CLOETE

(to Mrs. Bester)

Oh, I saw those sheets you liked,  
Sally, on sale at Bloom's.

MRS. BESTER

Will you be free on Wednesday  
afternoon? I have one or two  
other things to buy.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Susan enters the kitchen. As she is about to place the  
jug and basin on the table next to the tray with cups of  
the same set, there is a knock at the door.

SUSAN

(turning to the door)

Come in.

The door opens and Stanley steps in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
 (surprised)  
 Who are you? What do you want?

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ben and guests hear Susan.

Ben jumps up, hurries to the door. Viviers starts to follow.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ben stops at the door, sees Stanley, turns to Viviers.

BEN  
 It's all right.

Viviers returns to his seat as Ben shuts the door behind him.

BEN  
 Oh, it's you... hum... Stanley,  
 isn't it?  
 (to Susan)  
 That's all right, darling.

Ben leads Stanley out of the kitchen, closing the door behind him.

CLOSE ON SUSAN

intrigued.

INT. LEWINSON'S HOME - NIGHT

Lewinson is at the phone, behind him his wife, too, is entertaining guests for dinner.

LEWINSON  
 A Friday night, man! I'm no  
 doctor, I'm not on standby all the  
 bloody time. Can't they wait 'til  
 Monday?

INT. BEN'S STUDY - NIGHT

BEN  
 Dan! I'm standing here with  
 Gordon's clothing in my hand.  
 It's bloodstained...  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN (CONT'D)

There are broken teeth in the pocket. Monday may be too late!

(pause)

The lawyer has been banned.

Stanley is waiting, his great hand on his hips, the other one on Emily's shoulder. She is sitting on a chair. Obviously, Stanley doesn't expect a positive response.

INT. LEWINSON HOME - NIGHT

LEWINSON

(interested)

Do you mean Julius Nqakula?

(pause)

Too bad, he's a good lawyer. Why are you getting so involved, Ben?

INT. BEN'S STUDY - NIGHT

BEN

I'm just trying to help Gordon. ... You represented many cases, tell me, does this happen often?

(pause)

But Gordon's not political.

(pause)

Okay, Dan, I'm sorry for disturbing your weekend.

Ben replaces the phone. Turns to Emily and Stanley.

BEN

He agrees to see you tomorrow and will apply to the supreme court for an interdict to stop any assaults on Gordon. And, we'll find out what's going on.

STANLEY

You're all right, Lanie.

Ben can just hear Emily's soft voice.

EMILY

Thank you, Baas.

STANLEY

Come on, sisi. Tomorrow it'll all be first-class again.

INT. DU TOIT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Laughter again. Ben has rejoined the party in the lounge. The women are together talking, laughing and the men on their own.

SUSAN  
More coffee, anyone?

General assent.

CLOETE  
The security police don't arrest people for nothing, Ben. Leave it alone.

BEN  
They could make a mistake.

CLOETE  
Blacks lead double lives. One you see and one you don't. These people surprise you all the time.

VIVIERS  
(joking)  
That's what I like about them.

BEN  
We're not concerned with 'blacks.'  
We're talking about GORDON. A good man and very loyal.

SUSAN  
(serving coffee to Cloete)  
And a hard worker too.

CLOETE  
A hard worker? I had to get rid of him.

Susan doesn't react. She leaves to join the womens' group.

BEN  
What?

CLOETE  
I fired him a few days before he was arrested for staying away from work for days. And for the sake of the school I say good riddance.

BEN  
What do you mean 'good riddance'?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOETE

I have a responsibility for the children. These are troubled times, Ben, we can't trust the natives any more.

BESTER

You have to be extra careful about any influences, Oom Ben. Even their churches are breeding grounds for all sorts of evil ideas.

BEN

Gordon's not subversive and definitely not a Communist.

CLOETE

Then he's got nothing to worry about!

VIVIERS

Except his three teeth. Our government mustn't allow such things to happen. After all, it's a Christian government.

(turning to Bester)

What do you say, Dominee?

Bester doesn't answer.

BEN

(irritably)

I'm not talking about the government! I believe in our government, damn it...

His sharp tone surprises everybody. He quiets.

BEN

... Look, I know the police often know more than we do. I'm not questioning that. I'm as loyal as the next man. But I do know Gordon Ngubene... there is something wrong.

There's a moment's embarrassed silence, broken by Suzette's entrance with a tray of glasses and a bottle of brandy.

SUZETTE

(putting the tray in front of Ben)

Anything else, Papa?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben starts pouring, and offers the first glass to Bester.

BEN

Dominee?

Bester shakes his hand.

BESTER

Nee Dankie.

Ben hands the glass to Viviers.

Immediately Viviers raises his glass and laughingly says:

VIVIERS

Oom, Ben, may your problems be  
small ones!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM (JOHN VORSTER SQUARE) - DAY

Gordon is undoing his trousers.

Venter roughly drops the trousers and pushing him to the floor.

He handcuffs him while Johannes pulls off the trousers and underpants, and manacles his ankles.

Johannes fetches a rod.

Venter goes to a cupboard, pulls out two electric wires with electrodes attachments and places them on the desk.

All the preparation is done with practiced efficiency. From the adjoining room there are angry shouts of a woman.

Venter and Johannes place the rod between Gordon's elbow-joints and the back of his knees. The door opens.

Gordon has a look of terror on his face.

CAPTAIN STOLZ (O.S.)

Sorry I'm late.

Captain Stolz enters carrying a thickish file under his arms, goes straight to the desk and sits down.

CAPTAIN STOLZ

Johannes, the table.

Johannes moves the table in line with the desk.

Lieutenant Venter and Johannes lift the trussed Gordon and the ends of the rod between the desk and table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIEUTENANT VENTER

You're a heavy shitface. Too much  
mealie porridge!

Captain Stolz holds Gordon by the head and swings him like  
a pendulum.

STOLZ

How do you feel today? Ready to  
fly?

Very calmly Captain Stolz pulls out some papers from the  
file.

STOLZ

(pointing one sheet  
of paper)

Yes, Mister Ngubene, we know about  
this Wellington... and...

(pointing another  
affidavit)

... We know about him... and him  
... Now, we want the names of the  
others. And today you're going  
to tell us.

The WOMAN in the next room SHOUTING louder than before --  
that one is a real and tough activist --

STOLZ

(to himself)

Bloody woman.

(to Johannes)

Water!

As Johannes is fetching the bucket of water. Venter goes  
to the cupboard and stays there.

LIEUTENANT VENTER

'Samson' is ready, Captain, shall  
I switch him on?

Johannes empties the bucket over Gordon. Stolz attaches  
the terminal to Gordon's earlobes.

STOLZ

(to Venter)

Okay. Gert!

Gordon is given a short burst of electric shock.

GORDON

(reacts)

Hai!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOLZ  
That was a small taste of 'Samson.'  
We have a whole day...

A knock at the door.

STOLZ  
... Kom!

A black policeman in uniform. JOHNSON SEROKE, enters with a letter in his hand.

STOLZ  
What do you want?

SEROKE  
A letter for you, Captain.

Stolz goes to take the letter and turns to place it on his desk. He notices Seroke still standing.

STOLZ  
What are you bloody-well waiting for?

SEROKE  
No reply, Captain?

STOLZ  
Get out of here.

Seroke leaves.

STOLZ  
(to Gordon)  
Now about these affidavits who told you to collect them? The A.N.C.? Who recruited you?

Gordon mumbles something.

STOLZ  
What?

He bends forward to hear, and Gordon's swollen, puffy eyes hold his gaze.

GORDON  
I don't know anything about the A.N.C.

STOLZ  
You've had your chance. Now you're going to shit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOLZ (CONT'D)  
 (to lieutenant in  
 Afrikaans)  
 Reg gert. (Okay, Gert)

Gordon suddenly shakes violently and shouts repeatedly.

GORDON  
 Hai! Hai! Hai!

INT. DUTCH REFORM CHURCH - MORNING

Dominee Bester is preaching from the pulpit.

BESTER  
 God created the whole human race  
 so that they could occupy the  
 entire earth. He decreed how  
 long each nation should flourish,  
 and what the boundaries of each  
 territory should be. Our task is  
 to preserve that creative diversity.

Behind him, in his deacon's black tails, Ben listens with clasped hands. On the opposite side, another man is listening, standing in the love of his family, Cloete.

BESTER  
 Brothers and sisters, like our  
 forebears, the Voortrekkers, who  
 trekked into the wilderness  
 preserve the Afrikanere way of  
 life given to them by God. Today,  
 we also live in times of great  
 danger. Let not fear overcome  
 you! Cling to the ways of justice  
 and truth preserved by our leaders.  
 So shall God be honored...

BEN'S POV

The faces of his friends scattered among the pews, Suzette and Susan listening intently, Johan beside her visibly bored, his eyes wandering to the Cloete's daughter at the end of the pew.

BESTER  
 ... So shall the Afrikaner people  
 flourish.

The organ plays the opening notes to a hymn, the congregation rises and sings.

INT. BEN'S GARAGE - DAY

Ben's garage/workshop -- the door is open. Ben and Johan are together building a strong desk for Johan.

The RADIO offers MUSIC to keep them company. Susan is confronting Ben.

SUSAN

Why didn't you tell me you'd been down to John Vorster Square?

BEN

What difference would it have made?

SUSAN

I'm your wife, damn it!

She turns the RADIO DOWN, irritably.

BEN

I didn't want to upset you.

SUSAN

Upset me? It upsets me when you share your bloody secrets with a child!

Johan is embarrassed. Ben glances at him. Johan shrugs and shakes his head "not me." Ben planes on.

SUSAN

Ben! Ben! Look at me for God sakes!

(turns to Johan)

Johan uit met jou!

Johan leaves.

BEN

(posing down the plane)

Now what?

SUSAN

We have a good life. We may not have everything we might have had if...

BEN

(interrupts)

... If I'd been more ambitious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
 (looking at him)  
 Ben, what's happening?  
 (pause)  
 Sometimes it seems to me I don't  
 know you.

Ben looks at her. Her tone is panic, urgent. She looks  
 afraid. He crosses over to her, takes her in his arms.

BEN  
 What's happening -- it's something  
 I've never had to face -- deal  
 with -- before.

SUSAN  
 He's the gardener for God's sake,  
 not one of the family.

BEN  
 Be patient with me... When Gordon  
 is free you'll have me all to  
 yourself again... promise.

SUSAN  
 (nuzzling into his  
 chest)  
 Ben. We're growing old.

BEN  
 Nonsense. One's as old as he  
 feels. I feel young and very  
 attractive. I can still do my  
 duty.

She smiles up at him, chuckles, and then they kiss.

Johan interrupts.

JOHAN  
 Papa.

SUSAN  
 (smiling indulgently at  
 Johan's interruption)

---

JOHAN  
 Stanley's here, Papa.

Johan leaves.

SUSAN  
 Oh, bloody hell!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Susan exclaims in angry frustration and flees.

Stanley appears at the garage door. He stands.

STANLEY

Gordon's dead.

BEN

What?

The news leaves Ben speechless. Stanley continues in flat, emotionless tones.

STANLEY

The bastards say he committed suicide... hanged himself.

Ben, recovering from the shock.

BEN

Suicide... is that what they told Emily -- poor woman...

STANLEY

They didn't tell her. She heard it on the radio like the rest of us. I contacted Lewinson immediately. He then rung the police to ask why Emily wasn't informed. Would you believe it, they said they were sorry, and they didn't know where to contact her.

Ben walks slowly out of the garage in deep thoughts --

Stanley follows him.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

BEN

(almost to himself)  
God! I never thought Gordon could commit suicide.

STANLEY

Did you understand me? I said, they said he committed suicide.

BEN

How do we know?

STANLEY

Gordon wasn't a coward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

Yes, but...

STANLEY

(interrupts aggressively)

What do you mean 'but'? What about Timol who they said had jumped from a top-floor window? What about Ngudle? What about Mosala? Joyi? Malele? They all died in that John Vorster Square. All suicide, eh?

Ben stares at him. There is something like a strange silence between them. Ben is confused and Stanley is staring at him. Ben breaks this embarrassing mood.

BEN

Anything I can do to help?

STANLEY

He's got brothers.

BEN

(surprised)

Brothers?

STANLEY

I'm his brother, man, we all are! We'll take care of everything.

(with pride)

That's the African way.

BEN

Stanley, I'd like to see Gordon.

STANLEY

Don't look for trouble, man. You know there are riots all over Soweto. You're out of it. Why don't you stay out?

BEN

Don't you understand? I've got to go.

STANLEY

(with a mischievous smile)

You got to go? Of course, Lanie... the last farewell. But we have to be careful.

INT. STANLEY'S CAR - DAY

Stanley drives sportingly as he talks to Ben, seated in the back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

We expected it.

BEN

How can you talk like that!?

STANLEY

A guy gets picked up by the S.B...  
he's part of history, man.

BEN

You mean you had no hope, you  
didn't believe he'd be released?

STANLEY

Hope's a white word, Lanie... It's  
not hope we need.

There's silence for a moment.

BEN

Well, thank God Emily has you to  
lean on, Stanley.

STANLEY

Emily is like my sister... We go  
back many years.

BEN

Do you belong to the xhosa tribe too?

STANLEY

I am an African. That's all!  
(looking through the  
rear mirror)  
Comprende?

BEN

I am an African too!

Stanley turns abruptly.

STANLEY

What?

BEN

I was fourteen before I wore shoes  
-- except for church... I grew up  
on a plaas miles from any town...  
watching sheep and...

STANLEY

(interrupts)  
Bullshit! Next you'll have me  
believing we grew up in the same  
country, same laws, same freedom,  
same everything!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He laughs.

EXT. SOWETO BORDER - DAY

STANLEY  
 (like a tour guide)  
 We are now about to leave the  
 white jungle and entering the land  
 of love and glory.

The car approaches a huge perimeter notice:

"YOU ARE NOW ENTERING SOWETO TOWNSHIP. NO PERSON WITHOUT  
 THE NECESSARY PERMIT IS ALLOWED..."

Ben is driven into a different world; children playing in  
 dirty streets, in wrecks of cars, open spaces devoid of  
 vegetables, smoke from large rubbish dumps, burnt-out  
 skeletons of buses, beer halls and buildings. Clusters  
 of policemen in battle dress patrolling in the distance.

BEN  
 So this is Soweto.

STANLEY  
 (like an actor, with  
 big expansive gesture)  
 Land of love and glory, Lanie!  
 (turning suddenly  
 to Ben)  
 But watch out for the police and  
 army. They're patrolling all the  
 time.

The car follows an isolated broken stretch of tarred road  
 hill cluttered with rusty tins, cardboard containers,  
 bottles.

EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

A group of young children playing under the blinding sun  
 in a muddy ditch, notice the big painted butterfly on the  
 hood of Stanley's car.

They wave and scream at Stanley in their language and he  
 screams back at them.

Two little girls start running, heading toward the car.  
 Stanley notices the red VW parked in a corner. He man-  
 euvers and parks his car nearby.

STANLEY  
 (opening door)  
 Hurry up, Lanie.

BEN'S POV

A modern funeral parlor with its name painted on the side:  
"MOROKA FUNERAL DIRECTOR (PTY) LTD."

BACK TO SCENE

Stanley notices the two little girls with dusty smiling faces, standing there waiting for him.

STANLEY  
(checking his pants'  
pockets)  
No sweets today. I'm sorry,  
babies.

The children give Stanley a coy disbelieving look as they watch him go with the "white man."

CHILDREN'S POV

On the doorstep of the funeral parlor: Stanley and Ben run into a young woman coming out with a shoulder bag and a camera.

The young woman and Stanley exchange a quick, friendly greeting -- it's MELANIE BRUWER, the Rand Daily reporter -- and keep moving.

BACK TO SCENE

Ben turns back for a moment. Her face seems familiar to him. He would like to talk to her, but there is no time. Stanley is already inside.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

Ben and Stanley follow the proprietor who is expensively-dressed in a dark suit. Gordon's coffin stands as one of many in the room.

Inside the casket, brass fittings, white satin, lies Gordon, incongruous, ludicrous in a black Sunday suit. His hands are crossed on his chest like the claws of a bird and his face, barely recognizable, is gray, the left side distorted, blackish purple.

There are rough stitches of the postmortem across his skull and a scar on his lips.

Stanley speaks in an African language to the undertaker. The man opens Gordon's shirt and reveals the bruised and battered chest.

(CONTINUED)

61.

CONTINUED:

Stanley observes Ben who looks at the wounds with horror.

Then another command from Stanley and the undertaker opens the shirt to the waist. Ben's ashen. Stanley thanks the man and turns to leave. Ben remains a minute.

He shuts his eyes tightly. Now he saw it. Now he must believe it. He must accept that this battered corpse is Gordon.

As he follows Stanley, he thanks the undertaker.

EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

Outside the "sunlight," the children's laughter and Stanley, hands in pockets, waiting for Ben by the car.

The same two little girls approach Stanley who gives them some coins -- they run off happily.

Ben is coming outside blinking in the glaring sunlight. Stanley glares at Ben, who is pale, shaken and silent. They get into the car in silence.

STANLEY

(turning to Ben)

'The living close the eyes of the dead. The dead open the eyes of the living.'

Stanley starts the car.

BEN

Please, take me to Emily.

Stanley looks at him.

STANLEY

Look, we'd took one hell of a chance to get here, let's not push it.

BEN

I really have to see her, Stanley.

Stanley drives off.

STANLEY

(determined; looking through rearview mirror)

I said don't push it. I have to keep you alive. What's more the house is full of mourners.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They drive in silence... then:

STANLEY  
What are your thoughts now?

BEN  
What do you mean?

STANLEY  
(aggressively)  
Come on. I know you came to see  
the body. What do you think now?

BEN  
(exposed)  
I... I cannot think. I'm  
confused.

STANLEY  
You either believe what you saw  
or maybe you still prefer the  
government version.

BEN  
For Christ sake, just get off my  
back, Stanley.

STANLEY  
Okay. It was a simple question.

Stanley turns his RADIO ON and BANTU MUSIC invades the  
car as it speeds away in a cloud of dust.

EXT. WHITE SUBURB STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

The big brassy Dodge is threading its way through the  
leafy calm of the white suburb.

The "Bantu" MUSIC is STILL PLAYING on the radio under  
Stanley's animated conversation with Ben.

STANLEY  
You know, Lanie, when you run a  
taxi, especially a pirate taxi  
like me, you have eyes and ears  
everywhere. Even when a policeman  
farts in his bed you know. People  
want a reference book, a permit to  
stay in Soweto, a house, anything,  
we taxi drivers know the routes.  
I'll tell you something...

A news bulletin in African language interrupts the music.  
Stanley listens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

Shit!

BEN

What?

STANLEY

Dr. Hassiem has been picked up.

BEN

Who's he?

Stanley silently pulls up along the curb and comes to rest at Ben's gate.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - ENTRANCE - LATE EVENING

STANLEY

Dr. Hassiem is the doctor we got to represent Emily at Gordon's autopsy. We wanted the truth.

Ben suddenly realizes the significances.

BEN

He would have testified. Bloody hell!

STANLEY

A smart move by your Boer brothers. They have silenced Hassiem.

BEN

His report has to be important. We can only use what we have. Therefore, Lewinson must get a very good advocate.

(pause)

If only we could get hold of this Hassiem's report.

STANLEY

What's the use? It's one big game and we blacks are merely spectators. Hey Lanie, can one be a spectator as he's being kicked around?

He laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

It's not a question of being spectators. The courts are impartial, the law is what matters.

STANLEY

(quite seriously)

That's what you all say. I have to move man. Your neighbors! Now, be careful. They will put their marks on you!

BEN

Who?

Stanley takes an empty cigarette packet from his pocket, he writes on it.

STANLEY

You'll find out!

(handing the packet  
to Ben)

In case you need me. Don't give your name -- just say 'Lanie' phoned -- right?

Ben gets out of the car.

BEN

Now tomorrow at ten...

STANLEY

(interrupting)

Sharp! At our smart liberal friend's office, yeh!

BEN

Good night.

Stanley drives vigorously away.

Ben walks slowly and thoughtfully towards his house. He notices Susan watching him through the window.

He slumps on a chair on the veranda as Susan comes out of the house followed by Johan -- they both stand slightly worried at his moroseness.

BEN

I went to Soweto and saw Gordon's body. They have lied to me, my own people -- they killed him! I saw the body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Johan looks horrified.

SUSAN

Ben, you're not a doctor. His death was announced officially. They wouldn't say anything unless they were certain of their facts.

BEN

(more animated)

Facts? There's a doctor who participated at the autopsy. A Doctor Hassiem and he...

SUSAN

(interrupts)

You mean the Indian doctor who's been arrested?

JOHAN

It was in the five o'clock news, Papa.

BEN

That's him, he represented Emily at the autopsy.

SUSAN

(suddenly desperate)

Ben, I'm sorry about Gordon's death, but please for all our sakes, forget about this whole thing. Let's get back to a normal life.

BEN

Can I have a drink?

JOHAN

A brandy?

BEN

You always know what I need.

Johan hurries into the house.

SUSAN

(pleading)

Please, Ben, I'm frightened.

She turns and walks into the house, leaving Ben.

## EXT. SOWETO CEMETERY - MORNING

The large Soweto cemetery has scores of graves ready for burials. The chief mourners, Emily, Robert, his sister, Margaret, four relatives and Stanley are standing on either side of the PRIEST. Gordon's coffin is in the grave; several wreaths are on the side of the grave.

There are about fifteen hundred mourners, and half are youths. There are several local reporters and overseas television reporters.

The police are in attendance in large numbers at the edge of the crowd, some in battle dress and some with dogs.

## PRIEST

Before I conclude, I have to say we are tired of making this journey every day, sometimes twice in one day, burying our children, and those, like our departed brother, Ngubene who were merely seeking the truth; and those who have been denounced by traitors amongst us; and those who have been brutally killed for no reason, yes I shall say it, by the police. Let those who rule this land of ours listen to the word of God; let them listen to our peaceful and just demands; let them be humble and go down on their knees and seek forgiveness, then listen to God.

The crowd roars: "Amanda! Amanda!"

The Priest starts a short hymn and the crowd joins in.

At the end of the hymn.

## PRIEST

We will have a few words from Mr. Pilani our father and leader.

The crowd starts singing a freedom song with arms raised. The funeral has now become a political demonstration.

Mr. Pilani, who is a dignified, educated 70-years-old, walks slowly and waits beside the chief mourners. He is handed a loudspeaker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER threads his way through the crowd, a loud hailer in his hand. As he reaches the grave he turns. The crowd is quiet. He says something to the Priest then addresses the crowd.

SENIOR OFFICER  
The funeral is over. I order everyone to go home. This is not a political rally. I repeat, disperse.

As though by signal the police start attacking the mourners with truncheons and dogs. There is pandemonium, women screaming, people falling into graves or covering in them.

The Priest and Stanley lead Emily and the family away in the opposite direction.

The press and television are recording the scene. The police start throwing tear gas canisters. There is no confrontation, the crowd is fleeing in all directions.

One television cameraman is purposely pushed into a grave by a very young policeman, his round recordist is pulled up into the adjoining grave by the connecting cord. Melanie stands on a tombstone watching and making notes.

INT. BEN'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

Ben, Susan watching the main evening news bulletin on TV.

On the screen a sequence of rioting.

COMMENTARY (V.O.)  
Despite repeated warnings young blacks attacked the police with rocks and petrol bombs. Five policemen were injured.

Susan briefly glances at Ben.

COMMENTARY (V.O.)  
Several arrests were made. One youth was killed and five wounded.

Follows the newscaster and then reports:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)  
This morning there was a serious disturbance at the funeral of Gordon Ngubene.

Susan leaves the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEWSCASTER

The detainee who committed suicide by hanging himself at John Vorster Square. An overseas television cameraman broke an arm during the disturbance. It's been reported that several people had been killed by a car-bomb in Belfast Northern Island...

Ben turns OFF the TV and stays in his thoughts.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG - STREET - AFTERNOON

Stanley and Ben are driving in the outskirts of Johannesburg.

EXT. APPROACHES OF SOWETO - AFTERNOON

Stanley drives seemingly alone at very high speeds, which he maintains through the streets of Soweto... using his horn to scatter people out of his way, to the anger and indulgence of others.

The CAR SCREECHES to a halt outside Emily's house. Stanley gets out of the car and greets the startled neighbors... and acknowledges the friendly shouts of children.

Stanley looks around, then goes back to the car, opens the back door, leans and says something. Suddenly, to everyone's astonishment, Ben crawls out of the car; Stanley hustles him into Emily's house.

Stanley waves at the people, a sign of assurance, then closes the door behind him.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ben stands awkwardly for a moment, taking in the room and the people in it. He then walks over to Emily who is standing at the table. He goes to shake her hand.

BEN

How are you, Emily?

EMILY

Well, thank you, Mr. Ben, sir.  
Eh, that's father Masonwane, our priest, and that's Margaret from next door.

Ben nods at them. Stanley sits himself down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY  
 (raising his hand in  
 greeting)  
 Mfundisi...  
 (priest)  
 ... Sisi!  
 (sister)

EMILY  
 (to Ben)  
 Please sit down. Take this chair,  
 the other one is broken.

BEN  
 (apologetically)  
 I didn't mean to disturb you.  
 I've come to talk to you.

EMILY  
 (as she sits on the  
 broken chair)  
 Yes, it's good. What I want to  
 know is why did they kill him. He  
 didn't do them nothing. You know,  
 Mr. Ben, sir, I washed his whole  
 body for he was my husband. And  
 I know a man who killed himself,  
 he doesn't look like that.

MARGARET  
 Master, you must understand she's  
 still raw inside.

BEN  
 I'm sure.

Robert walks in, looks at Ben and walks into his bedroom  
 to fetch something, then as he's about to go out:

EMILY  
 Robert, where are you manners  
 today? Don't you greet visitors?

Robert stops momentarily and looks at Ben with hostility  
 and hurries out of the room banging the door.

EMILY  
 I'm sorry for his rudeness.

PRIEST  
 (to Ben)  
 You have to understand what's  
 happening to our children today,  
 they're like wasps when you burn  
 their nest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET

That's right. Our children are saying 'that's enough!' Things have to change in this country. They accuse us of being cowards.

BEN

Emily, I have really come to assure you that I will do all I can to help you find out what really happened to Jonathan and your husband -- we cannot bring them back to life, but we can make sure that this sort of thing won't ever happen again.

PRIEST

You mean well, sir, but it's better to forgive. If we keep the pain alive then hate and bitterness will remain with us.

BEN

The air must be cleared. So we can breathe again.

PRIEST

The air can only be cleared if we forget about yesterday's thunder.

EMILY

Mr. Ben is right. It's not that I want to go on with this thing because it's a bad thing that Jonathan died, that Gordon died that's hard enough to bear, but I can forgive it. But they covered Gordon's name with dirt and we must clean it up, else he'll never have peace in his grave.

STANLEY

(to Ben)

You must understand for us, suicide is a coward's way out, how do they say, it's a 'cop out.'

BEN

Gordon wasn't a coward and we'll prove that. We have a very good advocate for the inquest. His name is De Villiers. I have confidence in him and the truth will come out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY

The truth must be known. They killed my husband who wouldn't hurt a fly and they killed Jonathan who was only a child...

PRIEST

Those people who did it are sinful people who don't know what they're doing.

STANLEY

He! Mfundisi, what are you saying now? You mean...

PRIEST

We must help them. That's the only way. They need our help, not hate, but love.

PRIEST

I pity them and I ask the Lord to help me so I can learn to love them.

STANLEY

If that's what you preach in your church you will soon be starving.

EMILY

They covered his name with dirt.

PRIEST

Aren't you afraid sis Emily?

EMILY

No. In the end one grows tired of being afraid.

STANLEY

Amen!

Ben has been listening to the discussion with interest, this being the first time he has heard Africans talking seriously about their problems.

BEN

Emily, Stanley and I will do all we can. As I said we have a good advocate. Everyone involved with Gordon's death will be questioned and all that's known regarding what happened in John Vorster Square will come out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET

How can anything come out of that John Vorster Square? Who there will say: 'Yes, we killed the boy and Gordon?'

BEN

Lawyers ask questions.

MARGARET

And don't policemen lie?

EMILY

Thank you, Mr. Ben, sir for what you're doing.

BEN

(standing)

I'm pleased I came.

STANLEY

(to Ben as he goes to the door)

Wait, let me check the situation.

He opens the door and walks out.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A small group of youngsters are there, hands thrust into their pockets, hanging around in a stony silence.

Robert is standing by the door.

Stanley calls one of them and talks to him -- the boys look around and say something.

As Stanley goes back to the door, passing Robert, he ruffles his hair.

STANLEY

(to Robert)

Take it easy.

(then to Ben)

It's okey, dokey, but hurry.

Ben hurries out of the room. The children stare at him.

BEN

(as they go to the car)

Do I...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY  
(interrupts)  
Yes, on the floor man.

Stanley opens the back door for Ben. Who crouches on the floor.

Some of the boys snicker and one bursts out laughing.

As Stanley gets into the car he shouts at them:

STANLEY  
Okay. Kids, time to go home. Be careful.

BOY  
(shouting back)  
Sure 'bra' Stanley. Take it easy.

Stanley drives off at speed.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SOWETO - LATE AFTERNOON

Stanley is driving, they have left Soweto. Ben still on the floor.

BEN  
Are we still in Soweto?

STANLEY  
Why don't you look for yourself?

Ben rises and sees that they're at least a mile out. He is not amused.

BEN  
(sitting up)  
What the hell are you playing at?

STANLEY  
(as he bursts into  
loud laugh)  
Precautions, Lanie.

BEN  
(exposing)  
Don't call me Lanie! What does that mean anyway?

STANLEY  
(still laughing)  
You will not understand, Lanie.

They drive off.

INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Susan and Ben are in bed. Susan is in Ben's arms, she is relaxed and loving.

Ben talks quietly and calmly.

BEN

I think I am without awareness. I have always cared about people, call it a social conscience. But my visit to Gordon's house made me experience another dimension of human conditions.

SUSAN

The poverty, ja...

BEN

No, I expected that. But listening to them talk made me realize that I did not know the blacks. Now I question my attitudes, my concerns as Ben, and complacency as a white person.

SUSAN

Ben, I know your anxiety about the inquest. All will be cleared up, in a legal way, and you'll be back to your normal self. Now let's turn off the lights.

Susan kisses Ben tenderly.

INT. COURT ROOM - FIRST DAY OF INQUEST - DAY

The inquest of Gordon Ngubene... conducted by MAGISTRATE KLOPPER. In the witness box is DR. JANSEN, the state pathologist, giving evidence. Advocate DE VILLIERS is cross examining.

DE VILLIERS

Dr. Jansen, you are a state pathologist of many years standing and I have no doubt a well-qualified pathologist. Could you now please tell us what caused the death of the deceased?

DR. JANSEN

I found that death had been caused by the application of force to the neck, consistent with hanging.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's a vigorous reaction to this around the court, which gives us a chance to discover the crowd:

In the white section of the public gallery are Ben and about eight other whites.

The black section is filled to capacity with a few standing. In the front row is sitting Stanley next to Margaret. At the entrance, a white policeman.

In the press section are several reporters; amongst them Melanie Bruwer the Rand Daily Mail reporter.

Colonel Viljoen and several policemen are sitting around the court.

DE VILLIERS

You are sure about the hanging?  
This pressure on the neck, could it also have been exerted in other ways?

DR. JANSEN

It could, but it is not for me to speculate.

DE VILLIERS

Of course not, Doctor. The list of injuries found on the body was horrifyingly long; bruises, swellings, abrasions, broken rib, lacerations, etc. How long before death do you estimate he received these injuries?

DR. JANSEN

I couldn't say exactly.

DE VILLIERS

Roughly.

DR. JANSEN

Some were fourteen to twenty days old, others three to four days and others even more recent.

DE VILLIERS

Even more recent. I see. I understand you had a Dr. Hassiem present at the autopsy.

DR. JANSEN

That's correct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DE VILLIERS

There were two reports, ours and his. Did they tally?

DR. JANSEN

Yes, it was. In most respects.

ON Stanley listening.

DE VILLIERS

Isn't it normal practice to have one report? Why did Dr. Hassiem decide to draw up a separate report? If he really co-signed yours.

DR. JANSEN

That's for him to answer!

DE VILLIERS

I would very much like to, Dr. Jansen, but he's been detained -- you know of course that he represented the Ngubene family. Thank you.

There's a murmur around the court... Ben looks across at Viljoen who returns his gaze -- smiling.

CUT TO:

DR. HERZOG

the police physician, giving evidence.

DE VILLIERS

Dr. Herzog, did you examine the deceased?

DR. HERZOG

Yes, one day Captain Stolz called me in. The man had toothache.

DE VILLIERS

(aggressive)

That's all?

DR. HERZOG

(uncomfortable)

As far as I could tell -- yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DE VILLIERS

You didn't examine him thoroughly?

DR. HERZOG

Why should I? The man was perfectly healthy, just complaining of toothache. I extracted three decayed teeth, and gave him aspirin for the pain... that's all.

DE VILLIERS

Did the captain or anyone else assist you during the examination?

DR. HERZOG

(hesitates)

I... I cannot remember.

DE VILLIERS

(more aggressive and accusing)

Dr. Herzog, tell us. Have you been intimidated by the Security Police or did you deliberately cooperate with them in playing their disgusting little game of hide-and-seek?

LOUW

(jumping up from his seat)

I protest, Your Worship.

MAGISTRATE

Advocate De Villiers, will you refrain from insinuations?

DE VILLIERS

Thank you, Doctor Herzog... I'm sure Gordon Ngubene was extremely grateful!

Herzog's face is impassive.

ON crowd reacting.

MAGISTRATE

Advocate Louw?

During the hubbub De Villiers and the state advocate trade places. The courtroom is quiet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUW

Thank you, Your Worship. I'd like to call Captain Stolz.

There's a buzz from the spectators as Captain Stolz walks up to the witness stand. He's given a Bible.

ON Ben -- watches him.

CLOSEUP - STOLZ

In witness box, swearing in Afrikaans.

LOUW

You're a police officer stationed at John Vorster Square?

STOLZ

That's right, Your Worship.

LOUW

You arrested Gordon Ngubene. Could you describe what happened?

STOLZ

Acting on information we had received, I went to the house of the deceased, accompanied by Lieutenant Venter, Lieutenant Botha, and three native members of the security force. This was about 10 P.M. I informed Ngubene that he was under arrest under Article 6 of the Terrorism Act. He then became violent and resisted arrest. A certain force had to be applied to restrain him.

ON Stanley listening.

ON Ben listening.

STOLZ

We found several incriminating documents. These pointed to his involvement with the A.N.C. and activities endangering the security of the state.

ON Ben looking at Stolz, and shaking his head, bewildered.

LOUW

Was the deceased ever assaulted to your knowledge?

STOLZ

Never. He was always treated with courtesy and correctness. But, one time we had cause to use force against him. It was the day before his death. The deceased suddenly showed signs of aggression. He tried to jump through the open window of my office. He was acting like a mad man. It took six of my men to restrain him, and he had to be manacled hand and foot, for his own safety. But once he calmed down, he was ready to make a statement about his activities. The next morning we found him dead in his cell.

MAGISTRATE

Is the statement in evidence?

LOUW

No, Your Worship. It can't be disclosed in court without damaging our investigation, but I would like to offer into evidence a suicide note written by the deceased.

Louw, taking it from his file on the table.

Stanley and Margaret listening.

LOUW

'Dear Captain. I prefer to die rather than betray any more of my friends. Amandla! Gordon Ngubene.'

He hands it to the court clerk. There's uproar at this.

LOUW

Thank you, Your Worship.

MAGISTRATE

Advocate De Villiers?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben is disgusted. He looks about the court, as if seeking allies. His eyes meet Melanie's -- just for a second there's recognition -- then he returns to De Villiers.

Advocate De Villiers cross-examining Captain Stolz.

DE VILLIERS

Thank you, Your Worship. Captain Stolz, you said you treated the deceased always with courtesy and correctness, then how do you account for the injuries found on the body?

STOLZ

Sometimes detainees deliberately injure themselves for propaganda purposes.

The gallery screams its objections. Stanley leans forward and grins across the partition at Ben. The Magistrate warns the crowd. Finally the gallery quiets down.

DE VILLIERS

You say he tried to jump out of the open window... Are there no bars to prevent such an act?

STOLZ

They had been removed for repair.

DE VILLIERS

And why did he wish to jump out? Because you were torturing him?

STOLZ

He wasn't tortured.

DE VILLIERS

Perhaps it was the toothache then.

No reaction from Stolz.

DE VILLIERS

You said you seized incriminating documents at the deceased's home; can you produce them to see how subversive he was?

LOUW

(to Magistrate)

Those documents cannot be introduced as evidence, Your Worship, in view of the fact that state security is involved.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Magistrate makes a note.

DE VILLIERS

I put it to you, Captain -- that the only subversive activities the deceased had been involved in were his efforts to establish what happened to his son, Jonathan, allegedly shot during a riot, although several witnesses are prepared to testify that he died in detention one month later.

LOUW

(jumping up)

I protest...

DE VILLIERS

This would support my case that an innocent man has died in your hands under highly questionable circumstances.

LOUW

If it please Your Worship... this unwarranted slur on the integrity of the special branch is unacceptable... and based, I may say, on allegations which are in any case irrelevant to the present inquest.

MAGISTRATE

I agree.

DE VILLIERS

(turning on Louw)

If the police are really interested in retaining an unsullied reputation, they should not object to the real facts being presented. Thank you, Captain.

LOUW

The real facts are being presented -- as the following affidavits prove. They are all by detainees -- who testify that they had all seen the deceased intermittently from the time of his detention -- to the time of his death -- and on all occasions he was in good health.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the documents are passed to the Magistrate, they are scorned by De Villiers. Imperviously he requests:

DE VILLIERS  
I trust the signatories of these  
... documents... are available to  
corroborate their evidence in  
person.

STRAIGHT ON ARCHIBALD CHIGORIMBO

Detainee in the witness box. He swears in Zulu.

De Villiers holds his signed affidavit.

DE VILLIERS  
Mr. Archibald, when did you first  
meet Gordon Ngubene?

ARCHIBALD  
(looking at black  
crowd, then to De  
Villiers)  
I never saw Gordon Ngubene.

A sudden stillness in the court.

ON Ben.

ON Stanley.

ON Melanie.

ON Louw.

DE VILLIERS  
Are you saying that you didn't  
sign this statement?

ARCHIBALD  
... I never met Mr. Ngubene...  
they forced me to sign. Captain  
Stolz, he hit me many times with  
a rubber hose... he said he would  
kill me 'less I signed... this...  
this is what he did to me.

He pulls up his shirt -- his back is covered in bruises.

The crowd cannot restrain itself any longer. Ben is aghast by what he sees.

DE VILLIERS  
Thank you, Mr. Archibald.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGISTRATE

Advocate Louw?

LOUW

(uncomfortable)

No thank you, Your Worship.

As Archibald leaves the witness stand, held by a special branch officer, he raises his fist in salute and shouts to the crowd: "AMANDLA." The crowd responds: "Ngawethu."

Ben looks at Archibald. He is very impressed by this strength in the prisoner's eyes.

An officer of the court shouts at the crowd: "silte in die koort" (silence in court) -- bailiffs collar a few of the loudest protesters and pull them with brutality out of the courtroom.

DE VILLIERS

(to town, wearily)

May we put up the second signatory?

Louw confers hurriedly with the prosecution officers, then turns back to the court.

LOUW

Your Worship -- the other three signatories cannot appear for reasons of state security.

He sits down, bland, examining his papers.

DE VILLIERS

Your Worship, I'd like to recall Captain Stolz.

As Captain Stolz returns to the stand he crosses Archibald being handcuffed by the S.B. officer.

Ben watches him passing by the detainee, straight, impassive without a look to him.

DE VILLIERS

Captain, you're still under oath -- you took Archibald's statement. Was it voluntary? I'm sure you'll say it was, then how did he come by the injuries on his back?

STOLZ

He fell down the stairs a few days ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DE VILLIERS

Fell down the stairs. You should do something about those stairs, Captain, so many people fall on them. Thank you.

The crowd laughs.

STOLZ

(to the Magistrate)

Your Worship, may I be excused? I have to escort detainee Archibal back to John Vorster Square.

MAGISTRATE

You may, Captain, and thank you.

(to the crowd)

I think this's a good moment to adjourn -- we'll reconvene at two thirty.

EXT. COURTROOM - DAY

Emily, Margaret, Stanley and a man, are sitting outside the court eating fish and chips.

There are various Africans sitting around for their lunch break.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE NEAR COURT - DAY

Ben and Dan Lewinson having a light lunch in a nearby cafe.

BEN

(buoyant)

De Villiers is making mincemeat of them.

LEWINSON

He's very good. His cross-examination has got them rattled.

BEN

It's obvious to anybody! The evidence is clear!

(pause)

Did you see Archibal's back? He didn't have to tell the truth.

Dan Lewinson's dry laugh catches in his throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWINSON

That's what Stolz is saying to  
him right now in his torture room.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - AFTERNOON

Advocate De Villiers and a dignified Emily in the witness  
stand.

EMILY

Captain Stolz lied. My husband  
never fight the police when he  
was arrested. They were rough  
with him, pushing him and  
threatening.

DE VILLIERS

When your husband's clothes were  
given to you, in what condition  
were they?

EMILY

There was blood on them and in  
the back pocket I found three  
broken teeth.

DE VILLIERS

Now Mrs. Ngubene, you have seen  
the note that's said to have been  
written by your husband. Do you  
recognize the writing?

EMILY

(firmly)  
That's not how my husband writes.  
(strongly)  
He never wrote that letter, they  
lie.

DE VILLIERS

Thank you, Mrs. Ngubene.

MAGISTRATE

Advocte Louw?

He shakes his head.

EMILY

(facing the  
Magistrate and in  
firm voice)  
They killed my husband and son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON Ben, satisfied.

MAGISTRATE  
(to a policeman next  
to Viljoen)  
Will you take the woman out?

DE VILLIERS  
I'd like to call my last witness.  
Grace Nkosi.

Grace's name is called. She is an attractive 20-years-old girl. As she passes by Ben, he watches her with concern; her face looks familiar. Of course he remembers having seen her at John Vorster Square the first time he went there to meet the colonel. GRACE NKOSI is the African girl the two security officers were lifted to the ten flour. He recognizes her.

Grace Nkosi in the witness stand.

She swears in Xhosa.

DE VILLIERS  
Were you ever detained?

GRACE  
Yes sir, at John Vorster Square.

DE VILLIERS  
For how long?

GRACE  
Six months.

DE VILLIERS  
Can you tell us what happened to  
you during that time?

GRACE  
I was interrogated by many special  
policemen, but mainly Captain Stolz  
and the one they call Venter. As  
they were searching somebody I  
know, they wanted me to tell them  
where that person was hidden. As  
I refuse to cooperate they beat me  
with a sjambok. After some time  
I fell and they kicked me in the  
face and stomach.

ON Ben obviously shocked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

I spot blood and they try to make me lick it. Then Captain Stolz threw a wet towel and started twisting it around my neck...

(she illustrates)

... until I lost consciousness. They did this several time and the last one Captain Stolz said 'come on meid, speak up, or do you want to die like Gordon Ngubene?' A few days later I was released.

ON Melanie taking notes.

DE VILLIERS

Thank you, Miss Grace. That's all, Your Worship.

LOUW

(rising and looking at Grace for some seconds)

You made that up. Say you made it up.

GRACE

It's the truth. I have nothing more to say.

Louw sits down.

MAGISTRATE

We shall adjourn until tomorrow morning. I'll hear the arguments and give the verdict.

The crowd stands and starts to leave the courtroom.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COURTROOM - MORNING (SECOND DAY)

A silent black crowd; Emily, Margaret, Stanley anxiously awaiting the verdict. Today the public gallery is more crowded than before.

MAGISTRATE

I wish to thank both advocates for conducting this case without rancour and in the best traditions of the South African legal profession.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON Ben's face. ON Dan Lewinson's face. ON Viljoen and Stolz's faces.

MAGISTRATE

I have listened to all the evidence and the arguments. To begin with I have to say that there was no conclusive evidence offered to prove beyond doubt that members of the Security Police had been guilty of assault or any irregular conduct on the deceased. There were indications that Ngubene was aggressive and on more than one occasion had to be restrained with force. There was sufficient evidence to conclude that death had been caused by a trauma following pressure applied to the neck, consistent with hanging. Consequently, I find that Gordon Ngubene committed suicide by hanging himself and that on available evidence his death cannot be attributed to any act or omission or amounting to a criminal offense on the part of any person.

CUT TO:

Viljoen and Stolz smiling, shaking hands with Advocate Louw in congratulations.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER OF COURTROOM - DAY

The predominantly black crowd obviously dissatisfied with the verdict, discussing it as it moves slowly towards the main entrance.

In the crowd Stanley, Margaret and Emily controlled, dignified but obviously pained.

CUT TO:

BEN

totally depressed, walking up to Emily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY  
 (to Ben over noise  
 of the discussion)  
 Don't worry, man. There's another  
 day!

Ben leans towards Emily.

BEN  
 I'm sorry, Emily.

Several press photographers are taking pictures ostensibly of Emily the widow.

Stanley gently guides Emily out of the building.

Ben, who is following, is besieged by the insistent reporters, shouting:

REPORTERS  
 'Mister Du Toit, how do you know  
 Mrs. Ngubene?' 'Mister Du Toit, can  
 you answer, is it true, he was a  
 terrorist?'

Ben tries to get through.

REPORTERS  
 Mister Du Toit, what do you think  
 of the verdict? Do you believe  
 the police?

Melanie appears, grabs Ben and pushes him away through them.

REPORTER  
 Hang on, Melanie, I'm coming with  
 you.

MELANIE  
 (shouts back)  
 Fuck off.

The press is still pursuing them.

As Ben and Melanie reach Melanie's car:

BEN  
 My car is over there.

MELANIE  
 (opening the car)  
 Never mind your car. Let's get  
 away from these vultures.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They get into the car and as they drive away, Melanie introduces herself.

MELANIE

By the way, I'm Melanie Bruwer.

BEN

Obviously of the Rand Daily Mail.  
I read your article about  
Jonathan.

MELANIE

Ten out of ten, Mr. Du Toit. I  
know about you too.

BEN

(uncomfortable)

You do?

Melanie smiles.

MELANIE

We have a mutual friend. One  
Stanley.

BEN

I remember. The mortuary in  
Soweto...

(pause)

... The ambiguous Stanley.

MELANIE

Stanley? No. Just careful. A  
big black rough uncut diamond.  
Don't be fooled by his happy-go-  
lucky attitude. There's much more  
to him.

BEN

He couldn't have given you a  
glowing report of me.

(suddenly aggressive)

I'm sorry, but where are we going?

MELANIE

I thought a cooling drink at my  
house.

BEN

(on the defensive)

Mrs. Bruwer, I'm not...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE  
 (interrupts)  
 I promise you. I'm not after an  
 interview or anything like that.

She smiles.

BEN  
 I really must go home.

MELANIE  
 Please, Mr. Du Toit, and you'll  
 meet my darling father.

She smiles again. A disarming smile.

EXT. MELANIE'S HOME - DAY

Melanie drives into the yard. The house is an old  
 Colonial style house amidst flowers, bushes and trees, a  
 controlled wild garden.

A figure is bent over a beehive. A large brimmed old hat  
 with a net hides his head and features.

Melanie stops the car in the driveway.

MELANIE  
 (pointing from the  
 car)  
 There he is by the eucalyptus  
 tree, on the left. That's old  
 Bruwer.

They get out of the car and walk towards him.

BEN  
 How long have you lived here?

MELANIE  
 Oh, about twenty-one years. I  
 love this house.

BRUWER  
 (without looking up)  
 Is that you, Melanie?

MELANIE  
 Of course, Dad. I want you to  
 meet a friend.

BRUWER  
 Does anyone have a friend  
 nowadays?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He straightens up and throws the net over his head and studies Ben. MR. BRUWER is seventy years old; an interesting face with a goatee beard.

MELANIE

Mr. Du toit, Dad.

BRUWER

Do you like bees?

BEN

(smiling)

I have nothing against them.

MELANIE

(to Ben)

Be careful, I can see philosophy coming.

BRUWER

You shut up.

(to Ben)

Let me tell you about bees, and for that matter ants: a bee has a completely altruistic sense of purpose -- based on the common good. A course from which he cannot be deflected. Greed, ambition, they mean nothing to him. He lives solely to serve his fellow bee.

MELANIE

What about individuality, Dad?

BRUWER

There's the rub, my girl. There's the rub. One of these days I'll ask the bees. I'm sure they have the answer. Now, you two run along!

He replaces his net and continues with the hive.

MELANIE

A drink, Dad?

BRUWER

I've been peeing too much this morning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE  
 (as they walk toward  
 the house)  
 That's my Daddy.

Melanie and Ben enter the house.

INT. MELANIE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Bruwer living room is a profusion of piles of papers, of books on shelves, on tables, on the floor, paintings -- records, African sculptures.

On the floor tangled lengths of flex leading from a record player to two voluminous speakers.

A settee, a chess set. The furniture is old and well-used, dominated by a large leather club chair -- two big cats sleeping on it. It's civilized pandemonium.

MELANIE  
 (gesturing to the  
 room)  
 Now you see in what environment I  
 was spawned.

Ben looks at the shelves and smiles.

MELANIE  
 Please sit down, on that chair.  
 (pointing to club  
 chair)  
 That's Dad's. Drink?

BEN  
 Please. A...

MELANIE  
 (interrupts, mischievous)  
 A brandy?

BEN  
 (looking at her  
 surprised, then  
 smiling)  
 No thanks, a beer will be fine.

Melanie goes into the kitchen leaving Ben. He cannot forget what he heard and what he saw in the court!

She returns barefooted, with two beer mugs, and hands one to Ben.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

The mugs are the few things that Dad brought from Germany. He studied philosophy in Tübingen and Berlin before the last war.

BEN

I thought they were German?

Melanie sits, her legs propped up on the settee, hugging her knees.

MELANIE

Mr. Du Toit, tell...

BEN

(interrupts)

Please, call me Ben.

MELANIE

All right, Ben, tell me, why are you so depressed? You really expect a different verdict?

BEN

(disgruntled)

Why do you ask? Can you understand it?

MELANIE

Of course I understand it. What could they have. I'm not cynical. I'm only trying to be realistic.

BEN

Tell me, Miss Bruwer...

MELANIE

Ben and Melanie, that's fair.

BEN

Tell me, do you believe in the notion of justice?

MELANIE

(lighting a cigarette)

I'll never stop believing. But in this country I've learned it's pointless to look for it in certain situations.

BEN

What use is a system if justice does not apply to all situations?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

Exactly. And you cannot fight for justice unless you know injustice very well. You've got to know your enemy first.

BEN

That's a tall order: 'know injustice... know the enemy.' it seems I have a long haul ahead of me.

MELANIE

Not at all, Ben. You have already taken the first steps.

(pause)

Welcome to South Africa!

She smiles.

INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Susan is sitting at the dressing table. She is applying cleansing cream to her face. She is relaxed. Ben is getting ready for bed.

SUSAN

Did you enjoy the 'bobotie?' When I heard the verdict on the news I knew you'd be upset.

(softer)

I wanted to make you something special.

BEN

(thoughtful)

Thank you, darling.

A pause. Susan starts to remove the cream.

SUSAN

I'm glad it's all over. You take things to heart too much.

Ben comes and stands behind Susan -- looking at her through the mirror.

BEN

(trying to keep control of himself)

They killed Gordon -- first they kill Jonathan, and then him. How can they get away with it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

(soothingly)

Now come on, Ben. Gordon's death upset me, too. But the Magistrate had all the facts. He must know what he's doing, he's had years of experience. The case has run its course, and nobody can do anything more about it! It's all over and done with.

BEN

(looking at her)

I'm not so sure about that, Susan!

Susan swivels around and faces Ben.

SUSAN

I'm damned well sure! It's over, Ben! You better get that into your head.

Ben just stares at her with seething anger. She stands up and starts being hysterical.

SUSAN

A teacher, always a bloody teacher. You never moved yourself for us. But for the blacks, oh yes. Whose side are you on, Ben? And I'm sick and tired of those natives coming here. Why don't you bloody well go and live in Soweto?

Ben strides out of the room.

SUSAN

(following and shouting)

Now where are you going?

BEN

(without looking)

Soweto!

Then shuts the door behind him.

Susan stands stupefied. There's the sound of the SPARE ROOM DOOR.

INT. SPARE ROOM - NIGHT

Ben is standing in the middle of the room, in the dark. On the wall behind him is a young Suzette's picture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a few seconds, Ben moves slowly to the bed and sits on it still in deep thought.

SLOW MOVE TO a:

CLOSEUP ON BEN

And:

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. NEWSPAPER AND CONFECTIONARY SHOP - MORNING

It's a Saturday morning.

A shopping center in a white suburb. Ben goes into a newspaper shop.

There are two children buying sweets and a woman leaving. The PROPRIETOR is an Afrikaner in his middle age.

BEN

More meneer Van de Merwe.  
(Morning Mister Van de Merwe.)

PROPRIETOR

(in offhand manner)  
More meneer du Toit.

BEN

Our boys gave the Eastern province  
a thrashing.

PROPRIETOR

Yes.

Ben realizes that the man is not his usual conversational self.

BEN

Is anything wrong?

PROPRIETOR

No.

Ben goes to pick up an Afrikaans newspaper and the Rand Daily Mail.

BEN

(walking up to counter)  
And a packet of tobacco and pipe  
cleaners.

The man gets them and takes a note from Ben and gives him his change. By then a man is waiting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

See you tomorrow.

As he walks out the other man turns around to watch him.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Ben walks out of the shop. The newspaper under his arm. A group of three middle-aged women turn to look at him. Ben didn't see them. A little further on, he meets Mrs. Coetzee. He tries to greet her but she walks straight by.

Further on, he notices two men obviously talking about him. Then a couple of boys on bikes snigger as they pass him. He begins to wonder what's it all about, and spontaneously checks his clothes.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - VERANDA - MORNING

Susan and Suzette sit there. Suzette's holding a newspaper -- the Ossewa -- Susan's thoughtful, her face is red and discomposed -- obviously she had cried. The PHONE RINGS but they deliberately ignore it.

Ben appears with the newspapers under his arm, sees Suzette's sports car and hurries to join them.

Suzette doesn't even give him a chance to kiss her.

SUZETTE

(jumping up and showing  
the cover of Ossewa)

Now, Papa, this is going too  
far! How could you?

BEN

(surprised)

How's that, Suzette?

Ben takes the newspaper and looks at the cover. A picture of himself and Emily outside the courtroom. The two faces are close together with the notes:

"EMILY NGUBENE, wife of native who  
died in detention, comforted by a  
friend of family, Mr. BEN DU TOIT."

And in parenthesis "see page two."

He throws the Ossewa on a chair and checks into the Rand Daily Mail. Inside there is a long article with Emily's picture, titled "the Face of Grief."

Ben folds up the newspapers, and shakes his head. He suddenly realizes why the people reacted like that outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUZETTE

You didn't stop to think of the family.  
Poor mother, how can she face anyone?  
And tomorrow is Sunday!

BEN

Now listen...

Johan steps into the veranda.

JOHAN

What's everybody yelling about?

SUZETTE

You listen, Papa, just tell me, why?

Recognizing his father in the photo, Johan has picked up the newspaper from the chair.

BEN

Do you really think I specially  
arranged for the photographers to  
take that picture? And what's  
more it's distorted.

SUZETTE

What's distorted about it? Your  
face is practically touching that  
meid's face, like you were about  
to kiss her.

BEN

(disgruntled)  
Suzette, pull yourself together!

SUZETTE

Today the whole country has seen that  
photograph. We, your children, are  
going to suffer. At this very moment  
Chris is negotiating with the Provincial  
Council. Would you like to see them  
cancel it? You have no feeling, Papa!

BEN

(shocked)  
Suzette!

She leaves in rage.

JOHAN

(conciliating)  
What's Papa done, anyway? If  
something happened to him,  
wouldn't you be upset?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
(standing up)  
Not enough, Johan, to throw myself  
into the garden boy's arms.

BEN  
That goes without saying.

JOHAN  
(trying to joke)  
There must be easier ways of  
getting your name in the paper.

Before she can stop herself, Susan slaps him across the face, although not hard. Johan leaves without a word. She clutches her hand, shocked at having it against him.

The PHONE starts to RING. Susan runs out sobbing.

Ben looks at her then walks into the living room to pick up the phone.

INT. BEN'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

BEN  
(into phone)  
Who?... I don't know you and have  
nothing to say to you... No thank  
you for your advice!

He puts the phone down. The PHONE RINGS again. Ben picks it up and waits.

BEN  
It's you, Viviers... I appreciate  
it... of course... Not yet... Any  
thank you. Tot siens.

He replaces the receiver and is about to light his pipe when the PHONE RINGS again.

BEN  
Morning, Mr. Cloete... I'd like  
to say...  
(impatiently)  
... Mr. Cloete, may I ask what on  
earth has the picture to do with  
politics?... I'm sorry Mr. Cloete,  
I have to go.

He replaces the telephone and walks out of the house. The PHONE KEEPS RINGING.

EXT. BESTER'S FARM - COUNTRY - DAY

The farm is a typical transvaal farm covering thousands of acres. In the distance there's a range of mountains. Several cattle are grazing, herded by a poorly-clad African and his son, aged 8 years.

Bester and Ben are leaning on the wooden fence of the cattle kraal with calves penned in.

BESTER

Everything was examined in depth  
in court.

BEN

Did you read the papers, Dominee?  
Were you happy with what came to  
light? And is it the Magistrate's  
work to pretend that the facts  
which came to light didn't exist?

BESTER

Was it really facts, Ben?

Just then the African "HERDBOY" walks up to them taking off his lattered greasy hat.

BESTER

Ja? What is it Tom?

TOM (HERDBOY)

Does the Baas want me to bring the  
bull now?

BESTER

Later, Tom.

TOM (HERDBOY)

Dankie, Baas.

Tom hurries away.

BESTER

I bought a bull last week.

BEN

I know, Gordon. What they said about  
him, that he was plotting against  
the government -- is a downright  
lie. He was only doing what I  
would have done as a father;  
searching for his son.

BESTER

No one but God can see what's in  
our hearts.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BESTER (CONT'D)

Isn't it presumptuous to pretend we can speak for someone else?

BEN

Have you no faith in your fellow men, Dominee? Don't you love your neighbor?

BESTER

(confronting Ben)

Wait a minute, instead of criticizing blindly, don't you think we have reason to be proud of the judiciary we have? suppose this had been Russia; what do you think would have happened then?

BEN

What's the use of reaching a court when a handful of people have all the power to decide what is going to be said in that court and by whom? The one man they allowed to speak for himself, that young Archibald Chigorimbo, didn't he immediately deny everything they forced him to say in his statement? And the girl who spoke of her own torture?

CUSTOMER PAGE 99 MISSING

BEN

That did not refer to our situation in this South Africa. Do you know what I believe in, Dominee, that once in one's life, just once, one should have enough faith in something to risk everything for it.

BESTER

One can gain the world and still lose one's soul. Tea must be ready.

Bester and Ben walk towards the house still in conversation.

INT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - MORNING

The staff is having coffee during morning break in the staff room. The room has several easy chairs, a table with the morning newspapers on it. The walls have pictures of South African scenes.

There are several conversations in Afrikaans. This is the first morning since the photograph.

Ben walks into the staff room. The conversations stop. Everyone looks at him with hostility. The teachers all place their cups on the table and quietly file out of the room.

Ben pours himself a cup of coffee; as he takes his first sip, Cloete looks in, sees him. He walks in.

CLOETE

I hope you don't mind us talking here.

BEN

I don't mind, Mr. Cloete.

CLOETE

I'll come to the point. You can't imagine how shocked I was by that scandalous photograph in the Ossewa.

BEN

The woman lost her husband, she was shattered with grief.

CLOETE

A Kaffir woman, Du Toit.

BEN

(angrily)

I can't see that it makes any difference.

CLOETE

Have you gone color blind then? And what about the apartheid laws? Our first responsibility as teachers is the reputation of the school, the pupils entrusted to us. We have to be an example to them in and out of this school yard.

Ben looks at him calmly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOETE

I thought I had warned you about involving yourself with Kaffirs. Obviously you didn't heed my advice. That's all I have to say for now.

Cloete walks out of the room.

Viviers hurries into the room, he is late for his coffee.

VIVIERS

'Morning, Oom Ben.

BEN

(acknowledging  
greeting)

Viviers.

VIVIERS

(pouring coffee)  
Private coffee with Cloete?

Ben picks up the copy of the Ossewa with the photograph and shows it to Viviers.

EXT. MELANIE'S HOME - DAY

Ben stops the car in the Bruwer driveway. From the driving seat he searches the garden for Bruwer.

He walks up to the front door and knocks, but there's no reply. He goes 'round to the back and finds the old man on his knees weeding his vegetable garden.

BEN

Good afternoon, Professor.

BRUWER

(looking up)  
Melanie isn't home. You are...

BEN

Ben Du Toit. You have a nice vegetable garden.

BRUWER

You mean the area or the produce?

BEN

Both. What plants are these?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUWER

What's the world coming to? It's herbs, can't you see? Thyme there, oregano over there, feunel next to the tomatoes, sage here and rosemary somewhere. Poor plants, they re not in their ideal soil or climate. Next time, I'll bring some soil from the mountain of Zeus. Perhaps the old man's holiness will do the trick.

He throws down the small weeding-fork.

BRUWER

Come, you are just the person to sample my greengage wine. I don't suppose you've ever tasted it? I'm sure I'm the only person in the country making greengage wine.

He leads Ben to the two old chairs by the back wall. He enters the kitchen and returns with a bottle of greengage wine and two glasses.

BRUWER

(as he pours)

The first bottle this year, and you don't have to tell me if you like it or not. Tell me, did you ever study philosophy?

BEN

Not really. I've read a few books.

BRUWER

(taking a sip)

Not bad, in fact quite good. Now where was I... Oh, I was going to say after decades of philosophy, I find myself being forced back to the earth. Do you know, Ben, we're all living in the spell of abstractions. Hitler, apartheid, the great American dream, the lot?

BEN

What about Jesus?

BRUWER

Misunderstood.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUWER (CONT'D)  
 (referring to the  
 wine)  
 You don't have to finish it.

BEN  
 (lying)  
 It's quite nice.

BRUWER  
 Melanie has told me a little about  
 you. It's not an easy road you  
 have chosen.

BEN  
 I feel I have no choice.

Bruwer farts loudly, Ben is taken aback, but the  
 Professor continues.

BRUWER  
 Of course you have a choice.  
 Damn it. One always has a choice.  
 Only thank God you made the choice  
 you did. But all I want to say  
 is, keep your eyes open, young  
 man.

BEN  
 That's encouraging.

BRUWER  
 We are both Boers, Ben. We know  
 how hard our people worked to get  
 a toehold on this land; it was a  
 good life. Now look at the mess.  
 It's all systems and no God!  
 Sooner or later people start  
 believing in their way of life as  
 an absolute: unmutable,  
 fundamental, a precondition. Saw  
 it, with my own eyes in Germany,  
 a nation running after an idea.  
 Sieg heil, sieg heil. I left  
 there thirty years ago because I  
 couldn't take it any longer. And  
 now I see it happening in my own  
 country, step by step.  
 Terrifyingly predictable. This  
 sickness of the great abstraction.

He farts and sips his greengage wine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben is so fascinated by the old man's conversation he didn't react. He is learning from his old Afrikaner.

BEN

What you say is very interesting and important.

BRUWER

Take for example the way the government is handling the electorate; like a bloody donkey. Carrot in front and kick at the backside. The carrot is apartheid, Dogma. The kick is quite simply, fear. Black peril, red peril, whatever name you want to give it.

(pause)

Fear can be a wonderful ally, Ben. I talk too much, I always do with younger people, they don't fall asleep to me.

BEN

(laughs)

We Afrikaners have to stop to turn a blind eye and look around us and at ourselves.

BRUWER

You are right. We still have time. History should teach us about those who regarded themselves as the chosen people.

BEN

(standing up  
comforted)

Professor Bruwer, may I say I have needed to hear somebody say some of the things you said. I still have hope for our country.

BRUWER

If you lose that you have lost everything. I'll get back to the earth.

BEN

(shaking hands)

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUWER

I'll tell that hot-head daughter  
of mine that you came to see her.

Ben takes his leave.

INT. LEWINSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ben and Dan Lewinson are sitting opposite, cups of  
coffee in front of them.

BEN

There is absolutely no doubt that  
they were killed in custody.  
Those responsible must be  
punished, whoever they are, or  
whatever their rank.

LEWINSON

The problem is laying our hands on  
them.

BEN

Tell me, Dan, we lost at the  
inquest, what next?

LEWINSON

The family can file a civil claim.

BEN

What does that entail?

LEWINSON

To put it briefly, it means we  
have to have witnesses, affidavits  
and any information relating to  
the arrest and death of Gordon.  
We also need similar information  
on Jonathan. You see Ben, for  
example, Stolz figures in both  
cases. That's one link at least.

BEN

I know what I have to do.

EXT. ROADSIDE CAFE - AFTERNOON

It's lunch time and the working population of Jo'burg  
has paused for lunch. Ben and Melanie are sitting at a  
table outside. The cafe is on the outskirts of a very  
affluent part of Johannesburg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

I didn't think you would want to have anything to do with me after that crap in the Ossewa.

BEN

Why? You didn't write it.

MELANIE

I'm a journalist, perhaps tarred with the same brush.

BEN

No.

MELANIE

So what happened? I can imagine. The family, the dominee, colleagues, neighbors...

BEN

A distorted photograph and a few poisoned words and meneer Du Toit is a leper. That's why I called on you the other day, I needed to talk to somebody rational.

MELANIE

Thanks for the compliment. But remember, you're an Afrikaner, you're one of them. In their eyes they regard you as the worst kind of traitor.

BEN

You are an Afrikaner too, and your articles, in a liberal English paper?

MELANIE

My mother was a foreigner, I'm not pure, wragte Afrikaner. They don't expect the same loyalty from me that they demand from you.

BEN

What kind of loyalty? Blind loyalty. Until the deaths of Jonathan and Gordon, I gave all the loyalty I could give, laager loyalty. You know, Melanie, we Afrikaners have always lived in our laager, we have not seen what's beyond the mountains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

Has it ever occurred to you that the Volk may be scared to leave the laager? That's the downfall of this country. So, where do you go from here?

BEN

We carry on. There has to be justice.

MELANIE

Justice.

BEN

We lost at the inquest, so we pursue them in a civil action. I consulted the attorney Dan Lewinson.

MELANIE

We know each other well.

CUSTOMER PAGE #'S 107 - 110 MISSING

STOLZ

Mr. Du Toit, if you knew what we're working with every day of our lives, and what we're up against, you would understand why we have to be so thorough.

BEN

However you go about it.

STOLZ

I can understand you're upset about having your house searched ... but...

BEN

I wasn't thinking about myself.

STOLZ

What are you talking about then, Mr. Du Toit?

BEN

My thoughts, Captain, I'm sure, are an open book to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stolz picks up a book of Picasso's Peace Paintings, starts leafing through it carefully, scrutinizing each page.

He puts the Picasso book carefully back in the place he took it from.

STOLZ

An interesting book -- Picasso --  
Not one I'm familiar with.

BEN

Not on your list of banned books,  
Captain?

Stolz doesn't react...

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The search continues in the living room. Susan is standing pale, rigid, shocked.

STOLZ

Mr. Du Toit. If you're keeping  
anything from us, we can turn this  
whole house upside down if we want  
to. We have all the time in the  
world.

SUSAN

(throwing Ben a  
warning daggers  
look)

I'm afraid I don't understand.

Nothing from Stolz.

One of the men starts to roll up the carpet to look under it.

Susan has to move out of his way.

BEN

(gently to Susan)

Why don't you go upstairs?

STOLZ

I'm afraid she has to stay where  
we can see her -- in case she  
wanted to warn someone.

SUSAN

My father's an M.P.! Warn who?

CONTINUED:

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - DAY

All four tires of Ben's car have been slashed to ribbons.

INT. BEN'S GARAGE - DAY

Ben and Johan are there.

Ben takes a file from under a toolbox and measures it carefully against the drawer base. Then, he selects a piece of wood approximately the size of the drawer and tries it for size.

We should be in no doubt that's he's constructing a hiding place.

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Susan is preparing a roast. There's music from a transistor RADIO. Susan is startled by a voice, her father's (Ben's FATHER-IN-LAW). She turns OFF, the RADIO.

FATHER-IN-LAW

Roast beef, I hope it's like your mother's.

SUSAN

(happy)

Papa!

He is aged about 70 years, thick set. She rushes to him and he hugs her tightly and practically lifts her off the floor. She kisses him.

SUSAN

Where's Mama?

She disentangles herself and goes to the living room as excited as a child, the mother is standing by two cases, smiling.

Susan hugs her.

SUSAN

Mama!

She holds her mother at arm's length inspecting her.

SUSAN

The perfume and a new hairstyle.

MOTHER

Your father insisted that I don't disgrace you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
(hugging her again)  
I expected you a little later.

FATHER-IN-LAW  
She insisted we start early.  
Where is Ben?

JOHAN  
(walking in with golf  
club bag)  
In the study. I'll get him.

FATHER-IN-LAW  
Have you put on weight, Susan?

SUSAN  
Please don't say that, Papa.

Ben walks in.

BEN  
Sorry. Didn't hear you arrive.

He shakes hands with Father-In-Law.

FATHER-IN-LAW  
How are you, Ben?

BEN  
Fine.

He goes to MOTHER-IN-LAW. He kisses her on the cheek.

BEN  
And how are you, Ma?

MOTHER-IN-LAW (MOTHER)  
Well, Ben, still have trouble with  
my feet.

BEN  
Why doesn't everyone sit down?

SUSAN  
I'll prepare some tea. I baked a  
cake.

She goes to the kitchen.

EXT. LOCAL GOLF COURSE - SUNSET

Ben and Father-In-Law are having a drink after a round of  
golf, outside the club house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER-IN-LAW

I'm getting tired of the trek to Cape Town and then back to Pretoria. If I had my way, Parliament and government would be in the same city. There's nothing wrong with Pretoria.

BEN

I thought you'd prefer Cape Town; the sea and Table Mountain.

FATHER-IN-LAW

That's for holidays. Anyway, Ben, one of the reasons for this visit was that I wanted to have a discussion with you.

BEN

What about?

FATHER-IN-LAW

It's that photograph in the papers. Ben, a thing like that could be an embarrassment for someone who is a member of Parliament. It's a grievous day when one's family's behavior comes between him and his duty to the fatherland.

BEN

Are you blaming me for trying to help those people?

FATHER-IN-LAW

I've been doing that all my life, be they black or white. But no member of our family has been seen with a Kaffir woman before, Ben.

Father signals the African waiter for more drinks.

BEN

I am glad you mentioned it, Father. Because I'd like to discuss the whole thing with you. First, there's the matter of Gordon Ngubene himself.

FATHER-IN-LAW

What about him? I thought the case was closed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

The inquest didn't clear up half of what happened.

FATHER-IN-LAW

Oh, really?

BEN

We have no irrefutable evidence yet, but we have enough to indicate that something serious is being covered up.

FATHER-IN-LAW

You're jumping to conclusions, Ben.

BEN

I know what I'm talking about.

The black waiter places the drinks on the table.

FATHER-IN-LAW

All right, Ben, I'm listening. Perhaps I can use my influence. But you'll have to convince me

first.

BEN

If they have really nothing to hide, why is the special branch going out of its way to intimidate me.

FATHER-IN-LAW

(practically choking)  
What's this about special branch?

BEN

They raided the house; they are tapping my phone, and I have been threatened by one of the officers.

FATHER-IN-LAW

I'm sorry, Ben, I'd rather not have anything to do with this sort of thing.

BEN

Why?

FATHER-IN-LAW

If the special branch are involved they must have good reasons.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

It's exactly what I said, Father, when Jonathan first got into trouble. Of course, they have good reasons: hushing up how Gordon died and how his son died!

FATHER-IN-LAW

(angry)

Ben, how could you side with the enemies of your people?

BEN

You mean you're prepared to sit back and allow an injustice to be done.

FATHER-IN-LAW

(his face grows purple)

It's you, Ben, who talk about injustice? A man who teaches history at school? Did you forget what our people have suffered under the English oppressors? Now that we have at long last come to power in our own land.

BEN

Now we're free to do to others what they used to do to us. What will you do if you were a black man in this country today, Father?

FATHER-IN-LAW

Don't you realize what the government is doing for the blacks? It's a slow process, Ben. One of these days the whole bloody lot of them will be free and independent in their own parts of the land, the bantoustans -- what can be more just than that? But they're not ready yet.

The waiter returns -- Father-in-law pays the bill, and as he rises to leave, he puts a paternal arm on Ben's shoulder.

FATHER-IN-LAW

We have nothing to be ashamed of before the eyes of the world, my boy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN  
 (standing, his golf  
 bag in his hand)  
 We don't? I'm not sure we're  
 going to survive.

They walk away.

FATHER-IN-LAW  
 Don't underestimate us, Ben. Our  
 power of survival. We are  
 Afrikaners!

EXT. STREET CORNER - EVENING

Stanley is parked in a street corner in the last white suburb on the way to Soweto. Ben pulls up in his car behind Stanley's. He walks over to Stanley's car and enters the back. Stanley smiles as he points at his watch.

STANLEY  
 African time.

BEN  
 I'm sorry.

They drive off towards Soweto.

STANLEY  
 Doesn't matter, Lanie -- as long  
 we are on time for the revolution.

BEN  
 The special branch searched my  
 house four days ago.

STANLEY  
 The S.B. searches your house?  
 (chuckles)  
 Did they take anything?

BEN  
 A few journals, letters -- nothing  
 much. Just wanted to scare me,  
 that's all.

STANLEY  
 Don't be so sure. They may think  
 you're onto something big.

BEN  
 They're not that stupid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stanley laughs.

STANLEY

'Lanie' -- don't you believe it --  
nothing's as stupid as the old S.B.  
If they decide it's a bomb they're  
looking for, you can shove a turd  
in their face and they'll swear  
to God it's a bomb.

He laughs... making Ben smile.

A pause.

STANLEY

And did they?

BEN

What?

STANLEY

Scare you?

BEN

No. They tried too hard.

Stanley laughs again.

STANLEY

Hallelujah!  
(offers his huge  
hand)  
Shake, man. Join the club.

Ben accepts the handshake.

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Susan sitting on an armchair, sewing. She is aware of a  
car stopping opposite the house. Then several young  
voices shout:

"Kaffir lover"  
"Kaffer boetie"  
"Red Communist"

The car drives off at speed.

Susan sits petrified.

CUT TO:

INT. STANLEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Ben and Stanley driving in Soweto.

It's a different city by night. The dark seems to soften the violence of the confrontation, hiding the details which, by day, assault and insult the eyes. There are several GUNSHOTS in the distance. The only light comes from the small, square windows of the innumerable houses.

STANLEY

Did you hear that, Lanie? More kids dying?

Ben says nothing.

Further on there's a group of people outside a house. As they pass they hear HYMN SINGING from the house.

BEN

What's happening? What's the singing?

STANLEY

A wake for a child; eight months old. She was sleeping and they threw tear gas into it.

They drive on.

CUT TO:

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben, Stanley and Emily are sitting 'round the table. Ben has pulled the lamp closer to read one of two notes from Gordon -- one is written on ruled paper, the other a square of toilet paper. The notes have been smuggled out of John Vorster Square.

GORDON (V.O.)

(shakily)

'My dear wife, you must not worry about me. I miss you and the children. You must look after them in the fear of the Lord. I'm hungry, and I don't know what they want from me. But I think I'll be home some day. I think about...'

They are interrupted by a KNOCK at the door. Emily snatches the notes and stuffs them into her bosom. Everyone is tense as Emily slowly walks up to the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She opens it and a man with a hat and dressed as a minister walks in. Before anyone can say anything, Stanley bursts out in a loud laugh. The man is slightly built, aged 40 years. He is JULIUS NQAKULA.

STANLEY

On your knees, everyone, prayers time.

Ben is perplexed. Emily closes the door and locks it.

STANLEY

Hey man, you should have been a mfundisi holiness oozer...

JULIUS

(removing this hat)  
Okay, Stanley. It's stupid, but one is forced to do these things.

He walks up to Ben and offers him his hand.

JULIUS

I'm Julius Ngakula... I'm banned and also under house arrest. That's why I have this ridiculous garb on.

BEN

I understand.

STANLEY

He's one of the most solid lawyers we have; they've immobilized him, that's the right word isn't it?

He laughs.

BEN

Stanley has told me about you. I appreciate the risk you are taking by coming here to meet me. I was reading the notes Gordon smuggled out of John Vorster Square...

JULIUS

May I have a glance at them?

Emily produces the notes. Julius takes them. He starts reading the toilet paper, which is harder to read.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON (V.O.)  
(speaking with great  
difficulty)

'My dear wife. I am still in these conditions... worse... and too much pain. They don't want to believe me. You must try to help me. They won't stop. You must care for the children. I don't know anymore if I will come home alive. They're very --

(a word mumbled)

-- but God will provide. I love you and I miss you very much. Try to help me because...'

The voice breaks off.

JULIUS  
(to Emily)

When did you get the letters?

EMILY  
(uncomfortable)

The first one two days after they took him away. And the other one came later.

BEN  
But, Emily, why didn't you tell me long ago?

EMILY  
I had given my word to the man -- who brought them to me --

BEN  
Emily, I have to meet the man.

EMILY  
He said he didn't want anybody to know who he is. I cannot make trouble for him in his work.

BEN  
He has to be persuaded. He is very important to us.

EMILY  
(to Julius)  
You as a lawyer will understand.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY (CONT'D)

We intend starting a civil suit against the police, to do that it is necessary to have as many affidavits as we can from people who have any information about Gordon since he was arrested. And this man is vital and so is the Indian doctor.

JULIUS

You mean Dr. Hassiem. How are you going to do that? You know of course that he is detained.

BEN

I know, with luck they may release him.

JULIUS

With luck.

BEN

But, Emily, this man is important, please try to tell him we will protect his identity. No one will know. Nothing will be done without his approval. I only want to talk to him.

JULIUS

Why don't you leave it to Stanley and I? What do you say, Stanley?

STANLEY

Sure.

BEN

May I call you Julius, I'm not very good with some African names.

STANLEY

(laughs)

Ngakula, that's a hell of a name.

JULIUS

Please call me Julius.

BEN

This case must be reopened and we must win. We have to dig up everything. We need your cooperation, Julius.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIUS

Where do I start? Don't forget my restrictions.

STANLEY

They did not ban you so you could sit on your backside and have a Soweto holiday.

BEN

You could help with the affidavits. Lewinson the lawyer has stressed their importance.

JULIUS

We know each other. He's a good lawyer for this kind of case. Of course I'll do what I can. My commitment forces me.

BEN

I'm glad.

JULIUS

How are you planning to safeguard the documents? Stanley told me you have already had a said by the S.B.

BEN

I wouldn't worry. I have a secure place.

STANLEY

Let's hope so.

EMILY

I'll make some tea.

STANLEY

Not for me, Sis -- too strong for me. No whisky?

EMILY

In my house? You know better than that, Stanley.

STANLEY

Tea then...

(turning to Julius)  
... and God forgive me --

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S GARAGE - EVENING

Ben is standing by the workbench, the new drawer he and Johan built for the toolbox, open before him.

He's rereading Gordon's letters to Emily.

Sound of approaching FOOTSTEPS. Ben quickly puts the letters into the drawer and shuts it.

Susan appears at the door -- she looks ten years older.

SUSAN

Ben, it's Johan. You'd better come.

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Johan sits, Ben crouched before him. The boy's shirt is torn, his eyes swollen, his lip cut. He looks at the floor. Susan hovers.

SUSAN

He won't tell me why it happened

Ben holds his son's arms, gently.

BEN

Johan. Was it because of me?

He doesn't answer for a moment. Then he nods.

SUSAN

You see! It's gone too far, Ben. You've got to stop it...

JOHAN

(shouting at his mother)

I don't care! It doesn't hurt me!

Susan stares at him, at Ben, turns abruptly, walks out of the room. Johan looks at his father.

JOHAN

It was my friends, Dad. They're so stupid... They won't listen. They don't even want to know what you're trying to do.

He's crying.

BEN

Are you sure you know?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHAN

Yes. I know.

BEN

Does it worry you?

Johan looks at his father through his tears.

JOHAN

Don't stop, Dad. You mustn't  
give up now!

Ben hugs his son.

MONTAGE

The Gordon Ngubene name-cleaning team on the move.

A) BEN

in a phone box dialing a number.

B) PHONE

RINGING, RINGING, on a desk full of scattered  
files and papers. By the phone a photograph of a six-  
year-old Indian girl.

C) CLOSE ON NURSE

Sound of the PHONE, a young nurse's frightened face as  
she remembers peering in at a young boy, struggling  
and moaning... Policemen closing the door...

D) CLOSE ON

her hand signing the affidavit and handing  
it to a man's hand.

E) CLOSE ON

Ben in the phone box hanging up the phone  
with rage.

F) CLOSE ON

a young black man's face listening to Julius's  
voice:

JULIUS (V.O.)

... And on the morning of the  
autopsy, as I was cleaning the  
mortuary, Captain Stolz gave me a  
bundle of Ngubene's and ordered  
me to burn them.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

The young man nods.

G) BEN

having a look on the two affidavits before hiding them into the drawer of the stool box.

SHOTS. Three! Loud, sharp, terrifying.

INT. BEN'S LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING

The WINDOW, a LAMP and a MIRROR SHATTER -- Susan screams, standing, her hands -- clamped over her ears -- eyes tight shut -- hysterical -- the TELEVISION CHATTERS on an Afrikaans' play.

Ben bursts in, holds her tight, as she screams into his chest.

SUSAN  
(hysterical)  
Call the police, Ben, call the police!

Johan's voice comes from his room.

JOHAN (O.S.)  
Papa! Papa!

BEN  
(calling)  
It's okay, son... we're all right.  
Everything's okay!

JOHAN (O.S.)  
What's happened?

BEN  
(shouting)  
It's okay, stay there, please!!

Gently, he leads Susan who is sobbing now, out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE EVENING

SUSAN  
(in disbelief)  
My God. They were trying to kill us.

She's seated at the kitchen table. Ben has poured her a brandy which she cups in her hands.

BEN  
They were trying to scare us, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her fear turns into anger.

SUSAN

(screaming)

Oh, is that all... What the hell more do you want to happen... we're ordinary people for God's sake -- and you've pitched us into this -- this nightmare. I can't take any more, Ben... I can't take any more!!

She drops her head and sobs.

Ben sits beside her, and takes her hands to comfort her.

Susan puts her head on his shoulder.

SUSAN

(in a quiet pleading voice)

Please, Ben, stop. Just stop... please.

Ben is obviously moved.

He squeezes her hands, then takes her in his arms.

INT. VILJOEN'S OFFICE - DAY

The colonel, amiable, cool, behind his desk. A dishevelled Ben, pitched angrily forward in his chair.

VILJOEN

Now you must be exaggerating, Mr. Du Toit.

BEN

My house has been searched. My phone is tapped. My mail is opened. And last night three shots were fired through my window -- close to killing my wife.

Viljoen reacts.

VILJOEN

Mr. Du Toit, if shots were fired into your premises, we will investigate.

BEN

All I want to know, Colonel, is why don't you leave me in peace?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VILJOEN

Now wait, wait a minute, Mr. Du Toit, you're not trying to blame me?

BEN

Tell me, Colonel, why is it so important to you people to stop my enquiries about Gordon Ngubene?

VILJOEN

Is that what you are doing?

(he pauses)

Well, now. If you possess any information that may be of use to us, I trust you won't hesitate to discuss it with me.

He leans forward towards Ben, his tone darkening.

VILJOEN

Because if there are facts you are deliberately hiding from us, Mr. Du Toit -- If you give us reason to believe that you may be involved in activities that may be dangerous to both yourself and us -- then I can foresee some problems.

BEN

Is that a threat, Colonel?

VILJOEN

(smiling and sitting back)

Let's call it a warning. A friendly warning. For God's sake, open your eyes, Mr. Du Toit! Don't you see you're being used!

BEN

(sarcastically)

By the Communists, I suppose.

Ben gets up to go. The colonel doesn't rise to see him out.

BEN

Goodbye, Colonel.  
(at the door,  
turning back)

I'm sure.

He leaves. The colonel immediately picks up the phone.

EXT. BEN'S KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

A 40-year-old African woman walks up to Ben's kitchen door. She knocks.

Ben opens the door in pyjamas and dressing-gown. She hands him a note and leaves.

Ben reads the note and goes back into the house.

EXT. STREET IN VREDEDORP - MORNING

Vrededorp is a colored section of Johannesburg. It's rundown area vacated by whites. There are children playing in the street. Some unemployed men are sitting on old chairs outside a doorway; a vendor is serving two women from his milk churn.

Ben drives into the street searching for an address. He stops outside a house. As he gets out of the car the children and everyone stop to look at him with interest. He walks up to a door and knocks.

A COLORED WOMAN appears as the door opens. She is young and obviously educated.

COLORED WOMAN

Mr. Du Toit?

Ben nods, hesitatingly.

COLORED WOMAN

Please, come in.

Ben walks into the living/dining room. It's a very tidy room with a three piece sitting room suite, a sideboard with a clock on it. At one end of the room is the dining area. The floor is linoleum and covered with a rug in the middle.

Stanley is lounging on a settee, beer in hand. On the chair next to him a black man in a brown striped suit, drinks orange squash. Thirtyish, pleasant face but very tense. He rises as Ben walks in.

STANLEY

(rising and shaking  
hands with Ben)

How's it? No trouble finding this  
place? You met Sadie. She's one  
of us.

Ben nods to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

And this is Johnson Seroke. The man of the letters.

BEN

(nodding in greeting)  
Johnson.

SADIE (COLORED WOMAN)

Please sit down, Mr. Du Toit. A beer, tea or orange squash?

BEN

A beer would be nice.

Sadie goes to a cupboard and brings out a bottle of beer and a glass. She opens the beer and hands it to Ben. She disappears into the bedroom with a curtain at the door.

STANLEY

You know they call this place Vrededorp, but we baptize it Malay Camp. Your first time in Malay Camp, Lanie?

BEN

I've driven through here many times.

STANLEY

The main road, eh?

BEN

(smiling)  
Ja.

The woman re-enters.

SADIE

You'll excuse me. Stanley, you know what to do with the key.

STANLEY

Sure, Sadie. And thank you. Can I help myself to another beer?

SADIE

You know it is. Goodbye, Mr. Du Toit, and you, be careful.

To the Seroke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEROKE  
 (trying to smile)  
 Okay, Sadie.

Sadie leaves.

STANLEY  
 That woman can die for you. We  
 mustn't be long, Johnson has to  
 be back on duty.

BEN  
 Alright, let's get on with it.  
 Stanley tells me, you work at  
 John Vorster Square.

SEROKE  
 I had no choice, they transferred  
 me there.

BEN  
 Yet you smuggled out letters to  
 Emily?

SEROKE  
 (pulling the fingers  
 of his left hand one  
 by one cracking the  
 joints over and over)  
 What do you do if a man asks you,  
 and he's in trouble?

STANLEY  
 If they find out he'd be in very  
 big trouble.

BEN  
 I know that. Tell me, what do you  
 know about Gordon?

SEROKE  
 Very little.

BEN  
 You did talk to him from time to  
 time?

SEROKE  
 He gave me the letters.

BEN  
 When was the last time you saw  
 him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEROKE

Just before he died.

BEN

Did you attend any of the interrogations?

SEROKE

No. I'm not a member of the Special Branch. But once I had to deliver a letter to Capt. Stolz, Gordon was there.

BEN

(concerned)

How were they interrogating him?

Seroke hesitates and looks at Stanley.

STANLEY

It's okay. Tell him what you told me.

BEN

(anxious)

What?

SEROKE

They were using the pole.

BEN

The pole, what's that?

STANLEY

(demonstrating)

They handcuff you and manacle your feet then they put a pole between your arms and the back of your knees. Then you're like a chicken ready for the oven. They hang you between two tables. Then they do what they like with you. The S.B. call it the aeroplane.

Ben is horrified.

BEN

I see. Who were in that room? Stolz...

SEROKE

Lieutenant Venter and a black S.B.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

You are sure?

STANLEY

He's sure.

BEN

(to himself)

It's very interesting. When was the last time you saw him?

SEROKE

(nervous)

I saw them take the body away to the cells. He was limp.

BEN

You did! Johnson, why do you stay with the police? You don't really belong there.

SEROKE

It's a job. And how can I go away? I love my family.

He jumps up and faces Ben with a look of anger and panic.

SEROKE

They must never know I told you anything. Right?

BEN

I understand. I promise.

STANLEY

This is strictly between the three of us. Don't worry, man.

Seroke shakes hands with them as he's leaving.

STANLEY

(slapping his back)

Take it easy.

Stanley goes to the cupboard for another beer.

STANLEY (O.S.)

A beer, Lanie?

BEN

(shouting)

No, thank you. You know, Stanley, after what happened the other night I was about to give this whole thing up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

(intrigued)

What happened, man?

BEN

My wife nearly got killed. Three shots were fired into the house. What right have I to expose my family to harassment and actual physical danger? That's what I asked myself.

STANLEY

Three bloody shots and you crawl on your hands and knees to people like Stolz, and say 'I give up.' What is the beginning for you is a version of what we suffer all our bloody life. Shit, I thought you had more guts than this, man!

BEN

I didn't say I'm giving up.

STANLEY

But you thought about it.

BEN

Johnson has revived my determination.

STANLEY

It's a hell of a time, Lanie, but we'll survive. You and me. I tell you!

BEN

You think we may still win in the end, Stanley?

STANLEY

Of course not, Lanie -- but we needn't lose either -- what matters is to stick around.

Ben nods.

STANLEY

By the way, man, I'm off on a trip -- Botswana -- thought I'd tell you in case you get worried.

BEN

Why are you going there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

Business. Tell you next week.  
Now for the bad news I've been  
saving to the last.

BEN

What?

STANLEY

Julius has been arrested. He  
broke his banning order and  
visited his sister. You know what  
that means? At least a year's  
imprisonment.

BEN

A year in jail just for visiting  
his sister?

STANLEY

That's the chance he took. And  
he'll be the last to complain.

BEN

Don't you think the real reason  
for this arrest was that they  
found out he was helping us?

STANLEY

So what? Lanie, you're not  
getting guilt complexes now, are  
you? That's a luxury only  
liberals can afford. Julius will  
be back, man. All refreshed by a  
spell in the deep-freeze.

BEN

How can we shrug off a man we've  
been working with?

STANLEY

Who said we're shrugging him off?  
Best way of remembering a man,  
Lanie, is to carry on fighting.

INT. BEN'S STUDY - DAY

Ben's study is in chaos.

The books have been plucked from the shelves and the  
contents of his drawers emptied on the floor.

Ben standing in the middle of the room surveying the  
vandalism.

INT. BRUWER KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

This is a medium-sized kitchen with two doors leading from it, one to the dining room and the other to the living room. It has not changed since it was furnished twenty years ago, the only modern appliances being the electric stove and a modern mixer on the working table.

Ben is leaning against the wall next to the door leading to the living room, drinking coffee.

Melanie, bare-feet, her long black hair tied up in a ribbon, is washing up. She looks younger and fragile with this hair-style.

BEN

(smiling)

What about you?

MELANIE

What?

BEN

I mean not married...

MELANIE

And living in this chaos with my eccentric father? I love him and we get on perfectly. We have been together since I was a year old. My mother could not adapt to South Africa. She went back to London and we've never heard from her since.

BEN

Being a professor and bringing up a child, how did he manage that?

MELANIE

Dorothy, dear Dorothy, she was a fantastic mother. In fact she had two families, me and her three children in Alexandra township.

BEN

And this little girl grew up to be a tough journalist. Why a journalist?

MELANIE

(laughs)

Sometimes I ask myself the same question.

She leans against the sink and picks up her mug of coffee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

Alright. I'll tell you. I was brought up in a sheltered way, not that Dad was possessive, not openly anyway. I think he'd just seen enough of the mess the world was in, to want to protect me as much as he could. Then, I went to university. I don't know what you'll think... being a teacher.

Pause.

BEN

About what?

MELANIE

Then I married my ex-teacher.

BEN

Oh. He must have been young.

MELANIE

Fifteen years difference. He too protected me like Dad. Then one day I visited Dorothy in Alexandra and saw her home and the appalling conditions in that township. I was shocked, Ben, and ashamed.

BEN

Go on.

Melanie pours him another mug of coffee and starts to wipe up.

MELANIE

That made me think that I was a parasite, something white and maggot-like... just a thing... a sweet and ineffectual thing. I felt more and more claustrophobic. Poor Brian, who loved and pampered me. Had no idea what was happening. I left him for a whole year and we divorced.

BEN

And then you became a journalist?

Melanie goes to the living room, as she passes Ben she touches his arm and continues talking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE (O.S.)

I thought it would force me, or help me, to expose myself. To force me to see and to take notice of what was happening around me.

BEN

Did it work?

She returns to the kitchen with a cigarette.

MELANIE

I wish I could give you a straight answer. What did help me was my wanderings in Africa.

BEN

How did you manage that on a South African passport? We South Africans are white devils in Africa.

MELANIE

My mother was English, remember? So I get a British passport. It comes in handy even for the paper.

BEN

You really are your father's daughter!

MELANIE

I wonder what he's doing right now. Most likely standing on a rock, looking through his old binoculars at springbok or a lion or whatever.

One of the two large CATS approaches them, tail in the air, and goes to Melanie, drubbing against her legs, PURRING luxuriously. She picks it up into her arms.

BEN

How often does he go on these trips to the veldt?

MELANIE

It depends --

(approaching Ben with  
cat)

-- Bonjour, Ben. I'm Porto and my friend is Bello!

Ben smiles and starts to caress Porto in Melanie's arms.

EXT. SOWETO - EMILY'S HOUSE - MID-MORNING

Parked outside the house is a municipality truck already half-laden with Emily's furniture and possessions. Four Africans in khaki overalls are loading the truck -- supervising the eviction of Emily are a white Soweto official, Captain Stolz and Lt. Venter. In the b.g., a hundred yards away is a "hippo" with black and white armed policemen. Behind the truck are two police Land Rovers.

Emily is sitting outside on one of her chairs as neighbors walk up to her to comfort her and say their goodbyes. Her daughter is carrying the youngest child and standing next to Emily -- several children are watching. A woman in the crowd starts singing a freedom song: "UMZIMA LOMTHWALO" ("THIS BURDEN IS HEAVY"). The song is taken up by the other women.

Venter tries to stop them and disperse them. Stolz signals to him to leave them alone. One of the Africans then walks up to her for the chair. She refuses to get off the chair. The man looks at the white official as though to ask "what do I do." The official looks at Stolz. Venter walks up to Emily and, about to pull her off the chair.

EMILY

Don't you touch me!

Venter pulls back. The women start to ululate. Emily rises majestically, takes the youngest in her arms and walks slowly to the truck followed by her daughter. People cluster around her, singing with rage and shaking her hand. Stolz observes the scene, impassive.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Come back! Buya!

CROWD

(shouts)

Buya! Buya!

Emily and the children are helped onto the back of the truck which drives away preceded by the police "hippo" and escorted from the rear by the Land Rovers. The crowd continues singing.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Ben is leaving his home. This is a Saturday morning. Two men are sitting in a car a few yards from the entrance to the house. Ben doesn't pay attention to them. When he is about twenty yards past, one of the men, Jaimie -- who was present when Gordon was arrested -- gets out of the car and follows Ben. Ben stops at a corner for a car and again the FOOTSTEPS stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns furtively and sees the man, stopped, turning his head. Ben decides to turn the corner, and listens to the FOOTSTEPS. The man is still following. Ben then decides to turn right back to have a good look at the man. They pass each other and Ben takes a good look at him and turns back onto the streets to the local shops. The man decides not to follow.

INT. BEN'S STUDY - NIGHT

Ben and Stanley sit. Ben on his desk. Stanley in an armchair with a drink. They look perplexed.

STANLEY

(irritated)

She's a widow, man. That's what happens in Soweto when a woman loses her man. They throw her out of the house and out of the city.

BEN

(disgusted)

Zululand! The whole thing smells of being an excuse to send her hundreds of miles from the case. And how will they live there?...

STANLEY

Shit! I was about to find her a place, but I had to go to look for Robert.

BEN

So, that's why you went to Botswana for.

STANLEY

Sis Emily asked me but it was no use. His mind was made up. He was going to join Wellington in Zambia.

BEN

Couldn't you stop him? He's a little boy, Stanley!

Stanley gulps down his whisky and stands up.

STANLEY

(focusing Ben in the eyes)

He'll be back in a few years. And he won't be throwing stones!

Then, puts the empty glass on the desk.

INT./EXT. STANLEY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Stanley peers through the curtains: he sees a car parked outside the house. In it Jaimie and another S.B. They are watching the house. Stanley quietly opens the door and walks outside.

EXT. STANLEY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Stanley walks past his car and approaches the policeman.

STANLEY  
 (using his usual  
 humor)  
 Good evening. I'd like to invite  
 you into my humble home, but it's  
 full of terrorists.

The two policemen get out of their car, obviously angry.

JAIMIE  
 (pointing at Stanley's  
 car)  
 Open the boot! You cheeky bastard!

STANLEY  
 Okay, with pleasure.

They search and find nothing.

JAIMIE  
 Open the door and remove the seat.

Stanley executes the order. Jaimie and the OTHER POLICEMAN peer in, their eyes sweeping the car.

OTHER POLICEMAN  
 Now, your pass, bliksem.

Stanley produces his passbook and hands it to the Policeman who inspects the pages laboriously, then throws the book to the ground. Stanley doesn't pick it up and just watches the man.

JAIMIE  
 You watch your bloody step! Right?

They return to their car and drive off. Stanley looks at them thoughtfully, then picks up his book.

EXT. DAN PIENAAR SCHOOL - MORNING

All the students are in classes. Cloete walks out of a classroom and sees Capt. Stolz walking towards the building. Cloete stops to wait for him. They shake hands and walk to Cloete's office talking affably. They enter office.

INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben and Susan in bed, asleep. The PHONE RINGS... waking them both. Ben answers. There's no one there. He puts it down. The RINGING STARTS AGAIN. Ben puts the receiver down.

SUSAN

(calmly)

Ben, please stop whilst there's time. Please, Ben.

BEN

(focusing on ceiling)

It's impossible to stop now, Susan. I believe I'm right in what I'm doing. If I stop now I'll go mad.

SUSAN

(despaired)

Whatever the price you pay for it?

BEN

(painfully)

I have got to.

Susan shuts her eyes tight and turns her back on him to hide her tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLOETE'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

It's a functional office. Picture of the South African president (1976) John Vorster, on the wall. Various staff pictures... Ben, summoned by Cloete, sits.

CLOETE

Think of your heritage, man. My God -- think of your wife, your family, friends, neighbors. What's going to happen to them -- all of us -- if we can't depend on our own kind? We're educationalists -- teachers. We are building for the future.

BEN

Without simple justice we don't deserve a future.

CLOETE

We're Boers, man -- Afrikaners. We are your nation. What's justice for us is justice -- period!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOETE (CONT'D)

Traitors like you are threatening centuries of Afrikaner sacrifice.

BEN

That last remark was slanderous -- I'm simply being faithful to the truth.

CLOETE

Slanderous? My God, man, you slander a whole people.

He walks silently through the office then continues.

CLOETE

You have given me no alternative. I have to abide by the regulations of the Department of Education -- so I have made my report. And there will have to be a formal inquiry. But until such time...

BEN

(rising)

It won't be necessary, Mr. Cloete. I'll send you my resignation.

CLOETE

Thank you for making things much easier.

Ben stares at him for a moment, then turns to leave. As he reaches the door, Cloete says:

CLOETE

And it would be better if Johan left too.

Ben turns to stare at him, amazed.

BEN

Are you serious?

CLOETE

He's a Kaffir-lover too, isn't he?

The color drains from Ben's face. Then he steps forward, slaps Cloete thunderously across the face, hurling him back into his chair, and strides out, leaving the door ajar.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

It's the end of the school day. The yard is practically deserted. Only Viviers waiting for Ben under the veranda.

Ben appears.

VIVIERS

Oom Ben, I was waiting for you.  
I have something interesting to  
tell you.

BEN

(striding on towards  
his car)

Later, Viviers.

VIVIERS

(keeping up)

But, Oom Ben, it's about the  
S.B. they came to question me.  
Before they started questioning  
me I told them they were wasting  
their time.

Ben doesn't react.

VIVIERS

They asked if I was cooperating  
with you. What I knew about the  
A.N.C. Can you imagine that! They  
then said: 'Mr. Viviers you come  
from a good Afrikaans family and  
it's important that you realize  
that communists are looking for  
people like you and before you  
know where you are they're using  
you! And, Oom Ben...

BEN

(reaching the car;  
interrupting him)

I'm sorry, Viviers. I never  
wanted you to get involved.

(getting into his  
car)

I have just resigned.

VIVIERS

(amazed)

What...?

Ben drives away.

## INT. BEN'S DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Christmas day lunch. Assembled around the table are Ben's Father-in-law, his wife Helen, Suzette and Chris, her husband, Johan, Ben and Susan. They're all wearing paper hats from Christmas crackers. On the table is a large piece of roast lamb, ox tongue, a large turkey and assorted vegetables.

Ben is at the head of the table adjacent to the door leading to the kitchen, the Father-in-law is sitting by his side facing the door.

Ben is in the middle of carving the turkey, plates are being passed to him.

JOHAN

Was last year's turkey as big as this, Papa?

BEN

About the same size.

SUZETTE

Do you remember the turkey I had for Easter? You said it was as big as a baby ostrich, Papa.

BEN

I don't remember that, Suzette.

FATHER-IN-LAW

You know, Johan, when I was a boy in the Karoo, we used to fry ostrich eggs. You know how big they are?

JOHAN

(laughing)

As big as this table.

BEN

(to Father-in-law)

I think he deserves the parson's nose for that remark.

They laugh. Susan laughs. She does her best to compose. Suddenly... a KNOCK at the outside kitchen door. As Ben turns towards the door it opens and...

## INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

... Stanley erupts into the kitchen like a great black bull in white suit and white shoes. A scarlet tie is matched by a huge handkerchief hanging from his pocket. He is a little drunk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY  
(obviously surprised  
by this family  
scene)

Oh!

(then grinning and  
laughing thunderously)  
Merry Christmas, everyone!

There's deadly quiet -- not even the clink of a spoon --  
as the Du Toits look on aghast.

Slowly, as if in a dream, Ben rises and goes to Stanley  
who spots him.

STANLEY  
'Lanie'... compliments of the  
season, old mate.

BEN  
Stanley. What are you doing here?

Before Stanley answers, the Father-in-law gets up from his  
chair and goes to the kitchen.

FATHER-IN-LAW  
Who's this Kaffir, Ben?

STANLEY  
(shocked)  
Why don't you tell the Boer who  
this Kaffir is?

BEN  
Shut up, Stanley.  
(to Father-in-law)  
That's all right. I'll...

FATHER-IN-LAW  
(quivering with rage)  
A Kaffir calling me a Boer?

Chris hurries into the kitchen ready for a fight.

CHRIS  
Ben, did you hear that? Call the  
police, Ben!

BEN  
(to Father-in-law)  
Please, go to the table.  
(to Stanley)  
Stanley, wait outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

(fuming)

Who are these people, anyway?

BEN

Stanley, this is still my house.

CHRIS

Let me throw him out.

Ben steps between them and pushes Chris back into the dining room.

STANLEY

(laughing)

Let him try, leave him, Lanie.

BEN

(to Father-in-law)

Please leave me with him. I'll explain everything later.

FATHER-IN-LAW

Nothing has changed in this house.  
Mother, let's go!

He strides into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Susan sits with her eyes tight shut -- trying to shut out the horror of it all. As the Father-in-law goes into the living room, he pulls back his wife's chair and helps her to her feet.

FATHER-IN-LAW

(to his wife)

Let's leave this house. I've been sworn at by a Kaffir and Ben protects him.

SUZETTE

(following)

Chris!

Chris follows. Susan also. From the living room, she calls Johan who is left alone at the table, perplexed. Johan goes to his mother.

There's a general rush for the door and, without warning, the room is empty. Only the TIN ANGELS TINKLE merrily around their candles.

(CONTINUED)

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

STANLEY  
 (with cascading  
 laughter)  
 Lanie! Ever in your fucking life  
 seen such a stampede, hah?

BEN  
 (furious)  
 Maybe you think it's funny,  
 Stanley, but I don't. Do you  
 realize what you've done?  
 (he sighs deeply)  
 Come into the dining room.

Stanley follows Ben slowly, swaying.

STANLEY  
 (chuckling)  
 Jeez, who was that old cunt with  
 the potbelly and black suit, looks  
 like an undertaker?

INT. DINING-ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ben sits on his chair.

BEN  
 My father-in-law.  
 (deliberately)  
 M.P.

STANLEY  
 (sitting beside Ben)  
 You joking!  
 (he laughs)  
 Shit! I fucked it all up for you.  
 Sorry, man.

He laughs again. Ben cannot take it anymore.

BEN  
 Now pull yourself together,  
 Stanley. It's not funny at all!  
 What's the matter with you today?  
 You're drunk and making an idiot  
 of yourself. Say what you've come  
 to say. Otherwise, go to hell!

Stanley's laughter changes into a broad grin. He surveys the table and takes a bit of turkey from a plate and starts to eat it quietly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY  
 (after a pause)  
 Right. Dead right. Put the  
 Kaffir in his place.

Ben grabs him by the shoulders and starts to shake him.

BEN  
 Bloody hell! Stanley, what's  
 wrong with you?

Stanley shoves Ben off, and glares at him, bloodshot eyes  
 breathing heavily.

STANLEY  
 Emily is dead.

Ben stares at him in stunned disbelief.

BEN  
 Emily dead? How? When?

Stanley doesn't answer - he cries.

Ben grabs him by the shoulders and shakes him.

BEN  
 What happened, Stanley? Oh, my  
 God. Please tell me.

STANLEY  
 (between two sobs)  
 A broken heart. All they said.

Ben's hand still on Stanley's shoulder, he sits slowly  
 beside him, shaken, his face ravaged by the news.

BEN  
 God.

Through the window, he sees Suzette and Chris carrying  
 suitcases, back down the path to his in-laws' car;  
 Father-In-Law shepherding his wife and an ashen, dazed  
 Susan, helping them into the car.

As they leave see Johan leaning against the dining room  
 door, watching his father and Stanley.

INT. BRUWER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING

A very tense Ben is sitting on Professor Bruwer's chair.  
 Melanie is curled up on the old settee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

They don't know what you've got and you're a danger to them. I know there's a point of no return, but with our system, one has to plot the route with care.

BEN

That's the main reason for coming here tonight. Melanie, I need your help. Without Emily, we can't pursue our civil suit. The only thing left open to us is to expose them through the press, and the media here and abroad.

MELANIE

And your safety also, Ben, lies in the press.

(pause)

That way the world will know the brutality and power of our security services; here questions can be asked in Parliament. And the white public can appreciate the implications of the fascist laws of this country.

BEN

You know, Melanie, I'm discovering that the enemy is not in Soweto. The enemy is ourselves. Our bigotry, our laws, our system. We have our own fight and it's just beginning.

MELANIE

We better win before the blacks have won.

Ben and Melanie laugh.

BEN

Now, before going to the press, I have to have all the documents. I must have two vital affidavits; Dr. Hassiem's, he's detained and Jonathan's friend, Wellington has fled to Zambia.

MELANIE

Zambia? I'm going to Rhodesia... I can go to Zambia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN  
(surprised)  
Could you?

MELANIE  
And I can use my British passport.  
I know my way around Lusaka.

BEN  
That would be very useful.

Melanie jumps off the settee.

MELANIE  
This calls for a drink. Gin and  
tonic?

BEN  
Please.

As Melanie walks away, Ben looks at her with admiration and tenderness... her dress swinging around her legs... her bare feet soundless on the floor... the quiet grace of her movement.

On the way to the kitchen to get the drinks, Melanie goes to the record player. There's a record already on the turntable.

Suddenly as if rising from a dream, Ben murmurs:

BEN  
Melanie. Be careful.

MELANIE  
(as she plays the  
record and  
flippantly)  
Of course, Ben.

She goes into the kitchen.

As Melanie hums to herself to the BLUES MUSIC, in the kitchen, Ben walks over to the window and furtively glances out, to assure himself that nobody is watching. He takes then a book on a pile next to the settee and pages slowly through it.

Melanie returns with two glasses, still in her happy mood. She places Ben's glass on the side table next to the settee, takes the book from him and makes him sit down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

Cheers!

Ben raises his glass and touches it with hers.

BEN

Do be careful. I wouldn't want  
you hurt.

She reaches for his hand.

MELANIE

(with gentleness)

Don't worry.

BEN

And hurry back.

A new track starts on the RECORD.

MELANIE

(excited)

That's my favorite, Ben.

Jumping up and taking Ben's glass and placing it on the  
side table, she pulls him to his feet.

BEN

I can't dance.

MELANIE

Rugger player?

They laugh as they start to dance to the slow BLUES  
MUSIC. The laughing subsides as they hold each other  
closer. The dancing starts to lose the beat of the  
music. They look into each other's eyes and Ben envel-  
ops her tenderly in his arms hugging her as close as  
possible against him.

They stop dancing. Ben kisses her. A long, warm and  
tender kiss.

INT. MELANIE'S BEDROOM

Ben and Melanie in bed.

He is kissing her and fondling her passionately. During  
the love play, Ben reaches for the lightswitch of the  
bedside lamp, and knocks it over. They make love.

INT. LOCAL SUPERMARKET - MORNING

Ben is shopping at the local supermarket. He is pushing a trolley. As he places some groceries into his trolley, he notices a man standing near the check-out counters. The man is similar built as Jamie and similar hairstyle. He's reading a newspaper, his face concealed.

Ben drops the package he was inspecting, back on the shelf and pushes his trolley towards the man to try and see his face.

The man moves away. Ben follows him and has decided to confront him. Man picks up a pack of ham.

Ben is about to remonstrate with him.

BEN

Listen, you...

Just then a LADY and her daughter hurry to the man, pushing a trolley. Man turns to look at Ben.

WOMAN

Darling, put that down, it's not good for your cholesterol.

BEN

(to the man)

I'm sorry, my mistake.

He pushes his trolley away embarrassed.

EXT. SUZETTE'S HOUSE - SWIMMING POOL - DAY

The immaculate blue of the pool. Johan hurls himself out of the water, flops down at the side.

Suzette and Ben nearby, sitting in the sun.

Pieter at the barbecue, sizzling thick steaks.

A servant in white uniform soundlessly laying the table on the patio behind him.

The nanny with the baby in the shade.

BEN

-- How's she doing?

SUZETTE

Better... She's waiting for you to ask her to come home.

BEN

I doubt it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns to Ben, squinting in the sun.

SUZETTE  
Papa, I don't want to interfere...

BEN  
Then don't.

A pause.

SUZETTE  
I know this is going to sound  
strange coming from me... I mean  
I haven't exactly been supportive  
for the past months... I can't say  
I agree with what you've done but  
I respect you for what you are...

ON Johan listening.

SUZETTE  
I'm just... destroyed by what's  
happening to us as a family.

BEN  
Suzette...

SUZETTE  
(interrupts, squeezing  
his arm.)  
Please, Papa, for Mom's sake...  
For all of our sakes... Let's  
try and patch it up.

Ben smiles sadly at her... Suzette understands. Johan  
looks at them.

MIX TO:

EXT. SUZETTE'S HOUSE - LATER

Ben and Johan in the car. Suzette leans in through the  
driver's window.

SUZETTE  
Let me know if there's anything I  
can do to help.

BEN  
Thanks. I'm glad you understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUZETTE

I don't want to worry about you. That search, this vandalism, those shots... they're really after the evidence you've been accumulating ... Can I look after them for you, Papa?

Ben smiles.

BEN

You don't have to worry. They'll never find them.

SUZETTE

(smiling)

Where on earth do you keep them?

ON Johan looking at Suzette then at Ben with concern.

EXT. INDIAN TOWNSHIP - DAY

Ben has parked his car in a street corner of the upmarket section of the Asian township. He peers around him, then walks away.

Ben knocks at a door.

The door is opened cautiously by DR. HASSIEM, a tall, handsome Indian, aged 35 years. His clothes are casual but expensive. His six-year-old daughter, large dark eyes, is clinging to his leg. We recognize the little girl of the photograph near the telephone, from earlier.

BEN

Dr. Hassiem? I'm Ben Du Toit. I'm a friend of Gordon Ngubene's...

DR. HASSIEM

(raising his hands)

The inquest is over, Mr. Du Toit.

BEN

Not for me, Doctor. I've got to know what happened to Gordon.

Dr. Hassiem looks shaky, nervous.

DR. HASSIEM

I only came home yesterday. After three months in detention and now I'm banned and confined to the house. There's nothing I can do for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The little girl still clinging to his leg, watching Ben.

BEN

I know it may be painful to you,  
Doctor, but I need to talk to you.

DR. HASSIEM

How can I be sure you weren't  
actually sent by them?

BEN

Ask Emily. Doctor, we are in the  
process of filing a civil claim.  
And your help is vital.

Hassiem gives Ben a long look. He picks up his daughter  
and opens the door fully.

DR. HASSIEM

Come in.

Ben walks into the large living room, tastefully  
furnished.

DR. HASSIEM

Sit down.

Ben is still looking 'round at the opulence. He sits in  
a chair.

BEN

Thank you for inviting me in.

DR. HASSIEM

(the little girl on  
his knees)

What do you want to know?

BEN

Just one thing, Doctor. Why did  
you sign the State Pathologist's  
report on the autopsy if you drew  
up your own report as well?

DR. HASSIEM

(disconcerted)

What makes you think I signed Dr.  
Jansen's report.

BEN

The report produced in court had  
both your signatures on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. HASSIEM

Impossible.

BEN

What did you write in your report?

DR. HASSIEM

Dr. Jansen and I didn't disagree on the facts. After all we examined the same body in the same time. But just on the interpretation. For example, if Gordon, had really been hanged, the marks on his throat would have been concentrated on the front.

(he touches his  
larynx)

But in this case, the bruises were more obvious on the sides.

Pause. Ben nods, silent.

DR. HASSIEM

Something else really upset me, perhaps it isn't important.

BEN

What was it?

Dr. Hassiem puts down his daughter.

DR. HASSIEM

(leaning forward)

You see, through a misunderstanding I arrived at the morgue too early for the autopsy. There wasn't a soul around except a young African attendant. When I told him I'd come for the autopsy, he let me in. The body was on the table dressed. I noticed blood on the clothes.

BEN

And then?

DR. HASSIEM

As I examined the clothes more closely, a police-officer came in and said I wasn't allowed in the morgue before Dr. Jansen arrived. When I returned with Dr. Jansen, half an hour later, the body was naked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

(excited)

Doctor, we've already got the African attendant's affidavit. He testified that Capt. Stolz ordered him to burn the clothes.

(pause)

Did you mention what you said in your report?

DR. HASSIEM

Of course. I found it most odd.

BEN

Doctor Hassiem would you be prepared to put that in writing?

Dr. Hassiem thinks it over for a while then:

DR. HASSIEM

Please excuse me for a minute.

Ben watches him leave the room, the little girl following him. He gets up from the chair, walks to the window, glances through it, then steps to look at some family photographs on the mantelpiece. Amongst them a photograph of Dr. Hassiem before "Big Ben." Dr. Hassiem returns with a file, the daughter still following.

DR. HASSIEM

(opening the file)

This is my report. I only have one copy.

BEN

(astounded)

You have a copy of the report?

Hassiem grins.

DR. HASSIEM

I know how to hide things from the S.B., Mr. Du Toit.

Ben congratulates him by a deep laughter.

CUT TO:

INT. HASSIEM'S OFFICE - DAY

Ben and Dr. Hassiem working as a team, tape the type-written sheets of the report among a Rand Daily Mail newspaper pages at the back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On Dr. Hassiem's desk we recognize next to the phone, the little girl's photograph.

DR. HASSIEM

I hope you have as secure a place  
as I have.

BEN

(with an accomplice  
smile)

I think so.

INT. BUILDING IN CONSTRUCTION - LATE AFTERNOON

A multi-storied building half-built. Stanley standing on the fourth floor watching Ben's arrival.

Ben searches for Stanley who draws Ben's attention; beckons him up. Ben indicates they meet halfway.

He joins Stanley who's sitting on a pile of bricks.

STANLEY

(with expansive  
gesture)

Take a pew, man.

BEN

(sitting and  
excited)

We have it, Stanley!

STANLEY

Have what?

BEN

Hassiem's report. You know what that means, Stanley? Melanie arrives in two days. We'll have all the evidence. Everything is in place. We'll get them yet, especially Stolz.

STANLEY

That's fantastic, man.

Stanley produces from his jacket pocket a newspaper -- Rand Daily Mail. He opens it on a certain page with the picture of an African in police uniform, and hands it to Ben.

BEN

(shocked)

God! It's Johnson Seroke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

Late at night. A knock on the door. He opened and five shots, point-blank range. Face, chest, stomach.

BEN

(reading)

'A police spokesman when questioned said: "It's not the first time that a black member of the police has lost his life in the service of his country, fighting terrorism."

(folding paper in disgust)

Bloody bastards! They killed him. Stolz must have thought he knew too much.

STANLEY

What's the score? The nurse is detained; the mortuary attendant has disappeared; the police van driver who brought Jonathan to hospital is detained. Julius is in jail, and now Johnson dead.

BEN

Who's next on their secret list, I wonder? How much longer must the list grow of those who pay the price of our efforts to clear Gordon's name.

STANLEY

Hey! Are you going soft, Lanie? We must keep going even more so now. And for every bloke who's going to die of bloody natural causes in their hands. And for our children's future.

BEN

I know. If I can no longer believe that right is on my side, if I can no longer believe in imperative to go on, what will become of me, Stanley?

Ben looks at Johnson's picture again and shakes his head.

INT. BEN'S STUDY - DAY

A 8x10 black and white photograph on Ben's desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the photograph a naked man and a girl on a bed and a bedside lamp on its side. The man is Ben and the girl is Melanie.

Stolz in sports jacket, standing next to the desk is speaking... patronizing.

STOLZ

We're all made of flesh and blood, Mr. Du Toit -- we've all got our flaws. And if a man likes to sample the grass on the other side of the fence, well, that's his own business. But it would be unpleasant if people found out about it, especially if he's a teacher.

BEN

You mean, if I cooperate, if I stop digging, embarrassing you, threatening you... these photographs will disappear.

STOLZ

Let's just say I may be able to use my influence to make sure that a private indiscretion isn't used against you.

BEN

Suppose I refuse?

Stolz looks past Ben.

STOLZ

Is this your son?

Ben whirls around to see Johan at the door. He shoots, puts himself between the photograph and his son obviously surprised to find Capt. Stolz there.

BEN

Johan, leave us alone, please.

Johan walks away.

STOLZ

Don't you think this business has gone long enough?

Ben, struggling to maintain his composure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

That's for you people to decide.  
Isn't it? I won't be blackmailed,  
Captain -- not even by you.

STOLZ

Mind if I smoke?

Ben answers by a gesture.

STOLZ

(after lighting his  
cigarette)

Now be honest. Has all the  
evidence you've been collecting  
in connection with Gordon Ngubene  
brought you closer to the truth  
you are looking for?

BEN

Yes, I think so and there's more  
to come.

A pause.

STOLZ

I really hoped we could talk  
man-to-man.

BEN

It's not possible, Captain. Not  
between you and me.

STOLZ

It's high time, Mr. Du Toit, we  
allowed the dead to rest in peace.  
I'm offering you a chance.

BEN

You mean my very last chance?

STOLZ

One never knows. It may not be  
important to you, but we have to  
survive.

BEN

If we can only survive through  
murder and torture, then we have  
forfeited our right to exist.

Slowly and deliberately Stolz stubs out his cigarette  
in the ashtray.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOLZ

Is that your final answer?

BEN

Before you go. I'll tell this, Captain. I have a pretty good idea of what I will eventually uncover. I mean the truth. And I won't allow anyone or anything to come between me and that truth.

Ben walks up to the door to see him out. There's no response from Stolz. He calmly takes a small card out of his pocket and rests it on Ben's desk.

STOLZ

Here's my card -- my private line. If you should change your mind... Let's say before the end of the week?

BEN

Goodbye, Captain, and don't forget the photograph.

Stolz picks up the photograph and puts it into his briefcase.

STOLZ

(leaving)

Be careful, Mr. Du Toit. There are people who can make things very difficult for you.

BEN

They are wasting their time. They just can't hurt me anymore. I trust you'll give them the message, Captain.

He walks out. Ben follows him 'round the garage and watches him get into his car and drive away.

Johan joins his father.

JOHAN

(mischievous)

A brandy, Papa?

BEN

(smiling back, ruffling his hair)

A gin and tonic would be fine.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT - DAY

Ben and Johan are standing in the public enclosure on the top floor of the airport building. Ben is unshaved, he looks tired, but happy. There is the usual bustle of airport staff for the steps and luggage, two-thirds of the staff being black.

Passengers emerge from the plane Melanie amongst them. Some waving to friends and relatives on the public enclosure. Melanie stops momentarily and looks up at the enclosure. She sees Ben and Johan and waves at them. They wave back and Ben indicates they'll be waiting for her below. She walks off as they happily await her after the usual formalities.

INT. JAN SMUTS AIRPORT - DAY

Ben and Johan are waiting outside the arrivals exit. Several passengers stream out, some being met. Eventually there is a trickle of passengers. An INDIAN WOMAN is one of the last to come out. Ben approaches her.

BEN

Excuse me, I'm waiting for a lady with a red dress. Are there still, many people to come?

INDIAN WOMAN

I did see her. She was ahead of me. Maybe she's still in there.

BEN

Thank you.

Just then an OFFICIAL walks out of the door. Ben hurries to him.

BEN

Excuse me.

OFFICIAL

Can I help you?

BEN

I'm waiting for a passenger, Miss Bruwer. She's taking a rather long time to be cleared.

OFFICIAL

What did you say her name was?

BEN

Melanie Bruwer.

OFFICIAL

I'll go and check.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Official hurries back.

JOHAN

Is there any other exit, Papa?

BEN

No. They have to collect their luggage and pass through customs.

JOHAN

(joking)

Maybe she can't find her bag.

BEN

(smiling back)

That's possible.

Just then Stolz appears through the door. He slowly walks up to Ben and Johan. Ben becomes apprehensive.

STOLZ

Afternoon, Meneer Du Toit. Johan, isn't it?

Ruffling his hair; Johan pulling away and glaring at him.

BEN

What now, Captain?

STOLZ

Word came to me that you were asking after your very good friend, Miss Bruwer. You know, subversives come in all guises and can be very resourceful. Now let's take your friend, she has been using her privilege as a journalist to endanger the security of this country. But you know something else? She has been secretly holding a British passport. A South African passport and a British passport. Now you tell me, where is her patriotism? Her allegiance? The minister telexed to the immigration officers here declaring her an undesirable immigrant. So she is being put on the first available plane to London. This must be heart-breaking for you. Good afternoon, Meneer Du Toit, Johan.

Stolz walks back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN  
(quietly)  
Let's go home, Johan.

JOHAN  
I don't understand, Papa...

BEN  
(striding)  
I'll explain later.

They hurry out of the building in silence.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ben and Johan arriving at the house. An unsympathetic small crowd is there waiting... They react, murmuring in Afrikaans, watching them with hostility as Ben and Johan get out of the car and discover the chaos. The wreckage. The garage and Ben's study have been bombed. Johan leaves Ben and rushes to the house. The crowd starts to disperse.

The entire tools cupboard has been methodically ripped apart and the contents strewn on the garage floor. Everything is half-burnt... charred... Ben has sunk onto the stool in total defeat. There's silence.

Then Johan appears at the door. He hands Ben a large envelope -- in it, the file with all the papers. Ben looks up at Johan.

JOHAN  
(very proud)  
I took it out. Hide it in my  
secret place.

Ben grabs his son, hugs him and holds on for dear life.

BEN  
Thank you, son. You did a man's  
job.

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S STUDY - DAY

Ben is sitting at the kitchen table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Before him, scattered on the table: the affidavits he collected, the Hassiem report, cuttings of articles by Melanie in the Rand Daily Mail about Jonathan, newspaper pictures of Gordon, of Seroke, of himself with Emily, the half-burnt "peace painting" of Picasso, half-burnt photo of Ben with Suzette, a staff photograph, Ben amongst it, and a charred trophy.

Ben starts putting material relevant to his inquiries into a large brown envelope.

Johan enters kitchen with a large envelope and hands it to his father.

JOHAN

Somebody has dropped it through the door.

BEN

Thank you.

JOHAN

(leaving)

I'm nearly ready, Papa.

Ben examines the unstamped envelope with his address, with curiosity then opens it.

The contents is Wellington's affidavit.

BEN

(happy)

Wellington's affidavit!

He looks inside the envelope, expecting a personal note. There's none.

BEN

(to himself)

Good old Melanie!

CUT TO:

INT. JOHAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johan is packing his sport kit and few clothes into a bag.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Ben and Johan are walking towards the entrance, Johan wheeling his bike. Ben hugs his son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Johan gets on the bike and rides out.

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Ben is pouring coffee. He looks tired and tensed. The PHONE RINGS in the living room. He hurries to answer it. Who knows, could be Melanie from the airport!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ben picks up the phone. A menacing male voice says:

MALE (V.O.)  
Meneer du Toit, tonight we're  
coming to kill you.

Ben replaces the receiver obviously shaken. He becomes aware of FOOTSTEPS approaching the kitchen. Ben is terrified.

A KNOCK at the door and the door swings open: it's Stanley.

STANLEY  
(anxious)  
What's happened, man?

BEN  
(obviously still  
scared)  
It's you. It was a bomb.

STANLEY  
And the papers?

BEN  
Don't worry. Safe. Thanks to Johan. Incidentally, I have Wellington's affidavit. Melanie found him. She's being deported. The official reason is that she possessed a British passport. I don't know how she managed to smuggle the envelope to me.

STANLEY  
Man, it's all happening!

Stanley walks out, glances at the devastated study. He reenters the kitchen and slams on a chair. He takes a packet of "Lucky Strike" from his pocket and offers it to Ben

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANLEY

Like a joint?

BEN

No, thanks.

Stanley lights a cigarette and surveys the table. He picks up the half-burnt Picasso book, gives it a brief glance, and tosses it back on the table and starts to chuckle.

BEN

(surprised)

What's so funny?

STANLEY

(still chuckling)

They drop the bomb on you!

Ben walks up to him puts his hand on his shoulder. There's an understanding trace of a smile on his face.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Ben sitting in a cafe smoking his pipe. A waiter serves him a glass of beer, for which he pays.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHANNESBURG STREET - DAY

It's raining. Stanley driving in the rain on the same road as Johan.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE - PASSENGERS' POV FROM PARKED CAR - DAY

Suzette's sports car pulls up outside the cafe where Ben is waiting.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - DAY

Ben rises as Suzette joins him at his table. They kiss and she sits opposite him.

BEN

(looking at her  
straight in  
the eyes)

How are you, Suzette?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUZETTE  
(in a soft voice)  
Okay, Papa.

BEN  
Would you like a drink?

SUZETTE  
No, thanks.

Without taking his eyes off her, he takes a brown envelope from a chair and pushes it slowly towards the uncomfortable Suzette.

She picks up the envelope.

SUZETTE  
(rising)  
I have to go, Papa.

BEN  
(looking out)  
I know.

Suzette awkwardly kisses him on the cheek.

BEN  
Look after them.

Suzette looks at him for a moment and hurries to her car. As Suzette leaves, Ben turns back into the room, his eyes glassy with tears.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CAFE - DAY

Suzette gets into her car and drives off. The parked car follows. The two cars turn at the next corner.

EXT. QUIET STREET

The two cars approach following each other. As the second car overtakes, he draws Suzette's attention with his HORN and signals her to pull up.

As she gets out of her car holding the brown envelope, Capt. Stolz gets out of the other side.

Suzette walks over to the passenger: Colonel Viljoen.

VILJOEN  
(smiling)  
I see you got the goodies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUZETTE  
(happily)  
I was on my way to your office,  
Colonel.

STOLZ  
We thought we'd save you the  
trouble, Mrs. Klopper.

She hands Viljoen the envelope.

SUZETTE  
Here it is, Colonel.

VILJOEN  
Thank you. This country needs  
more people like you.

SUZETTE  
I must hurry, Colonel. Goodbye.

She drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPTAIN STOLZ'S CAR - DAY

Stolz gets into the car as Colonel Viljoen starts opening the brown envelope.

VILJOEN  
Now let's see what we've got.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAND DAILY MAIL BUILDING - DAY

Stanley is parked near the building. He's drumming on the steering wheel to the rhythm of AFRICAN MUSIC from his car RADIO.

CUT TO:

INT. STOLZ'S CAR - DAY

Viljoen has just finished opening the brown envelope. He pulls out the half-burnt Picasso book and Captain Stolz's card which he gave to Ben. On the card is written:

"APARTHEID MUST GO"  
TOT SIENS  
(goodbye)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben Du Toit

VILJOEN

The bastard!

CUT TO:

EXT. RAND DAILY MAIL BUILDING - DAY

Johan hurries out of the building and is about to get on his bike. His attention is drawn by Stanley's familiar HOOTER.

Johan turns, sees Stanley, and with a grin makes thumbs-up sign which happy Stanley returns with his large thumb. Johan cycles away followed by Stanley.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - DAY

Ben looks at his watch. He goes to the cash desk and pays. He walks slowly out of the cafe. Stands at the door to find his car keys; the rain has emptied the street. Ben turns up his collar and waits for a break in the traffic.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Captain Stolz alone in the car. He drives around the corner into the cafe street.

Just then, Ben is hurrying across the road to his car.

Captain Stolz sees him, accelerates and hits Ben, hurling him high into the air. And speeds away.

People rush to Ben's side... crowd quietly gathers.

FREEZE FRAME and...

SLOW DISSOLVE TO BLACK: