

MANICALAND MINE

written by

RJ Wattenhofer

RJ Wattenhofer Enterprises
Jungle Roar Films
rjwattenhofer.com
651.353.0101
St. Paul, MN - Seattle, WA

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"MANICALAND MINE"

FADE IN:

EXT. ZIMBABWE - SAVANNA - DAY

Lush African veldt sweeps along the countryside into the far distance. A rutted communal dirt road cuts a swath down the middle of the verdure. THIRTY BLACK MEN amble along the road toward the eastern horizon, each with pick or shovel.

SUPER: "MANICALAND PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE 2001"

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

A silver Mercedes convertible shoots in from the west.

EXT/INT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

DAVID LAURENT (early 30s), pale, lanky and clean-cut, navigates the convertible down the center of the narrow road. The pedestrians veer to the edge. He waves and smiles at a couple of them - dead stares.

EXT. SAVANNA - DAY

An enormous wooden cross looms in the distance, wreathed in the morning sun.

EXT. ROADSIDE ENCAMPMENT - DAY

The nine-meter tall cross stands just to the right of the road, planted in the earth.

A BLOOD-DRENCHED GOAT

hangs upside down from the top by a rope. A crowd of fifty seated BLACK MEN AND WOMEN surrounds the macabre crucifix. Several lean-tos and campfires dot the area.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Laurent slows, rubbernecks. The car creeps forward on the road.

EXT. ROADSIDE ENCAMPMENT - CONTINUOUS

His gaze locks on the pale blue eyes of YOUNG LADY JESUS (19), black, long hair in micro braids, draped in a scarlet frock. She is seated cross-legged in a meditation posture. Her eyes follow Laurent - a smile.

EXT/INT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent breaks eye contact and hits the gas. The convertible lunges forward, kicks up a cloud of dust. He gapes into the rearview mirror; the cross shrinks into the grass.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - DAY

A grandiose English Colonial House is the centerpiece of this immense commercial farm. A prodigious white barn and ten modest one-story homes are grouped to the north. A field of golden wheat blankets the northern countryside.

THREE SELF-PROPELLED SWATHERS

advance and slice through wheat stalks, wide paths of plant stubble left in their wake.

To the east, the mighty Sabi River bisects the farm and the eastern veldt.

To the south, the communal dirt road stretches across the savanna, broken for a short interval by a wooden bridge.

EXT. MERCEDES - DAY

Laurent slows and makes a left into the Silsbury Farm driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

He rounds the colonial's west wall, stops a meter from the front porch. Two husky, rope-muscled RHODESIAN RIDGEBACKS run over and jump up on the driver's side door.

Laurent honks the horn and steps out of the vehicle. He extends a hand to the dogs - hair bristles, low growls - he jerks it back.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

The covered porch extends the length of the north wall, encircled by a waist-high rail constructed of elaborate hand-carved balusters.

WILLIAM SILSBURY (late 50s) opens the screen door and steps onto the porch. He's a rough fellow: gray stubble, sharp-edged, tan skin leathered by a relentless African sun.

His dust covered Winton hat, venture shirt and field shorts are in stark contrast to Laurent's pressed slacks and virgin white button-down.

SILSBURY
Tinashe! Braiden! Heel!

Silsbury walks down the porch steps, claps his hands. The dogs saunter over, plant their rears in the dirt near his feet. Silsbury pats their heads.

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
Good boys.
(to Laurent)
Don't worry none, just suspicious
of strangers.

Silsbury and Laurent approach each other and shake hands.

SILSBURY
You must be David Laurent - William
Silsbury. How was the flight?

LAURENT
Fine, fine. Thank God for first
class...made the eighteen hours
somewhat bearable.

SILSBURY
(laughs)
Yeah, sounds rough. Anyway, I
called my partner when I saw you
pull in. Should be here soon.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury leads Laurent up the porch steps. A bench swing hangs by two chains from the rafters. A round table sits in front of it; two rocking chairs face each other on either side.

SILSBURY
Have a seat. I'll grab us beer.
(re: Laurent's watch)
That's a beaut. What is it?

LAURENT
This? It's a Rolex. A gift from
the wife.

SILSBURY
Best not flash that if you want to
keep it. The munts have sticky
fingers.

Silsbury disappears into the house. Laurent sits and
swings, takes in the view. Silsbury re-emerges with an open
cooler, slams it down on the tabletop and pops the caps off
a couple bottles.

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
Power goes out constantly. If
you're smart you keep reserve on
ice. Here.

Silsbury sits in a rocker, downs half the beer, wipes his
forehead with the bottle.

LAURENT
Ah, cheers.
(sips beer)
This is a beautiful country,
really.

SILSBURY
It can be.

LAURENT
I saw a bizarre sight about two or
three kilometers from here. There
was this girl...a large group of
black people sitting around a huge
cross. Hanging on top was, I
think, a dead goat. What is that?

SILSBURY
No idea. Local crazies up to their
usual shenanigans.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

A crud-encrusted white Range Rover turns into the Silsbury
Farm driveway from the east and stops beside the Mercedes.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
 (re: Range Rover)
 Here he is.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

RAY PRESCOTT (late 50s), grey beard, strong-jawed and weathered, emerges from the driver's side. RICHARD (20) exits from the passenger's side. Baby-faced, he is a softer, leaner version of his father. Both white men sport camouflage military fatigues and holstered pistols.

PRESCOTT
 (yells at Silsbury)
 What are you doing hiding on the porch, you zimbo bastard!

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Silisbury laughs, jumps up, cups hands to mouth and:

SILSBURY
 Oi, piss off, you wrinkled, old arsehole!

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Ridgebacks run over and greet the men. Prescott pets the dogs. The men stroll to the porch.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent stands, the two men climb the steps. Prescott and Silsbury clasp hands in an arm-wrestle grip and hug each other.

SILSBURY
 How's it, brother? This here's Mr. Laurent, the chap from London.

Laurent shakes his hand with a formal, business grip.

LAURENT
 A pleasure. And you are...?

PRESCOTT
 Ray Prescott. Good to know you.
 This is my boy, Richard.

LAURENT
 (extends hand)
 Hello, Richard. Nice meeting you.

RICHARD
 Yeah?

Richard frowns, eyes drill into the Brit. He gives Laurent a limp shake.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 Excuse me, Mr. Silsbury. Is Sunny inside?

SILSBURY
 (yells over shoulder)
 Sunny! Your boy's calling! Move your arse!

The three older men seat themselves. Prescott grabs a beer, opens the top with a swift slap to the table edge and downs most of it. Silsbury picks up a scroll off the floor, unrolls it next to the cooler.

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
 This is a map of the acreage. The trouble spot sits right dead center between our farms.

SUNNY SILSBURY (19) pushes the screen door open and steps onto the porch. Blonde and curvaceous, she exudes a raw sexuality. She hugs Richard and plants a long wet one on his eager lips.

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
 Sunny, this here's Mr. Laurent.
 He's staying with us for a spell.

LAURENT
 Good morning, Ms. Silsbury.

She gives Laurent a drawn out once-over, drinks him in; Richard observes this. A quick, dismissive wave at the Brit and she grabs Richard's hand, drags him into the house.

SILSBURY
 (sighs)
 And that was my daughter, Sunny.
 Anyhow, back to business.

PRESCOTT
 Billy Boy's spread and mine bump up here, along the Sabi River.
 (MORE)

PRESCOTT (CONT'D)
(runs finger along map)
That red area's where they're
buried.

LAURENT
Do you have a government map
confirming and detailing the
placements?

PRESCOTT
Hell, Boyo, they're there. I
placed pract'ly half them myself.

SILSBURY
No, no maps.

Laurent considers this. Silsbury and Prescott light
cigarettes, appraise the Brit.

LAURENT
A bit tougher, but doable. I'd
like to take a look at the field as
soon as possible.

PRESCOTT
(laughs)
Anxious to get the hell out of
here, eh?

LAURENT
Not in the least. Prior
obligations in London, I'm afraid.
I'll hand it off to my partner when
he arrives on Tuesday.

SILSBURY
We can hike over later today.

LAURENT
And the land itself - on the phone
you mentioned the bank?

SILSBURY
A formality. I meet with the
manager tomorrow.

PRESCOTT
Part of our grand plan. Once we're
unified and pick up that acreage,
you're sitting on what will be the
largest privately owned commercial
farm in Rhodesia.

(MORE)

PRESCOTT (CONT'D)

A great legacy to hand down to the
lovebirds and future generations,
eh?

SILSBURY

(broad smile)

Eh.

PRESCOTT

(raises beer)

To the future - salud.

The three men clink bottles.

SILSBURY

Aye, the future.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - DAY

Bush country motif: v-groove wood paneling, traditional artwork (bambalika statuettes, ironwood masks). The heads of several big game animals line the east wall above a rifle cabinet.

Richard is seated on the love seat, back rigid. Sunny is splayed out, bare feet in his lap, a devilish look on her face.

RICHARD

So, what's up with that English
prat staying here?

SUNNY

How do you mean?

RICHARD

What I mean is he seems dodgy. I
don't trust him.

SUNNY

I dunno. He seems nice enough.

RICHARD

Meaning?

SUNNY

Meaning nothing...just nice. Nice
face.

RICHARD

Nice face now?

Richard bolts up, paces, hands clench and unclench. Sunny gives him a coy look.

SUNNY

Yeah, in a puppy dog sort of way.
And he's very tall.

RICHARD

(about to lose it)
Tall, huh? You could tell that
from him sitting there?

SUNNY

Hmm. You're right. Maybe he just
seemed tall. Let me think about it
a minute.

RICHARD

Don't think about anything. Just
stay away from him.

Sunny stands and hugs Richard from behind. He turns to face her and she kisses him.

SUNNY

(smiles, tweaks
his nose)
Poor, crazy Richard. No worries,
darling. Don't you know I only have
eyes for you?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

A battered, blue Toyota sedan turns left into the Silsbury Farm driveway, crawls forward a few meters and stops.

INT. TOYOTA SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

HILLARY NCUBE (early 30s), black, cut physique, sits behind the wheel. DARLINGTON (early 20s) sits next him: small and thin, zero intensity, a watered-down version of his brother. Both men smoke cigarettes, eyes fixed on the white men.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury points to the sedan - the men turn and look. Prescott's eyes narrow, teeth grind.

PRESCOTT

What the hell is this then?

SILSBURY

A boil on my ass, is what it is.
The Ncube brothers...again.
Sniffing around here, good bloody
luck!

PRESCOTT

That's the bastard?

SILSBURY

Aye, in the flesh.

The two men march down the porch steps and over to the driveway; Laurent trails behind. They stop fifteen meters from the sedan, Prescott plants fists on hips.

PRESCOTT

Oi, piss off, you goddamned munts!

INT. TOYOTA SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Smoke drifts up from the cigarette perched on Ncube's bottom lip. His brother laughs and claps his hands.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Silisbury and Prescott move three meters forward and stop again. The stare-down continues. Prescott pulls his semi-auto pistol out, aims above the car and fires three shots. Laurent cringes.

EXT. TOYOTA SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle lurches out of the driveway in reverse, dirt and rock flung skyward. Ncube speeds west on the communal road, disappears behind a cloud of dust.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Sunny and Richard tear out the front doorway onto the porch.

SUNNY

Daddy! What's going on?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Prescott lowers the pistol. Laurent rubs his forehead.

LAURENT

What the hell, Prescott? You could have killed someone.

PRESCOTT

And...? I'll tell you, Mr. Laurent, you may find things are done a bit different out here in the bush then back in jolly old England. Best to mind that.

Laurent backs off, shakes his head. Silsbury stares down the road, dust wafts in the breeze.

SILSBURY

He'll be back. Ncube's a pit bull.

PRESCOTT

More like a damn mosquito.
(flicks fingers)
Zitt, zitt. Bloodsucker.

SILSBURY

No worries, all this nonsense will be over soon enough.

LAURENT

What nonsense? What does he want?

Silsbury spits in the dirt.

EXT. BUSH WAR MINEFIELD - DAY

One kilometer northeast of the Colonial House is the MINEFIELD. Thick Katambora grass covers the tranquil meadow, but nature can be deceptive: This is a death zone.

Silsbury, Prescott and Richard stand on the edge...

...and watch Laurent. The Brit is garbed in brown leather pants and jacket and wears a heavy orange flak vest. Metal detector in hand, he steps onto the field.

Two steps in and it beeps. He arcs the detector to the left, a beep. To the right, another beep. He backs out and rubs his chin.

LAURENT

This area's as saturated as the others.

PRESCOTT

We were thorough, if nothing else.

LAURENT

We're looking at a couple weeks after the disposal team arrives... maybe a month. I'll run a more extensive land survey tomorrow and get a better read on the situation.

RICHARD

What's the problem? Can't you just do it yourself?

Laurent studies Richard, senses something. Richard folds his arms and stares daggers.

LAURENT

I suppose I could, if I had a death wish. We need the dogs.

SILSBURY

Dogs?

LAURENT

Yes, German Shepherds. Handlers walk them through the field to sniff out gasses emitted by the landmines. Nothing beats the nose of a dog for finding unexploded ordnance and ERW. Once they're marked, we can start clearing.

Laurent sets the metal detector on the ground and removes his flak vest. He takes the rolled map from Silsbury and opens it.

LAURENT

What are these three black lines that cross the minefield area?

PRESCOTT

Come, I'll show you.

Prescott leads the group along the edge of the minefield twenty meters or so north and stops beside a pile of rocks welded together with concrete. He points to a second pile five meters farther up along the edge.

PRESCOTT (CONT'D)

See these rock piles? They're demarcation points...piled every ten meters across the minefield to the far eastern edge. Guides for the safety zones.

LAURENT
Safety zones...I see.

PRESCOTT
Aye, in case we ever needed to
cross over. You can walk down this
trail to the other side, no
worries. Just don't step off or...

Prescott mouths the word 'BOOM' and, wrists together, flicks his fingers skyward. He laughs and slaps Laurent on the shoulder. The Brit fakes a laugh.

SILSBURY
(points north)
There are two more trails farther
up.

LAURENT
Are there any recorded casualties
from this field?

SILSBURY
About once a year we get a
wandering animal blown to hell...
mostly antelope. This minefield's
been here thirty years and no one's
died...no one's ever had a reason
to cross.

LAURENT
Hopefully it stays that way until I
get my team in here. I think I've
seen enough for now.

SILSBURY
(hugs Laurent's shoulder)
Time for some Zim hospitality, Davy
Boy. Ever eaten Barbequed goat?

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - NIGHT

Oil lamps hang from the rafters and cast an eerie, surreal light across the porch.

Silbury and Laurent sit in the rocking chairs, an impressive Zimbabwean cuisine spread before them on the table. TWO BLACK WOMEN (20s), gorgeous in their tight western shorts and halter tops, scurry around and refresh drinks, flip meat on the barbeque grill.

Silbury devours his goat steak much like a jungle animal after a kill. Laurent cuts a micro bite off the massive

chunk of meat on his plate, places it in his mouth, chews slow and deliberate. He studies the two women.

LAURENT

So, is there a Mrs. Silsbury?

SILSBURY

Mrs. Silsbury passed ten years back.

LAURENT

I'm sorry.

SILSBURY

Eh, what are you going to do? She was a beauty in her day - a bit of a tart though, drove me crazy. She ended up fat and bitter, treated me like a work mule. Frankly, I couldn't stand the woman.

LAURENT

Sunny's mother, I presume?

SILSBURY

(drains whiskey,
grabs bottle)

You presume right. A peach of a girl most times, but got a lot of her mother in her. You want a bump?

LAURENT

No, thank you. I'll stick with beer.

SILSBURY

(laughs)

Not from around here, are you?

LAURENT

I know it's none of my business, but I wanted to ask you about those men from this afternoon.

SILSBURY

The Ncube brothers? Just political bullshite. Nothing to concern yourself with.

LAURENT

Prescott seems to think it is more than just bullshite.

SILSBURY

If you hadn't noticed, Ray has a short fuse. I once saw him beat a munt half to death for scratching his truck. Best to stay on his good side.

Laurent ponders this. He sips his beer and sits back.

LAURENT

Does this Ncube problem have anything to do with the land seizures?

SILSBURY

Can add two and two, huh? News gets around.

LAURENT

It's not exactly a secret. He wants your farm?

SILSBURY

Him and everybody else. Mugabe has a wild hair about booting out us white farmers...has for twenty years.

LAURENT

Aren't you concerned about this?

SILSBURY

Let 'em try. They've taken back a few smaller farms - gave them to the munts. Know what happened? The farms went to shite. We're too big. We harvested 4,500 tons of tobacco last year and this year we project to pull in 6,500 tons of wheat. Can't mess with success.

LAURENT

Okay, then...sounds like you have everything under control. And you meet with the bank tomorrow?

SILSBURY

In the morning. When that's settled you're free to work your magic.

LAURENT

Once the team arrives, they'll take over and I'll head home.

SILSBURY

You can come tomorrow if you want, I'll show you around.

Silsbury pushes his plate away and lights a cigarette.

LAURENT

What about Prescott? What's his story?

SILSBURY

Ray's what you might call an old school, dyed-in-the-wool Rhodie. What the munts call a 'Whenwe'- as in 'When we was in charge of this bloody country.'

LAURENT

Obviously ex-military.

SILSBURY

Who isn't? I was regular army during the Rhodesian Bush War. Ray was in the Selous Scouts...right brutal bastards, but they got the job done.

LAURENT

(careful)

In the end you lost, though.

Silsbury exhales a long, thin stream of smoke, stares at Laurent. Seconds pass, he shrugs and smiles.

SILSBURY

Yes, we lost. Damn communists stuck their nose in, turned it around for the ZANU-PF. But the past is the past. Adapt or die, I say.

LAURENT

And Prescott?

SILSBURY

Ray will always be Ray.

The two women hand the men fresh bottles of beer, plop into their laps and giggle. Laurent squirms, Silsbury laughs.

SILSBURY
Well, hello there. Care to sample
the local talent, Mr. Laurent?

LAURENT
(flashes wedding band)
Sorry, taken.

SILSBURY
More for me then.

Silsbury pushes the woman off and pops up. He grabs both women by their wrists and yanks them over to the doorway. He laughs, slaps their bottoms, and:

SILSBURY
See you in the morning, Davy Boy.
Hope we don't keep you up.

The trio disappear into the house, laughter emits from inside. Laurent, somber-faced, sips his beer and twirls the wedding ring with his thumb.

EXT. ROADSIDE ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Entranced black men and women in various stages of undress dance around an immense bonfire. A semi-circle of musicians sits in the grass. Some drum ngomas, others pluck mbiras - an eerie melody.

Blunts and hash pipes are passed around. Eyes rolled back, a few dancers convulse and spasm, scream in tongues.

Head bowed, Young Lady Jesus glides through the throng, withdrawn. Hands reach out and touch her scarlet frock. She steps onto the communal road. Pale blue eyes lock onto a brilliance in the distant savanna.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - NIGHT

Light cast from the homes of Silsbury Farm slice through the piceous African night sky, an oasis in the middle of the hostile veldt.

EXT. ROADSIDE ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Young Lady Jesus stares at the farm and smiles. She turns and sashays toward GAZI (30s), bald, barrel-chested, a fierce monster of a man.

He slides the frock off her shoulders and it drops to the ground. Welled, twisted scars lace her back, the remnants of flesh melted by fire long ago. She grabs Gazi by the neck, pulls her body close, matches his rhythm, hips sway together.

THREE SHIRTLESS MEN

squeeze in and form a circle of intertwined flesh around the girl. They kiss her back, arms and neck. She closes her eyes, arches her head back and soaks up the adulation.

Darlington sits near the musicians, smokes a blunt, watches the girl.

EXT. MUTARE - ZIMBABWE NATIONAL BANK - DAY

A faded rose, this three-story timeworn stone structure sits on the corner of a major downtown intersection. Other even less opulent architecture neighbor it.

Several uniformed black ZIM NATIONAL ARMY TROOPS are interspersed along the streets, each armed with a British SA80 assault rifle.

INT. ZIM NATIONAL BANK - DAY

A typical western first-world style bank, modern and sterile. A giant banner hangs on a cracked wall and exhibits President Mugabe's grim face with the ZANU-PF slogan "100% EMPOWERMENT" emblazoned on the bottom. A handful of customers stand in the two teller lines.

Silsbury and Laurent sit on a wooden bench near the entrance. Laurent leans against the stone wall, arms folded. Silsbury, stares at the floor, taps his foot.

LAURENT

Hung over?

SILSBURY

(laughs)

As a wise man once said: 'You can't get hung over if you don't stop drinking.' But yeah, a bit. Just want this business over.

LAURENT

Nothing to worry about, correct?

SILSBURY

This is Zimbabwe, Friend.

(beat)

Something's going on. It's not
like Tandira to keep me waiting.

EXT/INT. ZIM NATIONAL BANK - DAY

A grimy Zim police cruiser screeches to a stop outside the glass doors of the front entrance. Laurent and Silsbury watch two black POLICE OFFICERS exit the vehicle and enter the bank.

They hustle past the two white men; one turns his head and nods in their direction, whispers to his partner and gives them a cold look.

The policemen march across the bank, knock on the wooden door in the far corner and disappear into the room.

SILSBURY

What the hell...?

INT. ZIM NATIONAL BANK - DAY

The policemen re-emerge from the office, followed by NICK TANDIRA (60s), a distinguished black gentleman. Silsbury and Laurent stand.

The officers and Tandira walk over and stop before the two men. Tandira, twitchy and nervous, shakes Silsbury's hand.

TANDIRA

Good morning, Mr. Silsbury.
Please, come.

Laurent and Silsbury give each other a look, then follow the officers and Tandira into the office.

INT. ZIM NATIONAL BANK/TANDIRA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Tandira seats himself in a plush leather chair behind a massive oak desk. Laurent and Silsbury sit in either of the two wooden chairs that face him. The officers plant themselves by the door and maintain a military 'at ease' stance.

Silsbury swivels his head a couple times to eye the policemen.

SILSBURY

What's this then, Tandira? Why the coppers?

TANDIRA

(tents fingers, flustered)
I'll get right down to it, Mr. Silsbury. There's been a slight problem with the loan.

SILSBURY

'Slight problem?'

Tandira picks a folded sheet of paper off the desktop and hands it to Silsbury; he snatches it, opens it.

TANDIRA

Actually, big problem.

SILSBURY

(reads from paper)
"Pursuant to the 1992 Land Acquisition Act..." blah, blah, blah "...forty-five days to vacate your property."
(crumples paper in hand)
What is this bullshite, Tandira?

Tandira spots one of the policemen slide his baton from his belt loop. He waves his hand at the cop, shakes his head. Silsbury turns to look, then back to Tandira.

TANDIRA

That paper is your Section Seven eviction notice. As you read yourself, the government is asking you to vacate your farmland.

SILSBURY

(stands, points finger)
This is complete bollocks, Tandira. How long've I banked here? How much money have I put in your pocket over the years? We had a deal, you goddamned munt!

TANDIRA

(stands)
I am truly sorry, Mr. Silsbury. It is out of my hands...nothing I can do. Sorry, my friend.

Silsbury, bites his lip, eyes bulge, makes a fist and half punches at Tandira, pulls it back. The elder black man

flinches. Silsbury turns to leave, twirls and repeats the fake punch. He shakes his finger at Tandira, then at the cops.

SILSBURY
 (restrained)
 This isn't over. Eh? Eh? This
 isn't over. I'll be back.

Laurent grabs Silsbury's shirtsleeve and jerks his head towards the door a couple times. Silsbury yanks the door open and storms out, trailed by Laurent.

EXT. MUTARE - ZIMBABWE NATIONAL BANK - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury shoves the glass front door open and stomps out onto the sidewalk. A sheepish Laurent follows.

A couple of black Zim soldiers turn to watch them. Laurent grabs Silsbury by the shoulders and steers him toward their pickup truck.

LAURENT
 Get 'hold of yourself, Silsbury.

SILSBURY
 (turns, faces him)
 Did you hear what that bastard
 said? Give a munt a taste of
 power...

LAURENT
 This really isn't any of my
 business. Frankly, I think it
 would be best if I left and came
 back when things are sorted out.
 I think I can still catch a flight
 home today if we hurry back.

SILSBURY
 I'm not finished yet. Come on.

EXT. MUTARE - DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Located across the street and three blocks over from the Zim National Bank is this decrepit government building. Jagged cracks lightning-strike up the battered red brick walls, results of a sunken foundation.

A chipped and faded wooden sign near the entrance bears the words "DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX."

In the grass, a blue porta potty leans against the wall. Near it, two white BUSINESSMEN and a black ZIM SOLDIER face a stand of bushes and urinate.

Silsbury, on a mission, traverses over from the bank on foot, Laurent double-times it to keep up with him. They pass by the men and enter the complex building.

INT. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Brown water stains cover the walls, a mighty stench permeates the air.

A rotund white COUNTER WOMAN, thick-lensed glasses balanced on oily nose, flips through papers.

LAURENT
(pinches nostrils shut)
Good God, what is that awful smell?

COUNTER WOMAN
Terrible, ain't it? Sewer's been backed up for a month. If you think this is bad, you should take a whiff of the prison next door.

SILSBURY
Yeah, yeah. Look, I need to see Manyati. Be a doll and run get him.

COUNTER WOMAN
(cold, opens log book)
Do you have an appointment?

SILSBURY
(glances at watch)
Yeah, for nine-thirty.

COUNTER WOMAN
No, you don't.

SILSBURY
Goddammit, I need to see him now. It's an urgent matter.

The counter woman stares at him. Silsbury drags his palms down his face, calms.

SILSBURY
Alright, alright. When's the soonest I can see him?

COUNTER WOMAN
 (looks in book)
 Tomorrow...nine-thirty.

SILSBURY
 Put me down. William Silsbury. S-I-L...

COUNTER WOMAN
 (writes)
 Yes, yes, I have it.

SILSBURY
 We'll be back - and I will see him tomorrow.

Silsbury wraps the counter with his knuckles, exits the building followed by Laurent.

EXT. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Laurent walks alongside Silsbury.

LAURENT
 Look, I understand things are going badly and you'll probably get it figured out, but there's really no point in my hanging around here.

SILSBURY
 (stops and faces him)
 What's the goddamned hurry?
 (beat)
 Bear with me until tomorrow, okay? Go sightseeing or something. I'll get this all straightened out and things will be back on track.

LAURENT
 Sightseeing? You have armed soldiers in the streets, police ready to bash heads in and a group of weirdo neighbors praying to a dead goat. Do you think I'm really interested in sightseeing? I just want to go home. Call me later when you're actually ready to go.

SILSBURY
 Listen, I need this done pronto and can't afford any delays. Give me one more day, okay?

LAURENT

What's the rush? It's been thirty years - what's another month or two?

SILSBURY

Come on, Davy Boy, one more day?

Laurent places his hands on his hips and stares into Silsbury's eyes.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SABI RIVER - DAY

Silsbury is hunkered near the riverbank, lost in thought. He pokes the sand with his finger. Laurent lingers a couple meters back, smokes a cigarette and watches. Silsbury points and:

SILSBURY

See that, Davy Boy? Where the wet sand meets the dry land?

Laurent crouches near Silsbury - eight centimeters of wet sand border the water.

LAURENT

Yes, I see - it's dropped. Is that normal?

SILSBURY

Is anything ever normal in Zim?
No, that is not normal.

The men stand; Silsbury wipes his hands on his khakis. He lights a cigarette, studies the activity on the communal road.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The trickle of men with picks and shovels from yesterday has turned into a wave; hundreds of dusty BLACK MEN trek east along the narrow road and over the wooden bridge. Voices and laughter carry across the savanna.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SABI RIVER - CONTINUOUS

SILSBURY

(re: men on road)

Those idiots there are what's causing this.

LAURENT

How so?

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

An unbroken wall of black bodies passes in front of the driveway; several point and laugh at the white men.

SILSBURY (V.O.)

They're wanna-be gold and diamond miners. Some prat has spread the rumor that King Solomon's Mine has been discovered...again.

EXT. MINE EXCAVATION AREA - 25 KMS SOUTH OF WEDZA - DAY

The riverbank and nearby land are chewed up and pitted; silt pours into the river. Numerous deep trenches criss-cross and intersect, each filled with feverish BLACK MINERS who dig for hidden riches.

SILSBURY (V.O.)

Silt from the excavation site is filling the river, choking it.

A furious miner jabs another in the back. He shoves back and the first man beats him down with his shovel. Other miners look on - some horrified, most indifferent.

SILSBURY (V.O.)

Starving, desperate men...madness.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SABI RIVER - DAY

Silisbury spits in the water.

SILSBURY

Without crop irrigation, know what I got? Fuck-all, that's what!

Laurent shrugs and stubs out his cigarette.

SUNNY (O.S.)

There you are, Daddy.

Sunny skips through the tall grass over to Silisbury, gives him a big hug and kiss.

SUNNY

I was wondering where you boys went
off to.

(smiles at Laurent)

Mr. Laurent.

Laurent nods. Sunny squeezes Silsbury's jowls in a
'visiting auntie clamp.' In baby voice:

SUNNY

Ahhh, what's the matter, Mr.
Grumpy? Why so grumpy-wumpy?

SILSBURY

(passive, irritated)

Not now, Sunny.

Sunny tickles his stomach, neck and back. Silsbury curls
his arms and jerks.

SILSBURY

Stop it. Stop it now. Stop it,
goddammit!

Sunny backs off, flicks her tongue at her father and winks.
Laurent cocks an eyebrow; this is weird.

Silsbury stomps off through the grass, heads toward the
Colonial Home. A coquettish Sunny slips over next to
Laurent and hooks his arm.

SUNNY

We really haven't had a chance to
talk since you got here. Walk with
me.

LAURENT

(resigned)

Okay, sure.

The couple strolls through the grass toward the Colonial
House, Sunny pinched to his side. She runs a hand through
her hair and throws her head back, yells:

SUNNY

Oh God!

LAURENT

(alarmed)

What is it?

SUNNY

It's this heat. God, its simply unbearable. You know, I need to take three or four baths a day to cool off. I just love the feel of cold water against my naked skin. How about you? Do you like baths, or maybe you're a cold shower man?

LAURENT

I prefer a fan and iced tea, actually. My wife enjoys baths.

SUNNY

Oooh, you're married. That's so interesting.

LAURENT

Is it?

SUNNY

So you're from London? How exciting. I've never been anywhere. Do you miss home?

LAURENT

More and more each minute.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Laurent and Sunny round the southwest corner of the Colonial House. Prescott's Range Rover is parked near the Mercedes. Richard stands on the porch; one hand rests on his pistol holster.

Sunny laughs and slaps Laurent's wrist. The Brit sees Richard and breaks the arm hook. Richard marches down the stairs and over to the pair. He pokes Laurent in the chest and:

RICHARD

I knew it! What the hell you think you're doing with my fiancé?

LAURENT

I have no idea.

RICHARD

Smartarse, eh? How 'bout I knock all those pretty pearlies out of your mouth, eh? You best stay away from her if you know what's good for you.

LAURENT

You're absolutely right. She's all yours, Friend. Good luck.

Laurent steps around him and heads to the porch. Richard grabs Laurent by the shirt collar and twists him around.

RICHARD

Oi, where you going, bigmouth? I'm not done here.

LAURENT

Listen, you stupid git. There's nothing going on. Now kindly back off.

Richard slugs him in the jaw; Laurent's knees buckle and he drops to the dirt. Sunny is ecstatic: two men fighting over her!

Silsbury tears out the front door and down the steps. He grabs the boy by the arm, twirls him and boots him in the ass.

SILSBURY

Get your arse home, Richard. Go on, git!

RICHARD

(whimpers)

He started it, Mr. Silsbury. He was all over Sunny, feelin' her up and such.

Silsbury makes like he's going to charge Richard. The boy darts into the Range Rover, slams it into reverse and squeals out of the driveway. Sunny stands with a finger in her mouth, all smiles.

Silsbury bends down and pulls a dazed Laurent to his feet. Laurent rubs his jaw and:

LAURENT

Good God, he hit me. I've never been punched before. Is he insane?

SILSBURY

Just a love-struck pup. No worries.

LAURENT

Love-struck pup? He's a damn maniac.

SILSBURY
 (to Sunny)
 And you, Missy - get inside before
 I tan your hide.

Sunny skips by the men, eyes Laurent, oblivious. She enters the front door and disappears inside.

SILSBURY
 (yells)
 And stay away from Mr. Laurent,
 hear?

LAURENT
 I've had about all the Zim
 hospitality I can stomach. I'm
 going to check into the Crowne
 Plaza in Harare and then head home
 in the morning. Good luck with
 all...this.

SILSBURY
 Nonsense. She'll behave herself -
 she knows I'm serious. Besides,
 you gave me your word as an English
 gentleman you'd hang around for a
 bit.

LAURENT
 I just don't want any more bloody
 drama.

SILSBURY
 I understand, believe me. How do
 you think I feel being the father
 of the town bint? Short of
 clamping her thighs closed there's
 not much I can do. Praise Jesus
 she'll be married off soon - that
 whelp can deal with her then.

Laurent shakes his head.

EXT/INT. MUTARE - DIST. ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX - DAY

Silbury and Laurent enter the complex. The Counter Woman hangs up the phone. The air is foul.

SILSBURY
 Remember me? I have a nine-thirty
 with Manyati.

COUNTER WOMAN

Follow me, please.

Silsbury and Laurent (once again pinches nose) round the counter and trail after the woman past several cubicles filled with office workers. They stop before a cheap pine door and she knocks. Laughter emits from the room, then:

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Come in.

INT. DIST. ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX/OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The trio enter the bright room. Silsbury is startled to see Hillary Ncube seated in a cushioned armchair near the right wall, a smile stretched across his face.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR MANYATI (50s), black, overweight, sits behind a large metal desk; he chuckles, rolls an unlit cigar between his teeth.

THREE BLACK POLICEMEN stand along the left wall.

MANYATI

Very good, Hillary. One to remember.

(to Silsbury)

Good morning, Mr. Silsbury. You know Hillary Ncube?

The counter woman exits, shuts the door behind her. Silsbury, ashen, stares at Ncube.

NCUBE

Yeah, he knows me.

MANYATI

(to Laurent)

And you are, sir...?

LAURENT

David Laurent, sir. Visiting from London.

MANYATI

Ah, Englishman. Did you know I went to Oxford? I lived many years there. Good times.

LAURENT

I didn't know that.

Laurent looks to Silsbury for help. Silsbury continues a dead stare at Ncube.

SILSBURY

What's this rubbish doing here? I came to discuss private business with you.

MANYATI

Your business is Hillary's business.

SILSBURY

Meaning what? See here, I need to talk to you about this bloody eviction notice I received. They want me out in forty-five days. What does this have to do with him?

MANYATI

What is done cannot be undone, I'm afraid, Mr. Silsbury. You have six weeks to get your affairs in order then you must vacate the farm. In the meantime, Hillary and his brother Darlington will take up residence on the property.

SILSBURY

Bloody hell, you say! They set one foot in my house and I'll blow their goddamned heads off.

MANYATI

Relax, Mr. Silsbury. No one is forcing you from your house...yet. The Ncubes will live in one of your employee homes for now. This will help for a smooth transition.

SILSBURY

For who? All my homes are occupied with families. You want me to just toss someone out?

MANYATI

It is either that or they live with you...it is your choice.

SILSBURY

Have you lost your goddamned mind, Manyati? Why are you doing this?

NCUBE

Are you going to let him speak to
you like that, Uncle?

Ncube smiles and wiggles his eyebrows at the farmer.
Silsbury's jaw drops. He calms, folds his arms, nods.

SILSBURY

Ah, I get it now. This your nephew
then?

MANYATI

(stands)

These officers will accompany
Hillary and Darlington to their new
home...you won't cause any problems
will you, Mr. Silsbury?

SILSBURY

This isn't even close to being
finished. I'll take it to the High
Court. We'll see what they say
about your little arrangement.

MANYATI

Do as you please. If you make it
to the courthouse today I'm sure
they can get you on the calendar...
in five or six months. Now, I must
ask you all to leave - I have other
matters to attend to.

Laurent opens the door and shoots out - he's done with it
all. Silsbury follows, yells:

SILSBURY

This is absolute bollocks! Fucking
insanity!

EXT. MUTARE - DIST. ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Laurent and Silsbury stand on the sidewalk a few meters from
the entrance, smoke and watch the doorway. A few meters
away, Darlington is propped against Ncube's blue Toyota. He
eyes the two men.

Ncube exits the complex, followed by the three cops. Ncube
and Darlington hop into the Toyota and take off.

They pass the two white men, Ncube flashes a toothy grin and
Darlington jab-jabs his fingers at them, laughs. The cops
climb into a dirty police cruiser and follow. Silsbury
tosses his cigarette.

SILSBURY

Let's go.

The two men board the pickup truck, head down the road.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - DAY

Ncube's Toyota pulls into the Silsbury Farm driveway, followed by the police cruiser and then Silsbury's pickup truck.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Toyota stops to the left of the Range Rover. The police cruiser rolls to a stop behind it. Silsbury steers around them and parks next to the Mercedes.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Prescott, Richard and Sunny are kicked-back on the porch, beers in hand. The three leap to their feet and head to the driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury and Laurent walk over to Prescott. The cops hang back, whisper and eye the scout; they know what he's about.

PRESCOTT

What's all this, Billy Boy?
What're those bastards doing here?

LAURENT

Be cool, Prescott.

Ncube pops the trunk and he and Darlington pull out two green military seabags, throw them over their shoulders. The two brothers amble over to group of white folks.

Ncube lowers his shades, scopes Sunny; She steps into Richard, looks away. He pulls her close, grinds his teeth.

NCUBE

Miss Silsbury. Ummmm.
(to Silsbury)
So, where to?

SILSBURY
 Wherever you feel comfortable and
 happy, Ncube. My home is your
 home. How about an ice-cold
 Zambezi first? Maybe I could help
 you move your furniture?

NCUBE
 (smiles, pats duffle)
 This is it, Boss. We travel light.

PRESCOTT
 (loses it, yells)
 What the bloody hell is going on?

SILSBURY
 The powers-that-be have decreed
 that this floppy arse is the proud
 new owner of Silsbury Farm. How do
 you like them apples?

PRESCOTT
 The hell you say?
 (To Ncube)
 You are a dead fucking Munt.

With a much-practiced hand, Prescott draws a
 KA-BAR KNIFE and spins it in his palm -

- grabs Ncube's shirtfront and holds the blade in a reverse
 grip edge out to the black man's jugular. Darlington drops
 his bag and scurries behind the Mercedes.

The black cops whip out their revolvers...

...and draw a bead on Prescott. They edge around the cars
 and stop two meters from the enraged Selous Scout, panic in
 their eyes.

Laurent raises his arms and steps up to Prescott, mouth to
 ear, hisses:

LAURENT
 Don't be a fool - put it down.

Prescott: Stone solid, eyes fixed on Ncube's shades.
 Laurent places a hand on Prescott's knife arm.

LAURENT
 Look, if you kill him, they kill
 you and they still win...live to
 fight another day, Prescott.

Prescott falters, blinks. Ncube smirks, seems not to care which way it goes. Prescott lowers the knife, shoves Ncube back and releases him. He charges over to the Range Rover.

PRESCOTT

Richard - now!

Richard kisses Sunny on the cheek and runs over to the vehicle. The Range Rover circles around and speeds out the driveway, a group of miners brushed on its way out.

Laurent bends over, hands on knees - a long exhale. Ncube points to the nearest worker house, just north of the Colonial House. It is an inelaborate, one story wooden abode covered in chipped white paint.

NCUBE

I'll take that one, Boss.

(to Sunny)

I'll be seeing you later.

Ncube saunters off, followed by his brother, a stupid grin plastered on his mug. Silsbury and Sunny look at each other; she hugs herself, averts her eyes.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

CHARLES SENGWA (20s), black, built like a bull, sets a basket of sundries down near a mammoth stack of furniture and household goods piled beside the Colonial House porch steps.

His pretty teen-aged wife, VIMBAI, hovers in the shade of the porch, tentative. JEFFREY (5) and EDMORE (3) are clamped to her legs, half-hidden by the flower print dress that flows down her slim body.

Silsbury leans against a porch pillar, smokes and stares off into the distance. Sengwa wipes his brow and picks up a half-full bottle of beer, takes a swig.

SENGWA

This will be okay, Mr. Silsbury?
We could find shelter elsewhere,
even camp outside. It is not bad
weather.

SILSBURY

Don't be daft, Sengwa...You can't
live outside like bloody cattle.
There's a spare room on the top

(MORE)

SILSBURY (CONT'D)
 floor. You can use the kitchen.
 Of course, I expect Vimbai to
 prepare all our meals.

SENGWA
 Of course, sir. She is an
 excellent cook, you will be
 pleased. Again, we are very
 thankful, Mr. Silsbury.

SILSBURY
 Yeah, yeah. Just keep the pups
 under control. I don't want them
 tearing up the place.

Silsbury looks over at the boys, who hide their faces. He
 stubs out his cigarette and walks over to Laurent's
 Mercedes.

EXT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury leans over, places his hands on the hood of the
 convertible and droops his chin to his chest.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent pushes the screen door open with his back and steps
 onto the porch, a suitcase and portfolio in his hands. He
 hobbles down the steps, avoids eye contact with the family.

EXT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent pushes a button on his key ring; the trunk beeps and
 pops open. Luggage tossed in, he slams the trunk down and
 climbs into the drivers seat; the engine roars to life.

Silsbury steps over to the driver's side door, leans over,
 forearms on edge.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

SILSBURY
 A royal mess, eh?
 (beat)
 All right, have a good trip. Say
 'hi' to the Queen for me. Cheers.
 (stands, then
 under breath-)
 Prat.

LAURENT

A royal mess? More like a colossal waste of my time. What do I get for my troubles - how did you put it? Oh, yeah - 'fuck-all.'

SILSBURY

Easy now, Laurent.

LAURENT

I'm going to give you some advice, Silsbury. Take whatever money you have saved and get the hell out of Zimbabwe. This country is pure insanity...stay here, it'll take you down with it.

SILSBURY

You've got that right, but I can't leave...This is my home...I'm part of it and it's part of me.

(slaps door, walks away)

Take care, Davy Boy.

INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent slips a pair of aviator sunglasses on his face and reverses the vehicle down the driveway.

EXT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent backs out onto the communal road, black miners scuttle out of his way.

INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

He jams the gearshift into first, works up to fourth, and flies west down the road past the black bodies lined on either side.

The air feels good on his face and he smiles for the first time in days. He slides an alternative rock CD into the player and cranks it.

LAURENT

Goodbye, Zimbabwe, you bitch!

EXT. WEST ROADBLOCK - DAY

Two kilometres west of Silsbury Farm, near Young Lady Jesus'

encampment, a beat-to-shit yellow Volvo sits cockeyed in the middle of the road.

A couple dozen black ZANU-PF WAR VETERANS mill about the car. They sport a wide array of faded camouflage uniforms and carry iron pipes and machetes. They are in various stages of intoxication, which range from plastered to pissed out of their minds.

EXT/INT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent sits bolt upright, stops ten meters in front of the Volvo and flips the stereo off. A few miners bypass the roadblock, stare straight ahead down the road.

EXT. WEST ROADBLOCK - CONTINUOUS

WARDOG CHIUNDA (40s), tall and wiry, has badass written all over him. He two-steps over to the car, slaps a machete in his palm.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Wardog leans his elbows on the convertibles door and dangles the rusty, dry-blood spattered blade in Laurent's lap. The Brit gets a good look at the nasty, scar-covered dent in the grizzled soldier's forehead.

Wardog plucks the aviators off Laurent's nose, stares into his eyes, reads him. Satisfied, he slides the glasses on his own face, gives a wide, yellow-toothed grin. Laurent gets a double-dose of putrid breath and body door; his nose wrinkles.

LAURENT

Yes, ahhhhh, good day.

Wardog stands and walks to the rear of the Mercedes, appraises the auto. He whistles, men laugh.

LAURENT

I'm just visiting from England and on my way back to England. What I'm saying is, I flew here from London and now I'm on my way back to Harare to catch a flight - to England. So, if you don't mind...

The War Veteran strolls to the front of the vehicle, the machete tip screeches along the rear quarter panel and driver's side door.

WAR VETERAN #1 (O.S.)
 (laughs, yells)
 I hope you have rental insurance,
 Pinkie!

Laurent rubs his palms into his slacks. Wardog walks back, stops by the rear tire. The Brit turns his head a couple times to look back, then faces forward, eyes the soldier in the side mirror.

WAR VETERAN #2 (O.S.)
 Careful, Wardog, I think he's
 getting angry!

LAURENT
 Look, chaps, I'm not a Rhodie, I'm
 English - British, you know. I
 have no beef with you, so if you
 would be so kind as to let me pass,
 I would sincerely appreciate it.

Wardog unzips his fly, shoots a stream of urine from his beer-filled bladder onto the door, then lifts and sprays Laurent in the back of the head.

LAURENT
 Good God...?
 (shocked, turns, gets
 it in the chest)
 What the fuck?

Laurent slams the stick into reverse, tears away. Metal pipes and rocks whiz at him, shatter the windshield safety glass, dent the hood and smash a headlight.

EXT/INT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent blasts backwards fifty meters, jerks the wheel left; the vehicle cuts to the side of the road.

He heads east, back towards Silsbury Farm. The speedometer hits 90 kph, the car barrels down the road. Laurent lays on the horn, people scatter.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury watches the Mercedes shoot by the driveway and over the bridge, scratches his head.

EXT/INT. ROAD/MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

LAURENT
Holy shit! Holy shit!

Laurent drives east five kilometers - slams on the brakes and stops. He scopes the roadblock two hundred meters up the road.

EXT. EAST ROADBLOCK - DAY

A large, fresh-cut tree lies across the road. Five or six WAR VETERANS are seated across it; they pass a bottle and laugh. Ten or so others are seated in the dirt.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

He slaps the steering wheel with both hands and circles the car around, heads back west.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Laurent cuts the driveway corner hard, spins out, dirt flies. He hits the gas, hurtles down the driveway and stops five centimeters from the porch steps.

The Brit jumps up and over the door and races to a wooden barrel filled with water.

EXT. WATER BARREL - CONTINUOUS

He dips a bucket into the barrel, fills it and dumps it over his head. Silsbury walks over.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Sunny is bent over, a duck picks at a piece of bread in her extended hand. The Ridgebacks leap up and follow her over to Laurent.

EXT. WATER BARREL - CONTINUOUS

Two, three, four buckets later, and Laurent is satisfied he's washed the piss off himself.

SILSBURY
What happened?

SUNNY

Why in the world are you dumping
water on your head? Are you hot?

Laurent is in no mood. He glares at them, drops the
bucket.

LAURENT

(yells)

I was just assaulted! You need to
call the army, police, whoever. I
need to get the hell out of here!

SILSBURY

Calm down, Laurent. What happened?

EXT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Laurent stomps back over to the car, pops the trunk with his
electronic key chain. He throws the keys in the front seat
and walks to the rear.

LAURENT

Bloody savage animals.
Unbelievable.

The Brit yanks the suitcase out of the trunk and stomps over
to the porch; Silsbury and Sunny follow. She grins,
ecstatic.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

SUNNY

Did you change your mind and decide
to stay with us longer?

LAURENT

Well, I can't exactly get to the
airport with the road blocked by a
gang of grotty hooligans, now can
I?

SILSBURY

The road's blocked in both directions?

LAURENT

Yes, yes.

SILSBURY

(subdued, worried)

Word's out about the section seven notice...they cut us off. What'd they look like?

LAURENT

Black, okay? They were a big bunch of black chaps - does that help?

(calms a bit)

Older, faded uniforms, they carried machetes. Pissed out of their minds.

SILSBURY

The War Veterans - dammit.

LAURENT

What?

SILSBURY

The Rhodesian Bush War, what they call the 'Second Chimurenga.' After it ended they got nowhere to go, nothing to do.

LAURENT

So what? They hang around roads getting drunk and accosting innocent travelers?

SILSBURY

Something like that. The economy is shite, no jobs. This whole business of reclaiming the white farmland has riled 'em up - given them new purpose...and now they know about us.

LAURENT

I want you to get on the phone and report this - this outrage. Do you understand me?

SILSBURY

Yeah, good luck. The police are worthless.

LAURENT

Where does that leave us? Me?

SILSBURY

Same as before...shite out of luck.

SUNNY

Oh, Daddy, always so negative.

LAURENT

I'll tell you, I've had it with all those...munts' bullshite. One way or another I'm on my way back to London.

Silsbury cocks his head, gives Laurent an odd look. The Ridgebacks walk over to Laurent, wag their tails. Sunny rubs his arm.

SUNNY

Looks like Tinashe and Braiden are warming up to you...
(smiles, stares into his eyes)
...as are we all.

Laurent turns and climbs the steps.

SUNNY

What are you going to do?

LAURENT

Take a very long, long hot shower then call my wife.

Sunny giggles and claps her hands. Silsbury shakes his head, walks back towards the barn.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

This second-floor room has an Old English flavor: cedar v-groove wall paneling, a few potted flowers, a couple of framed landscapes - quaint and homey.

The lunette windows in the north and east walls allow for a magnificent view of the countryside and Sabi River.

Towel wrapped around his waste, Laurent sits on the four poster bed and picks the landline phone up off the inn table. He dials and:

LAURENT

Hi, Honey, it's me.

MRS. LAURENT (filtered)

Hi, Sweetheart. How's Africa?

INT. LONDON - LAURENT TOWNHOUSE/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A modest kitchen: hung pots and pans, wine rack, small wooden table with a half finished jigsaw puzzle on it.

MRS. LAURENT (late 20s), long blonde hair and full lips, sits at the table. She is beautiful - and pregnant. She flips through a baby magazine, the cordless propped under her chin.

LAURENT (filtered)
That's why I'm calling I...

MRS. LAURENT
Is it late there? What time is it?
It's 11a.m. here.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

LAURENT
We're only two hours ahead. The flight is almost directly south.

MRS. LAURENT
I can never keep that stuff straight. Oh, Great news! Ian called about the house in Chelsea.

LAURENT
Oh yes? And...?

MRS. LAURENT
The seller accepted our offer. He wants to close quickly and Ian said if we're serious we need to move fast - other offers, you know. I need you home soon as possible to iron out the details. I really, really want this house, Honey.

LAURENT
That's great news. Listen, let's talk about it when I get there. I'm going to be here a bit longer than anticipated, I'm afraid.

MRS. LAURENT
Oh, poo. You and your work. When will you be home?

LAURENT
I'm not sure. Things have gone a bit haywire. I'll call you later when I know for certain.

MRS. LAURENT
 You sound funny, David. Is everything okay?

LAURENT
 Yes, I'm fine...just had an excruciatingly long day.

MRS. LAURENT
 Okay. I miss you so much.
 (pats tummy)
 Just make sure you're back in time for the big day. I'd be devastated if you missed that. One week...can you believe it?

LAURENT
 I know, it's finally here...I want you to know I love you very, very much, Carol.

MRS. LAURENT
 I know that, silly, I love you too.
 (beat)
 Are you still feeling in control of it?

END INTERCUT

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laurent looks at the open bottle of whiskey and half-filled glass on the table near the east window.

LAURENT
 Yes, no problem, Honey. I'm handling it okay.

MRS. LAURENT (filtered)
 Good. I know how lonely you get on these trips...your mind starts playing tricks. Just be mindful, is all I ask.

LAURENT
 Of course.

MRS. LAURENT (filtered)
 Just remember, I'll be think...

LAURENT
 Hello? Hello?

Laurent taps the hookbox button. The phone is dead.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - NCUBE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hidden in darkness, Ncube leans against the front door frame, arms crossed, cigarette in lips. His eyes are fixed on the Colonial House: Light pours from the windows, the interior rooms illuminated.

Sunny approaches from the barn. She carries an oil lamp; it bobs like a beacon, cuts through the African night.

NCUBE

Eh, what are you up to, Sunny? Out for a stroll?

Sunny halts, turns. She lifts the lamp and highlights the concealed black man.

SUNNY

What do you want, Hillary?

NCUBE

Nothing. Everything. What do you want?

SUNNY

Goodnight, Hillary.

NCUBE

(pulls out blunt
from shirt)
Swaziland's best. Toke?

Sunny bites her lip, looks around, weighs it and then shuffles over to Ncube. She lowers the flame in the oil lamp and sets it down at their feet. Ncube lights the blunt, fills his lungs. He hands it off to her.

NCUBE

(exhales smoke
over her head)
How you been, Girl?

SUNNY

(holds it in, exhales)
Goddamn, that's sweet. I dunno...
good, I guess.

NCUBE

What happened? Haven't seen you
around the spot lately...missed
you.

SUNNY

Don't play stupid...you know exactly what happened. After that last little scene at the club...it scared me. Not really safe for a pinkie, know what I mean?

NCUBE

(looks away)

Yeah, heard that was bad. Never known you to be scared though...or play it safe. That's what I like about you.

SUNNY

Yeah, well, things change. Besides, I'm engaged now, can you believe it?

(flashes ring in his face)

Getting married in a month.

NCUBE

(annoyed)

To that little pissant? Why him?

SUNNY

He's sweet...in his own way. And he can take care of me. Daddy and Ray have big plans for our future.

He rubs his cheek, regains composure - cool and detached.

NCUBE

Like you said, 'Things change.'
You better wake up, girl. Change is coming...you can smell it in the air.

SUNNY

(laughs)

Shit, Hillary, all I smell is grass.

Ncube lightens, chuckles. He presses his body against the woman, arms encircle her waist. She feigns resistance, but lifts her face when he leans in - a passionate kiss.

SUNNY

(pulls back)

No, Hillary, I can't.

NCUBE

(kneads her buttocks)

Can't...but will. I want you, girl.

He pulls her in tight, kisses her hard, rough. The lamp is kicked over, flame extinguished. She moans. He back-kicks the door open, drags her inside the house and slams the door shut.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/NORTHEAST CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Darlington emerges from the shadows of the Colonial House, his face illuminated by the bay window light. He stares at the Ncube house for a few seconds, then disappears back into the darkness.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Laurent, unshaven, stands and stares out the east window, the morning sun peeks over the horizon. Whiskey glass in hand, he sways a bit, well on his way to smashed. He downs two fingers, refills the glass from the three-quarter empty bottle on the sill.

EXT. SABI RIVER - EAST SIDE - DAY

Richard lies on his stomach in the tall grass atop a small hill near the riverbank - jungle camouflage, face streaked with black and green paint - invisible.

He peers through the scope of a bipod mounted Barrett M82 fifty-calibre sniper rifle: A little boy with a big, dangerous toy.

RICHARD'S POV:

He swings the crosshairs across the east wall of the barn and lingers on Sunny, who sits in the shade, drinks a beer.

Now over to the Colonial, slow and steady up the east wall, stops on the second floor bedroom window. Laurent is visible from the waist up. He locks the crosshairs on Laurent's ear and...

BACK TO SCENE

...PULLS THE TRIGGER. Click - nothing. Richard jerks his head back.

RICHARD
Goddammit to hell! Fuck!

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Laurent grabs the neck of the bottle, stumbles over to the bed and plops his ass down on the mattress.

He stares at the phone for a few seconds and then picks up the handset. He holds the receiver to his ear, taps the hookbox button a few times - dead. He rolls the handset in his lap, chugs from the bottle.

EXT. SABI RIVER - EAST SIDE - DAY

Richard yanks the rifle's bolt up and back, digs in his jacket pocket. He pulls out a mondo-sized BMG cartridge, chambers it, pushes the bolt forward with a clank and squints into the scope.

RICHARD'S POV:

Past the crosshairs the window is empty.

RICHARD
Fucking hell!

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Laurent replaces the handset on the hookbox, pulls himself up - a momentous task. He staggers back to the window, collapses against the frame, drains the bottle down his throat.

BANG!

- Windowpane explodes -

- West wall blasts apart -

- Bottle flies, shatters -

Laurent screams, twirls and drops to his ass, grabs his right bicep - fire rockets from arm to brain, face white in shock.

EXT. SABI RIVER - EAST SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Richard looks up and then puts his eye back to the scope.

RICHARD'S POV:

No movement in the window.

BACK TO SCENE

He climbs to his feet, drags the massive rifle up with him. His crotch is soaked.

RICHARD
Bollocks...

One last look at the Colonial House and then he turns and heads east into the savanna.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Confused, terrified, Laurent drags his ass through the broken glass over to the door. His sleeve is soaked with blood, face lacerated. He screams:

LAURENT
Someone! Help me!

EXT. BARN - DAY

LAURENT (V.O.)
Oh God, please help me!

Silsbury and Sunny haul ass from the barn over to the Colonial House.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury and Sunny race down the hallway, fling open Laurent's bedroom door, crack him in the head. The Brit flops over and they enter the room.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sunny drops to her knees beside Laurent. Silsbury scans the room.

SUNNY
Oh my God, David. What happened?
Are you hurt?

LAURENT
Yes, my arm! See the blood? See?
See? Something hit it - something
- there was a loud bang and
something hit me!

SILSBURY

Let me look.

Silisbury crouches and peels Laurent's fingers off of the wound. After a moment he pulls his hand back and stands up.

SILSBURY

Nasty gash in your muscle. Sunny,
run downstairs, grab the kit.

Sunny springs up and darts out the door.

LAURENT

I need a hospital! Drive me to the
hospital, dammit!

SILSBURY

How? The road's blocked in both
directions - we're on our own.
Don't worry, you'll be fine.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

Arm bandaged, Laurent reclines on the bed. Sunny is seated next to him, presses a cold compress against his forehead. Silsbury inspects the splintered one-meter diameter hole in the west wall, points and:

SILSBURY

See here? Bullet done that. Big
one too.

LAURENT

A bullet hole? What do you mean...
someone shot at me?

SILSBURY

Or towards the house, who knows.

SUNNY

You think it was a hunter, Daddy?

SILSBURY

Judging from the size of that hole,
he would have to been hunting
Woolly Mammoths.

SUNNY

There aren't any Woolly Mammoths,
Daddy.

Silisbury walks over to the shattered window frame, gazes out across the river.

SILSBURY
That's right, there aren't.

LAURENT
Who the hell would want to kill
me...?

Laurent looks up at Sunny, searches her face. She rolls her eyes and looks away. His jaw drops, then:

LAURENT (CONT'D)
That bloody well does it!

Laurent sits up, grimaces, and gets to his feet. He walks over the window, points outside.

LAURENT (CONT'D)
That squirrely little shite! I
want him arrested, you hear me?

SILSBURY
(considers this)
I'll talk to Ray. We'll sort it
out.

Silbury walks to the open doorway. Laurent tails after him.

LAURENT
There is nothing to sort out. That
boy is a maniac and needs to be
locked up.

SILSBURY
(turns)
No one is getting locked up. If I
say it'll be sorted out, it'll be
sorted out.

Silbury exits the room. Laurent looks over at Sunny. She shrugs and smiles.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - NIGHT

The porch is well lit by oil lamps strung from the rafters. Silsbury, Laurent and Sunny are seated around the table, the men in the rocking chairs.

A half empty bottle of whiskey sits on the table. The mood is sullen; everyone smokes and drinks, each in their own world.

From the north, Ncube and Darlington appear out of the darkness. Ncube lights a cigarette, looks to the sky.

NCUBE

Nice night. The stars are fantastic. Amazing how much clearer things get once you're in the country.

SILSBURY

Glad you're so happy.

NCUBE

Don't be like that, Boss. We're practically family now.

Ncube smiles at Sunny. She looks away, drains her glass. Laurent picks up on the exchange, analyzes Sunny's sour face. A few moments silence ensues.

LAURENT

So, what now...Ncube is it?

NCUBE

(studies him a moment)

That's right, and this is my bro, Darlington. And your name again?

LAURENT

David Laurent. Just passing through.

NCUBE

Mr. Laurent, the Englishman. I suppose I should thank you for saving my life.

LAURENT

That's one way to look at it. Another way would be to say I was trying to save my own arse. You, frankly I couldn't give two shites about.

Ncube and Darlington laugh; he delivers a light punch to his big brother's arm.

NCUBE

I like that. An honest Englishman, who knew?

LAURENT

What would you know about Englishmen?

NCUBE

Enough, Mr. Laurent. You look at me like some ignorant country munt ...I see it in your eyes. Maybe I am, maybe not. I smell your fear and hate. You smell like your friend there.

LAURENT

And you two smell like the backend of a horse, so I guess that makes us even.

Sunny giggles. Darlington and Ncube laugh. He shakes his head, jabs his finger at Laurent.

NCUBE

I like you, English.

LAURENT

Not that I really care, but what exactly do you plan to do with this farm?

NCUBE

I have big plans, Mr. Laurent. Burley NC Nine.

LAURENT

I don't know what that means.

NCUBE

A new American tobacco hybrid. Twenty percent higher yield per hectare than the Golden Leaf Mr. Silsbury plants.

SILSBURY

The hell you say!

NCUBE

Imagine a field of beautiful tobacco as far as the eye can see. It'll really be something.

LAURENT

I see you've thought this through.

NCUBE

Mr. Laurent, I've spent my whole life thinking...now I'm doing. Returning to my family's land is the only thing that matters to me in this world.

SILSBURY

Family's land? My family's been here for six bloody generations, you cocksucking munt!

NCUBE

And mine six hundred generations before that.

Ncube and Darlington turn and head north into the darkness.

NCUBE (O.S.)

Don't forget to look at the stars. Goodnight.

SILSBURY

Cocksuckers!

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

South of the Colonial House, the black farm worker families, four dozen men, women and children in all, crowd the driveway; a nervous titter fills the air.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A half a kilometer west, Young Lady Jesus and her followers parade up the road toward Silsbury Farm. The girl is right up front, chin held high, a slight smile on her face.

To her right walks Gazi, to her left, Darlington. In the rear, two men pull a wooden cart covered with a tarp. The mood is festive: The horde skip and twirl, hands raised to the heavens.

The miners give the mob a wide berth, move off the road until they have passed.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Sengwa hovers over his wife and children, pulls them in close. The boys are terrified, cower behind their mother's dress. Sengwa steers the unit toward the Colonial House.

SENGWA

Quickly, into the house.

They run up the porch steps and scramble through the front door.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury and Laurent are seated in leather recliners, whiskey glasses in hand. The boys and Vimbai scurry past and disappear up the stairs.

SENGWA

We got big problems, Mr. Silsbury.
Come, sir.

Silsbury rolls his eyes (what now?) and stands up. Laurent follows the two men out to the porch.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

The men step over to the porch rail, look towards the driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Women hustle a crowd of children north towards the worker homes. The farm-worker men remain huddled in the driveway, tense, wary.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

SILSBURY

What the hell's going on, Sengwa?

SENGWA

(points)

Look!

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The gala procession rounds the corner from the west and spills onto the driveway. Young Lady Jesus, with her erect, graceful carriage and scarlet frock, draws all eyes.

The farm-worker men drift to either side of the driveway; the cortege flows through them and on toward the barn.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Young Lady Jesus nears the porch, Laurent's and her eyes meet; the beautiful pale blue eyes beckon him in. He snaps his head to the side, looks back; she has moved on, the moment over.

LAURENT
Sengwa, who is that?

SENGWA
That is Young Lady Jesus and the
Blessed Host. Very, very bad, Mr.
Laurent.

SILSBURY
I don't care if it's Jesus Christ
himself and all the bloody saints
in heaven - What the hell does she
think she's doing?

SENGWA
She is going home, Mr. Silsbury.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ncube steps out of the house, stands and watches the chaos,
arms folded. He looks over to the porch, eyes on Laurent.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent feels Ncube's stare, looks over at the black man.
Each scrutinizes the other, a moment of implicit
communication. They break, look back at the mob.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Sunny stands frozen by the barn door, transfixed by the
young messiah. With Young Lady Jesus in the lead, the crowd
filters through the doorway. Darlington claps his hands,
walks backwards to the east.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Darlington backs into Ncube, who shoves him hard. Little
brother turns, confused.

NCUBE
What's this then?

DARLINGTON
What?

NCUBE
That hole between your arsecheeks.
(MORE)

NCUBE (CONT'D)

(beat)

What do you think? That crowd of
stoned gits you dragged here.

DARLINGTON

(hurt)

They're my friends, Hillary.
That's Young Lady Jesus and the
Blessed Host.

NCUBE

That's great, Darlington - what are
they doing here?

DARLINGTON

Well, the Blessed Host needed
somewhere to go, and I might have
mentioned they could stay here,
since you are the Boss Man now.

NCUBE

(claps hands)

Good job, Darlington. Brilliant.
Really well done.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent watches the brothers.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MOS:

Ncube jabs a finger into Darlington's chest, says something,
then turns and storms off into his house. Darlington raises
arms over his head, exasperated.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

SENGWA

What do we do, Mr. Silsbury?

Silsbury, face blank and much too calm, turns and enters the
house. Seconds later, he kicks the screen door open,
marches down the porch steps, rifle in hand.

He stops in the driveway, snaps a clip into the rifle,
slides the bolt and:

BANG!

Wood splinters above the barn doorway. The crowd freezes, looks over. Young Lady Jesus and Gazi step through the mob back outside.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

A row of jagged holes appear above the doorway, chunks of wood rain down.

Laurent jumps down the porch steps, grabs the rifle barrel.

LAURENT

Give it! Give it - that's right,
give it to me!

He wrestles the gun away from the farmer. Young Lady Jesus nods and smiles at the Brit, walks back into the barn followed by the Blessed Host. Laurent grips the rifle, stares after her.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SABI RIVER - DAY

Silsbury stands in the middle of the river, whiskey bottle in hand. Knee-high water flows around him, the surface littered with hundreds of dead Barb, Catfish and Tigerfish. The water level is several centimeters lower than the day before.

He kicks the water, throws the bottle at a stone, shatters it.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

Laurent, now in t-shirt and khaki shorts, sits slouched in the rocker, bare feet up on the table, whiskey glass balanced on his belly. Congealed, dried blood covers his bandage.

Two whiskey bottles, one empty and one on its way, sit on the table. He observes the activity at the barn:

EXT. BARN - DAY

...several folks drag in wood and tools stolen from the farm, a couple others lead four cows through the doorway. Another paints archaic, malignant symbols in red paint on the white outer wall.

A 10-meter tall beamed cross, made of fresh raw timbers, leans against the east barn wall. Darlington and three other men sit in a circle near the attached cow pen, pass a blunt and laugh.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Ncube wanders over to the porch. He turns and watches the activity for a few moments then:

NCUBE

Any whiskey to spare, English?

Laurent slow-bobs his head in the man's direction. He lifts a bare foot and pushes the whiskey bottle across the table.

Ncube climbs the steps and sits in the other rocking chair. He pours, drains the glass, pours another.

NCUBE

You look like shite.

LAURENT

Thank you.

NCUBE

To be expected, I 'spose. Things haven't gone exactly as planned for you, eh?

LAURENT

You either, it seems.

NCUBE

I have my idiot brother to thank for that. He turned those fanatics onto this place.

LAURENT

Sengwa said she's going home. Is this her home?

NCUBE

I've heard many stories and rumors ...that she's a witch from Sierra Leone, kicked out by the government. She may be an excommunicated Catholic nun from Mozambique, or even a shaman from Tanzania. Wherever she's from, I tell you, it's not here.

LAURENT

Who are these people? What's she to them?

To them she is the messiah, the embodiment of Jesus Christ.

LAURENT

But that is insane. How can they not see this?

NCUBE

People see what they want to see. Whether she is Jesus Christ or not is immaterial. They see her as Jesus and so she is. She tells them evil is good, good is evil, and so it is.

LAURENT

I don't believe that. Everyone has a moral compass...everyone.

NCUBE

(laughs)

I would love to hear you explain moral compass to a Zimbabwean. The closest thing in the Shona language is 'tsika', which means 'good manners.' Speaking with your mouth full and killing your neighbour both defy tsika. You see? To us there is no difference, and so you get this...

He jerks his thumb at the barn. Laurent sits up and pours another glass of whiskey. He leans his elbows on the table and:

LAURENT

You understand the difference.

NCUBE

I understand what's good for me.

LAURENT

People always have a choice. You have a choice.

NCUBE

Do they? Did you have choice in all this, English? Options give you choices.

(MORE)

NCUBE (CONT'D)

When they strip you of everything
you love and leave you with
nothing, come back to me and talk
about choices.

Hands in pants pockets, Silsbury rounds the northeast corner
of the house and stops by the porch, head bowed.

SILSBURY

It's over...the river's dead.

NCUBE

(concerned)

What do you mean?

Silsbury ascends the steps, grabs the whiskey bottle and
plops down in the swing.

SILSBURY

The miners...they separate the gold
from ore with cyanide and mercury.
The water is poisoned.

NCUBE

What about the crops?

SILSBURY

(slumps)

What am I supposed to do now? We
can't irrigate with contaminated
water...

EXT. BARN/COW PEN - CONTINUOUS

Sengwa jogs around the north side of the pen and over to the
porch.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

SENGWA

(breathless)

Mr. Silsbury, we have big problems.

SILSBURY

Sengwa, if you give me any more bad
news I swear I'm going to crack
your skull with a pipe.

NCUBE

What is it, Charles?

SENGWA

The evil ones have stolen the pump
from the borehole!

LAURENT

What does that mean?

NCUBE

No water.

LAURENT

What about the house? Is water
pumped from Mutare?

NCUBE

This isn't London, Mr. Laurent. It
all comes from the borehole.

LAURENT

So now what? Can we get another
pump?

SILSBURY

How? With what? Even if I had
1,400 Pounds to buy another one
- which I don't - we can't get
into the city.

NCUBE

(studies Silsbury)

Don't tell me you're broke, Boss?

SILSBURY

Everything is riding on this wheat
harvest and land deal.

LAURENT

So what do we do for water?

SILSBURY

If we stop bathing, cleaning,
ration the drinking water for the
workers and livestock - the tank
should hold enough for...two days.

LAURENT

Two days? Good God, man, what are
we supposed to do after that?

SILSBURY

(defeated)

I don't know, I don't know. I
can't do this anymore.

Laurent reads the farmer's face and is disturbed by what he sees.

LAURENT

What's really going on, Silsbury?

SILSBURY

(sighs, points to stomach)
Sick...Cancer. If I'm lucky, maybe two months, prob'ly less. Wanted to pull it all together for Sunny and Richard before I left. I tried, goddammit, I tried...I tried.

The three men drink in silence.

EXT. BARN/COW PEN - DAY

Sunny is seated on a hay bale, blunt in hand. Darlington sits to her left, one of the Blessed Host men to her right. Two other men sit cross-legged on the ground in front of them.

The man on the right plays with a curl in her blonde hair; she swats his hand away, laughs.

Ncube saunters over from his house, hands in pockets.

NCUBE

(to Sunny)
Come on, let's go.

SUNNY

Go away, Hillary. I'm busy.

DARLINGTON

C'mon, bro. She's having fun.

Ncube lifts his shades, gives his brother a cold, dead look. Darlington's smile fades, he turns away. Ncube looks around the group of men who, one-by-one, avert their eyes. He lowers his shades.

NCUBE

You heard me.

Sunny stands up and stomps off towards Ncube's house.

SUNNY

You are such a poop.

Ncube waits until they are out of sight of the men, then grabs her arm, finger in her face.

NCUBE

I want you to - pay attention now -
I want you to stay away from them.
They're trouble, understand? Do
you understand?

SUNNY

Sure, Hillary. Whatever you say.

NCUBE

(warms, runs fingers
through her hair)
I care about you girl, don't you
know that?

EXT. BARN - DAY

Ten meters east of the barn, several of the Blessed Host pile lumber and logs, a massive bonfire in the works. The painter carries on, most of the front of the barn now covered in red symbols.

Several of the farm-worker men have joined Darlington's social circle near the cow pen.

Once again, Sunny sits beside Darlington, her hand on his knee. Smoke from hash pipes and blunts fills the hot air. On a hay bale sits a boom box; club music pulses.

Laurent, cigarette in lips, unsteady, approaches the barn door. He and Darlington lock eyes for a moment. The black man nods and smiles. Laurent steps through the barn doorway, catches his balance on the frame.

INT. BARN - DAY

TEN DAIRY COWS HANG UPSIDE DOWN

from the rafters by ropes. They are dressed, the blood collected in metal washtubs underneath the carcasses.

Men stack hay bales, junk and various farm implements in the southeast corner. Women cook over small fires.

Young Lady Jesus, Gazi and five other men sit on a blanket of loose straw in the northwest corner. They pass around a hash pipe; laughter fills the air.

Laurent, tentative, steels himself and walks over.

LAURENT
(slight slur)
Excuse me, Miss. I have an urgent
matter to discuss with you.

The laughter cuts short, blank stares. Young Lady Jesus raises her palm skyward. The seated men rise and walk away; Gazi brushes Laurent, glares at him. The Brit darts his eyes away.

Laurent sits down cross-legged before her, an arms length between them. She gives him a broad smile, gazes into his eyes.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
What can I do for you, Mr. Laurent?

LAURENT
I need to talk to you about the
water pump you...borrowed.

Young Lady Jesus lifts the hash pipe to her lips, draws a deep breath and closes her eyes.

LAURENT
Look, we need the water pump.
Without it, no one has fresh water
...you included.

Laurent eyes one of the cooking fires, frowns.

LAURENT (CONT'D)
Do you think that's safe? This
place is as dry as a tinderbox.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
Would you care for a hit?

LAURENT
Thank you, but no. I don't do
drugs.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
But you drink? Is that where you
draw your line?

LAURENT
Yes, that's right.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Drawing a line is so...confining.
 Take one hit and then we discuss
 your water pump.

She extends the pipe to him. Laurent debates with himself for a moment, and then takes the pipe from her. He sucks the harsh smoke into his lungs - violent coughs.

LAURENT
 Good God, that is terrible!

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 I'm afraid I can't help you with
 the water pump, Mr. Laurent.

LAURENT
 Why not?

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 It's not here anymore.

LAURENT
 Where is it?

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Gone.

LAURENT
 Well, that's bloody helpful. Get
 it back.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 I'm afraid it's been sold.

Laurent stares at the wall over her shoulder, spaces out - the hashish takes hold. She laughs and:

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Are you okay, Mr. Laurent?

LAURENT
 Call me David. Damn, that's
 something.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Would you like another hit?

Laurent shrugs, takes the pipe, inhales. This time it goes down a little smoother. He laughs; she smiles and nods.

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Fear not about your water.
 Tomorrow, all your strife will be
 over.

LAURENT
 How's that? What do you mean?

YOUNG LADY JESUS
 Have another hit, David.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Prescott's Range Rover tears into the driveway and screeches to a halt behind the battered Mercedes.

Prescott and Richard jump out of the cab. MAKONI and TUTANI (50's), black, garbed in camouflage, ride in the back, four Rhodesian FAL Rifles propped between their legs.

They exit the vehicle from the back doors; each toss a rifle to the two white men. The group march over to the porch.

PRESCOTT
 (yells)
 Silsbury!

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Silsbury and Ncube are seated at the table. Prescott and the others skip up the steps, spread out on the porch.

SILSBURY
 What the bloody hell is going on?

PRESCOTT
 (enraged)
 They burned my goddamned place to
 the ground!

SILSBURY
 What's that?

PRESCOTT
 Everything - gone! The houses, the
 barn, all my machinery destroyed.
 Wilson...stupid bastard died trying
 to protect the farm. They're
 everywhere, swarming the roads like
 maggots on a corpse.

SILSBURY
 But good God, why?

PRESCOTT

We broke through, got to Mutare for supplies. When we returned, they had taken over the farm...hundreds of them. Raided my bunker, got their hands on my stockpile - rifles, grenades, mortars - there was nothing we could do...

Prescott spots the activity by the barn, pauses, looks at Ncube. He walks over and grabs him by the back of the shirt.

PRESCOTT

Who are they? And what's this goddamned munt think he's doing?

No one answers him. Ncube blows smoke in Prescott's face.

NCUBE

Now's your chance, Pinkie.

A tense moment, all eyes on Prescott. They are surprised, none more so than Ncube, when the grizzled scout lets him go - something's caught his eye.

He steps over to the rail and leans his rifle against it. Prescott stands with hands on hips, stares out at the barn.

EXT. BARN - DAY

PRESCOTT'S POV:

He runs his eyes over the symbols painted on the barn.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

The scout squints, grinds his teeth.

MAKONI

Sir? You want us to clear them people out of here?

PRESCOTT

No. Those people will keep us alive...for a while.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Stoned and flirtatious, Sunny has a wonderful time with the circle of men.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Richard spots Sunny and shits a brick. Hands squeeze the FAL Rifle, knuckles white. He leaps over the porch rail and charges the circle. The boy claws her arm, yanks her to her feet.

RICHARD
(screams)
What the bloody hell do you think
you're doing, woman?

Everyone freezes for a moment and then Sunny giggles. Darlington and the men break into laughter.

Laurent steps from the barn doorway into the bright sunshine. He squints, shades his eyes, wobbles to and fro. His eyes lock on Richard.

LAURENT
You! You little bastard! Get your
arse over here!

The blood drains from Richard's face. He drags Sunny towards the porch.

RICHARD
Let's go. Now.

SUNNY
Toodle-oo, chaps.

Richard hustles Sunny over to the porch, trailed by Laurent.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Sunny stumbles up the steps and collapses on the swing next to her drunken father. Richard twirls around, slides the bolt of his rifle back and forth, takes a bead on Laurent's face.

PRESCOTT
Lower the rifle, son.

Laurent steps right up to him; the rifle muzzle rests against his sweaty forehead. His eyes bore into Richard's. He half smiles.

LAURENT
(high, detached)
You got the stones to kill me
twice?

Laurent slaps the barrel aside and clocks his jaw with a left hook. The boy stumbles backwards, holds his face. The Brit bends over, grips his busted hand.

LAURENT
Fucking hell!

RICHARD
You stay away from me! Stay away
from Sunny!

LAURENT
With bloody pleasure. Put a gun on
me again and I'll fucking kill you.

Richard runs around the east corner of the house, disappears. Laurent climbs the steps and slips into the first rocking chair. He rubs his fist, looks at Silsbury.

SILSBURY
I guess that sorted itself out.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

The bonfire blazes; Members of the Blessed Host dance around it, stoned and drunk. The musicians are scattered around the perimeter of the fire; a haunted melody carries through the hot night air.

Young Lady Jesus gyrates to the rhythm, eyes rolled back, possessed. Gazi encircles her with his tree trunk arms, matches her move for move.

Prescott, Makoni and Tutani stand in a tight circle ten meters east of the bonfire, rifles in hand, smoke and observe the hoi polloi.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/WEST SIDE - NIGHT

Laurent sits in the dirt with his back against the wall, whiskey bottle in hand. Hair mussed, unshaven, t-shirt and shorts booze-stained and filthy; Laurent is a fright. He stares at the bonfire, captivated by the dancers.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

Laurent watches Young Lady Jesus, drinks her in. Her eyes refocus, roll and stare at the Colonial House. Is she looking at him?

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/WEST SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Laurent slides his back upward against the wall, pushes himself to his feet. He braces against the wall for a moment, stumbles forward.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

The Brit passes by the porch. Ncube and Silsbury, seated at the table, follow him with their eyes.

NCUBE

Where are you going?

He continues forward, gives him a backwards wave.

NCUBE

Don't do it, English.

Laurent nods, stumbles onward. Ncube shakes his head, takes a drag off his smoke.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

Laurent steps up to Young Lady Jesus, cups her waist from behind.

She turns, presses her firm body up against his. Eyes meet, rhythms synch. She rakes his cheek with her long nails. A hash pipe slips between his lips.

Gazi scowls, hand grips the sheathed knife at his side. He stomps off into the barn.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Young Lady Jesus leads the dazed Laurent into the barn. Several oil lamps and cooking fires light the interior; shadows dance on the wall. A dozen or so couples lay intertwined along the far walls in various stages of undress.

In the southeast corner, Sunny lays on her back, passed out. Darlington is beside her, kisses her neck, undoes the last button on her blouse. Gazi pulls down her blue jeans.

In the northwest corner, the young messiah's two beautiful HANDMAIDENS (18) recline in the blanket of straw. Young Lady Jesus drags the passive Brit over to them.

She releases her grip and he falls on his side between the women; everyone laughs. She crosses her legs, lowers herself down across from Laurent.

Plates of cooked steak, pans of sadza and a metal bowl filled with fruit are nearby.

With deliberate slowness, she reaches her hand between her thighs; it disappears under her scarlet frock. Laurent raises his eyebrows.

In a flash, she has the STILETTO KNIFE

raised to his face. Laurent can see his reflection in the shiny blade.

She stabs an apple, lifts it from the fruitbowl, slices out a wedge and holds it out in her palm.

A wry smile creeps across her face. Laurent is trapped in her eyes, helpless. He licks the apple slice up into his mouth, bites down.

Young Lady Jesus stands -

- the frock slides down her smooth skin to the straw.

Laurent, jaw agape, stares up at the naked, beautiful creature before him. The two women slip their frocks off their shoulders, expose their bare breasts.

Laurent is pushed over onto his back; he does not resist. The women grab either side of his khakis and yank the shorts down to his knees. They kiss his face and chest.

Young Lady Jesus steps over him, lowers herself, straddles his hips. Laurent shakes his head, tries to sit up, but is pushed back. Young Lady Jesus tilts her head back and moans. Laurent, unable to fight it, loses himself in her.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Twenty or so War Veterans mill around the road, thirty meters west of Silsbury Farm. Wardog Chiunda oversees two men who tear apart an electric transformer.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - NIGHT

The electric power dies. One by one, the workers' houses fade into the African night. The lights in the Colonial House flicker a few times and go out. The darkness closes

in, stopped short by the bonfire and oil lamps on the Colonial House porch.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

The Blessed Host dance on, unabated. On the edge of the bonfire's light radius Prescott and the two black scouts step apart, raise their rifles - reflexive.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - NIGHT

Silsbury pulls himself up off the swing, looks around. Ncube is unfazed. This is Zimbabwe.

SILSBURY
(yells)
Sengwa! Get your arse out here!

Sengwa barrels out the front door onto the porch.

SENGWA
Lights are out, Mr. Silsbury.

SILSBURY
No kidding, you git. Grab a lamp
and follow me to the backup
generator.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Silsbury and Sengwa round the corner of the house from the north. The generator is housed in a one-meter by one-meter green steel casing, butted against the house wall.

The front door of the casing is open; a busted padlock lies in the dirt.

Silsbury crouches down, inspects the generator. He spits.

SILSBURY
Stripped. Bloody munt savages.

Silsbury falls to his ass, curls his arms around his knees and drops his chin to his chest. Sengwa stares at his boss, a worried look on his face.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The pack of War Veterans storm the driveway, armed with machetes and iron pipes. Wardog waves his machete in wide

arcs above his head. The men whoop and cheer, spread out and head towards the bonfire.

WARDOG
(yells)
We here to party, baby!

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

The War Veterans swarm into the dance crazed horde. Women are grabbed, their male partners shoved aside. The music continues, everyone dances; no one seems shocked or surprised by their arrival.

Face contorted, Wardog screams a shrill Shona war cry at Prescott and his two men.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Laurent (shorts back up) lies on his stomach in the straw, passed out and alone. The war cry jars him awake.

He groans, rolls over and sits up. Ancient religious symbols painted in cow blood cover his face.

The Brit stands up, teeters. He hobbles over to the barn door, sticks his head out and wretches.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

Laurent wipes his mouth, pushes through the crowd. He falls to his hands and knees by the bonfire, barfs again. A few of the dancers and War Veterans point and laugh.

Wardog stands over him, taps his machete against his thigh.

WARDOG
I see you missed your flight.

He grabs Laurent by the back of the t-shirt and drags him out of the throng. Laurent tries to regain his feet, fails.

LAURENT
(wails)
No!

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SOUTH GRASSFIELD - CONTINUOUS

Wardog lugs the broken Brit around the southwest corner of the barn, followed by three War Veterans. Laurent is tossed on his face into the grass.

WARDOG

Get his short pants down.

The three War Veterans pounce on the helpless man. Two hold his wrists, the third yanks down his shorts, his pale bare ass exposed. Wardog unbuckles his fatigue pants. Laurent squirms - it is useless.

LAURENT

No! I beg you, no!

BANG!

A rifle shot rings out. Wardog turns and looks in the direction of the bonfire.

EXT. BARN/SOUTH WALL - CONTINUOUS

Prescott and Makoni are by the wall fifteen meters away, wide-stanced, FAL Rifles fixed on Wardog. Tutani faces the opposite direction, rifle pointed at the bonfire.

PRESCOTT

Breathe wrong and you are one
headless munt sunuvabich. Now, let
him up.

EXT. SOUTH GRASSFIELD - CONTINUOUS

LAURENT

Prescott, thank God!

Wardog spreads his legs apart and faces Prescott, machete at his side. The War Veterans begin to stand up; their leader swivels his hand behind his back, motions for them to stay put. They freeze, grip Laurent.

WARDOG

Captain Prescott, the famous Selous
Scout and munt killer.

PRESCOTT (O.S.)

That's right. Now, do what I
ordered and let him up.

WARDOG

You know, we met once? During the
war. After you and your men slit
the throats of my friends, you let
me go so I could spread the tale of
the fearsome warrior Prescott.

BANG!

The wiry giant tips backwards and lands in the grass. He lays spread eagle, eyes pointed up at the fresh hole in his forehead.

Prescott and his men advance. The War Veterans release Laurent, raise their hands over their heads.

The Brit leaps to his feet and yanks up his shorts.

Prescott kneels beside Wardog, whips out his Ka-bar knife and slices off his right ear - slips it into his shirt pocket.

PRESCOTT

Would have done this twenty years ago if I knew you'd be such a pain in the arse.

Prescott stands and walks toward his men.

PRESCOTT

I wouldn't suggest hanging around here too much longer, Boyo. I think you've worn out your welcome.

Laurent reaches down and snatches his aviator sunglasses from the dead man's breast pocket, then hustles over to the Colonial House.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

Sunny limps through the dancers, hands pressed to her forehead. Darlington dances with a beautiful young teen girl, his hands on her buttocks. He slaps Sunny's ass and laughs.

Disoriented, she half turns and looks, doesn't see him. She shuffles over to Ncube's house, a zombie.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ncube sits in a folding chair, face in shadows. His cherry glows in the darkness, smoke drifts skyward. If he sees Sunny, he doesn't show it.

Sunny drops to her knees in front of him, throws her head in his lap, breaks into tears.

SUNNY

Oh, Hillary. I fucked up bad. I really fucked up bad. I wish I was dead.

NCUBE

Not the first time, sure it won't be the last.

SUNNY

How can you say that now? Look at me...I'm really messed up. I need your help.

NCUBE

(cruel laugh)

You must have me confused with that git Richard...it's his job to put up with your shite.

SUNNY

Why are you saying this? You said you cared about me.

NCUBE

Cared, yes. Now...
(blows raspberries)

SUNNY

It was your goddamned brother who did this! Aren't you going to do something?

NCUBE

Darlington will always be my brother, no matter what. You... you're just some pinkie tart...easy come, easy go.

Sunny jumps to her feet, slaps Ncube across the face, sends his cigarette into the dirt.

SUNNY

I hate you - and I'll never, ever forgive you for that night at the club. Those men...I was just a stupid naïve twit, I didn't know...

NCUBE

That wasn't my fault. It wasn't...

SUNNY

You were my boyfriend. You were supposed to protect me. I was never the same after that.

NCUBE

If you're finished you need to go.

SUNNY

I hate you! Do you hear me? I hate you worse than your brother. I hate you worse than them. Men will always use me - and I can live with that. But you...you, Hillary, you broke my heart.

Sunny covers her face, races over to the Colonial House. Ncube watches her disappear into the house, cracks his neck. He lights another cigarette, turns and stares into the darkness of the barnyard. Moments pass - he lifts a finger and wipes a tear from his nose.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/LAURENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Laurent is sprawled lengthwise across the bed in the grubby clothes from the day before. He awakens, groans, rolls over.

He tilts his head up to look at the morning sunlight that streams through the window, drags his palms down his face.

LAURENT

Oh, God.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/ SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM - DAY

Laurent wretches in the toilet; nothing comes up. He leans on the washbasin, looks into the mirror, stares at the smeared cow blood on his face, aghast.

He twists the sink faucet; the strained plumbing emits a groan: no water.

EXT. BARN - DAY

A subdued scene. Two passed out War Veterans lay near the charcoaled remains of the bonfire; everyone else has vanished into the barn. The Ridgebacks sniff at one of the prostrate drunks.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

Laurent and Sunny sit on the swing, sip tea. They are filthy, but wear fresh clothes; Laurent is back in his dress casual slacks and collared shirt and has cleaned his face.

Silsbury sits motionless in the rocker. He has shut down: He is wrapped in a blanket, eyes vacant.

Laurent and Sunny meet each other's eyes for a moment - snap their heads down.

Prescott opens the screen door and steps out on the porch, rubs his hands in a towel. He takes one look at the sullen group and:

PRESCOTT

Well, you're a chipper bunch this morning.

He shrugs, pours himself some tea and sits down in the far rocking chair. He appraises his old friend, gives him a sad look.

PRESCOTT

Anyone seen my boy?

Heads shake in unison, they sip their tea.

PRESCOTT

Can't figure where he's off to.

SILSBURY

(mutters, almost incoherent)

We've a few gallons of water left, and that's it...we're finished. It's all over, everything.

PRESCOTT

(re: barn)

What are the crazies doing for water? They don't seem like they're hurting.

LAURENT

Maybe their messiah turned whiskey into water.

Prescott laughs and slaps his shoulder.

PRESCOTT

Cheer up, Boyo. You survived last night, and you'll survive all this. If I gave up every time things got sticky, I would have been worm food long ago.

LAURENT

Very optimistic. I guess there's nothing like killing a man to make your day, eh?

Prescott wiggles his eyebrows, grins and takes a sip of tea.

LAURENT

Yesterday, when I spoke to the girl about the water pump, she said not to fear, that our strife would be over tomorrow - meaning today. I didn't think anything of it at the time but...something may be up.

PRESCOTT

Something was up the minute they walked onto this farm, Mr. Laurent.

LAURENT

(studies his face)

What do you know, Prescott?

Prescott sinks his head for a moment, looks up.

PRESCOTT

Liberia, 1989. A bloody civil war raged...250,000 dead and counting. I was a private contractor, hunting terrs.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. LIBERIA - OUTSIDE VILLAGE - DAY

Dense jungle foliage. A group of black and white mercenaries in jungle camouflage, face paint and berets creep down a trail, lead by a younger, beardless Prescott. They enter the village clearing.

PRESCOTT (V.O.)

We trailed a unit all the way to a village ten clicks outside Voinjama. A group calling itself the 'Holy Anointed' had control of
(MORE)

PRESCOTT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 the area, lead by a gorgeous young
 thing, their messiah. By the time
 we entered the village, it was all
 over.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

LAURENT
 The terrs killed them?

PRESCOTT
 Other way 'round - the Holy
 Anointed slaughtered the terrs.
 Then each other.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. LIBERIA - VILLAGE - DAY

Collapsed, burned-out huts and buildings, a charred stone
 wall with remnants of archaic red painted symbols on it.
 Bloody corpses everywhere, flopped helter-skelter.

The mercs spread out and circle, rifles shouldered.

PRESCOTT (V.O.)
 Men, women, babies...dead munts
 everywhere, a total bloodbath.
 Everything burned, destroyed.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

PRESCOTT
 All that was left was a stone wall
 with that stuff painted all over
 it...
 (points at the barn)
 I recognized the artwork the minute
 I saw it. It's Liberia all over
 again.

Sunny leans into Laurent, hugs his arm.

SUNNY
 That is just terrible. They all died?

PRESCOTT

All but one little girl, six or seven years old.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. LIBERIA - VILLAGE - DAY

A young black girl lays curled against the body of her mother; smoke drifts up from the scorched skin on her back. She peers up at Prescott through half-closed lids. He cocks his revolver and places it against the child's forehead.

PRESCOTT (V.O.)

Badly burned, beaten. I reached out to help the poor thing, but some nuns showed up, hustled her away.

A group of white Catholic Nuns enters the clearing from a nearby road. One of the sisters sprints over and swats Prescott's hand down - the gun discharges into the dirt.

She crouches and cradles the injured girl. Two others race over and help carry the child to the road. Prescott watches them leave, smirks.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

LAURENT

So what are you saying? They plan to kill the War Veterans and then kill each other? That is insane, Prescott.

PRESCOTT

We learned later that the crazy goddamned munts were a doomsday cult. Their mission, whole objective, was to reach heaven via suicide...the terrs coming to their village was the match that ignited the powder keg.

LAURENT

Young Lady Jesus is going home...
(beat)
You said before that their being here was keeping us alive?

PRESCOTT

For now, aye. The War Veterans know they're here and will avoid storming the place, like they did my farm. They'll watch and wait, bide their time. But they will come.

LAURENT

What about that man you shot and his men? They don't seem to care.

PRESCOTT

Their leader was a crazy fucking bastard, or didn't you notice?

SUNNY

So, they kill themselves and then what?

PRESCOTT

Themselves, the War Veterans, everyone.

SUNNY

What about us?

PRESCOTT

Everyone.

LAURENT

(angered, jumps up,
paces)

This is utter madness. Sure, they're a bunch of drugged nutcases, crazy as hell, but I haven't seen any indication that they plan to kill us.

PRESCOTT

You said yourself they have something planned for today. What do you suppose that is? A surprise birthday party? Perhaps a lovely picnic in the countryside?

LAURENT

So we just sit here, lambs to the slaughter?

PRESCOTT

Did I say that? No one is going to die...not under my watch.

LAURENT

What then?

PRESCOTT

We leave. Tonight.

LAURENT

How?

PRESCOTT

The five of us - plus my men Makoni and Tutani - take off in the Range Rover, just after sunset. We run the blockades, get to Harare. From there, who knows? We may just all head to England. God knows there's nothing left for us here.

LAURENT

Oh, brilliant. That's a really spectacular plan, Prescott. Run the blockades? And what if they attack us? They have guns now, or have you forgotten?

PRESCOTT

If you have a better idea, let me know. One thing's guaranteed: If we stay here we are dead.

(leans in,
lowers voice)

I have a strongbox buried back on my farm...British and American currency, bearer bonds, a bit of gold. Plenty to set us up very nicely...and more than enough to compensate you for your troubles here.

LAURENT

A buried treasure? Why do you have it buried? Why not in a bank?

PRESCOTT

Would you keep your money in a bank in Zimbabwe?

LAURENT

And how do you propose to retrieve it?

PRESCOTT

It's buried a click from here in the North Field. My men and I will walk over this morning and grab it.

LAURENT

(sits back down)

What about Silsbury? He's a zombie. And what happens to the others? Sengwa and his family... Ncube? All the farm families? We can't just desert them here.

PRESCOTT

It's every man for himself. The munts will have to sort it out themselves.

(beat)

Alright? Alright?

LAURENT

Yes, yes, alright. You win. We go tonight.

PRESCOTT

Say nothing to anyone, especially Ncube. He tells his brother and the whole thing's blown.

(smiles)

No worries, I've been in tighter scrapes...we'll make it.

LAURENT

This is all fun and games to you, isn't it?

PRESCOTT

(frowns)

Don't presume to know me or what I'm about, Boyo. Now, do what I say...keep your lips zipped and you just might live another day.

Sunny drops her head on Laurent's shoulder. The Brit sips his tea and stares out into the distant farmland.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - DAY

This bedroom layout is a mirrored version of Laurent's room.

Prescott, Makoni and Tutani prep for their mission: They strap on sidearms and Ka-bar knives, lock and load their FAL Rifles.

MAKONI

So, everything's set with them
civilians, sir?

PRESCOTT

Yes.

MAKONI

They know we leave tonight? Keep
their mouths shut?

PRESCOTT

Yes, yes.

MAKONI

What about that English poofter?
Trouble follows him. I don't like
it, sir.

PRESCOTT

Fuck 'im. Any problems we slit the
little twat's throat and toss him
in a ditch.

MAKONI

And the others? That little bint's
flaky as hell and her pop's a
basket case...excess baggage.

Prescott snaps the bolt back and forth on his rifle and
steps up to Makoni, nose to nose. They stare into each
other's eyes for a moment, then:

PRESCOTT

Fuck them too. Now, let's go.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - DAY

Laurent stands before Ncube's door, tormented. He raises
his fist, hesitates a moment, then knocks. A long pause,
then the door opens.

Ncube leans his shoulder against the doorframe, crosses his
arms.

NCUBE

To what do I owe this pleasure, Mr.
Laurent?

LAURENT

Are you alone?

NCUBE

Yeah, no female companionship, I'm afraid.

LAURENT

Listen, I need to tell you something in confidence.

(re: barn)

There's trouble brewing over there. Those people, they're planning something pretty horrible tonight. It'd be best if you take off. Get away. Now.

NCUBE

Thanks, I'll take it under advisement.

He begins to close the door - Laurent slaps his hand against it.

LAURENT

Wait a minute. Did you not hear me? Those crazy nuts over there are going to kill everyone. You need to go.

NCUBE

(unfazed)

And where should I go exactly? I have nothing besides this land.

LAURENT

What about Sunny? I know what's going on with you two. She's something, isn't she?

Ncube looks at his feet, shuts the door. Laurent, exasperated, throws his palms in the air, walks east along the wall. He steps away from the house and:

DARLINGTON (O.S.)

You want some grass, Boss?

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE/EAST SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Darlington, seated against the wall, smokes a blunt.

LAURENT

(stops, turns)

No thanks, Darlington. My days of smoking are over.

DARLINGTON

How 'bout some more cootchie-coo?
You look like you had fun last
night.

LAURENT

That was a big, big mistake. And
you can tell her I said so, if she
asks.

DARLINGTON

No regrets, that's my motto. And
she does ask about you. She's very
interested in you, Boss.

LAURENT

Why do you hang out with them?
What's in it for you? Take my
advice and get away while you can.

DARLINGTON

They're my friends - lots of fun.

LAURENT

Do you know what they have planned
for tonight?

DARLINGTON

(laughs)

Sure, we party as usual. Big, big
party planned. Everyone's invited.

LAURENT

Yes...

DARLINGTON

Party won't last long for Young
lady Jesus, though. She's leaving
us soon.

LAURENT

How do mean?

DARLINGTON

She's sick...AIDS. Most of them
sick. But we party on 'til the sun
sets.

Laurent's face sags, heart drops to stomach. Darlington
claps his hands and laughs.

DARLINGTON

Surprise, huh?

Laurent, fingers laced behind neck, lumbers over to the Colonial House.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Sunny stands on the porch near the north rail, watches the two men. Laurent stumbles up the steps, passes her. Sunny reaches out and:

SUNNY
God, what's wrong with you?

Laurent raises his hand to block her. He shakes his head, opens the screen door and heads into the house. Her eyes follow him inside, then she turns and stares at Darlington.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE/EAST SIDE - DAY

Darlington looks at her, wiggles the blunt in the air and jerks his chin: Come over!

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Sunny lowers her head, hugs herself. She looks back over, bites her lip.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM - DAY

Laurent leans on the washbasin, stares at the drain. He looks in the mirror, lifts his left hand up, the wedding band now level with his eyes.

The Brit screams, slaps himself in the face three, four, five times, drops to his ass and clutches his knees, cries.

He wipes his nose and rights himself, faces the mirror. Laurent gazes at the pitiful stranger's sunken face and hollow eyes for a few moments, then:

Dead eyes clear and brighten, the face tightens.

He juts his chin out and charges from the bathroom.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Laurent exits his bedroom, airplane ticket in hand. He races down the hallway, stops in front of the Sengwa's bedroom door, bangs on it with his fist. Vimbai opens the door, frightened.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SENGWA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sengwa is seated on the bed, the boys huddled on the floor behind it.

Laurent strides in, shoves the ticket at Vimbai.

LAURENT

Sengwa, there is no time. You must get your family out of here now. No questions, just go.

SENGWA

But where to, Mr. Laurent?

Laurent pulls out his wallet, digs out a stack of bills and throws them on the bed.

LAURENT

There's over 500 Pounds there. Cash the plane ticket, get the money.

(slips off Rolex)

This Rolex is worth 2,500 Pounds, see what you can get for it.

Sengwa takes the watch from Brit, scoops up the money.

LAURENT

Grab a shovel. Stick with the miners until you get to the main road to Mutare. Now go!

Overcome, Sengwa jumps up and bear hugs Laurent, tears in his eyes.

SENGWA

You a good man, Mr. Laurent. Thank you, sir.

Laurent pushes away, turns and walks out the door.

LAURENT

Good luck.

EXT. BARN - DAY

A handful of the Blessed Host meander around the area, words spoken in hushed tones. A few stack wood and lumber on the scorched remains of the last bonfire. The mood is somber.

Gazi leans against the barn wall, fixated on the Colonial House.

EXT. BARN/COW PEN - DAY

Darlington and Sunny are seated on a hay bale near the pen; they pass a blunt.

DARLINGTON

So what's up with you pinkies? I see you all on the porch, looking down on us poor munts - whisper, whisper, whisper.

SUNNY

Nothing. They're real downers.

DARLINGTON

'specially that Englishman. Big stick up his bum, that one.

SUNNY

(laughs)

Yeah, he's the worst - a serious asshole. Now, they got some big plan.

DARLINGTON

(fishes)

Oh, yeah? I bet it's brilliant.

SUNNY

It's pure genius. They plan to sneak off in the Range Rover tonight. They're scared of these chaps. Oooooooh - us big scary stoners.

DARLINGTON

(fakes a laugh)

No kidding? Where they gonna go - mars? The moon? They got a rocket ship stashed somewhere?

SUNNY

(gets the giggles)

Stop it. No, Richard's dad has a buried treasure - imagine that? - full of money and gold. He went to go get it. I wish I could find a buried treasure. Maybe on an island somewhere.

DARLINGTON

(grabs her arm, stands)

C'mon. Let's go into the barn for awhile.

SUNNY

I dunno, Darlington. Last time I
woke up with my pants off.
(laughs)

DARLINGTON

No, I promise. We smoke some, talk
a little more.

Sunny shrugs and follows him over to the barn.

INT. NCUBE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is bare except for an iron-framed bed in the center of the room covered in loose clothing. Ncube stands by the west window, looks out.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Hand-in-hand, Darlington and Sunny pass through the open barn doorway and disappear into the darkness.

INT. NCUBE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ncube steps over to the bed, picks his green seabag off the floor and stuffs clothing into it.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - NORTH WHEATFIELD - DAY

Ncube passes across the wheatfield, a trail of crushed stalks behind him lead back to the farm buildings. He stops, turns and looks back for a moment, then continues on his journey.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

The flames of the massive bonfire attack the darkness with unrestrained fury; smoke and hot embers fill the night sky.

The Blessed Host, adorned in colourful frocks, skin covered in cow blood and painted artwork, dance around the inferno with frenzied abandon.

Several writhe on the ground, scream in tongues. Each of the men and women brandish either a machete or spear.

Intermingled with them are twenty or so War Veterans and fifteen farm-worker men who dance, laugh and howl.

Gazi, red lightening bolts painted on his face, stands to the side, rubs his thumb along the edge of a ceremonial bakatwa sword.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Most of the interior of the barn is dark, with some light cast from two oil lamps in the northwest corner.

Young Lady Jesus is seated on the blanket of straw attired in a shiny blood red robe. The two handmaidens on either side of her paint archaic symbols across her face in blood. Her stiletto lies before her.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Oil lamps burn on the porch. The shades are drawn.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Two oil lamps on the coffee table light the interior. A forty-centimeter tall dirt-encrusted steel strongbox sits next to them.

Silbury sits on the love seat, wrapped in his blanket. Laurent sits across from him on a recliner, elbows on knees, fingers pressed together.

Prescott grips his rifle, stands by the screen door, looks out. Makoni and Tutani are posted at the west window and scan the area outside. The tension is palatable.

MAKONI

If we're going to go, we need to do it soon. They're getting crazy out there.

PRESCOTT

I'm not leaving without Richard, goddammit! Where is that little fucker?

LAURENT

We can't leave without Sunny either.

PRESCOTT

Well, where the hell is the bitch?

LAURENT
 I think I have an idea.
 (lowers head, then up)
 I'll get her.

Laurent jumps up and pushes past Prescott through the screen door.

Makoni exchanges looks with Tutani. Their eyes shift to the strongbox on the coffee table. Tutani looks at the back of Prescott's head, licks his lips. Makoni nods.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent bounds down the steps, marches toward the barn. Richard charges out of the shadows, makes a beeline straight for the Brit, semi-auto pistol in hand.

He snags Laurent's neck from behind and places the pistol's muzzle against his right temple. Laurent freezes, raises his arms from the elbows.

LAURENT
 Richard, listen to me. Put the gun down. Let's talk.

RICHARD
 Shut up! I'm tired of your fucking voice and I'm tired of you. Where's Sunny?

LAURENT
 Alright. Let's go to her. You and me. Easy.

They shuffle towards the barn, Richard pressed up behind him.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Darlington skulks in the shadows. He watches the silhouettes of the two black men in the west window for a bit and then snakes through the vehicles.

He stops by the right rear quarter panel of the Range Rover, pulls out an Anzu combat knife. He jabs the tire - it deflates. He then moves to the right front tire and pops it.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

Richard steers Laurent around the left perimeter of the melee.

The drug-crazed mob is oblivious of them. They skirt around to the open barn door and enter the building.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Young Lady Jesus and the two women watch the pair approach. Richard stops them three meters from the women. Young Lady Jesus smiles.

RICHARD

Alright, you fucking munt witch,
where is she?

YOUNG LADY JESUS

Of whom do you speak?

LAURENT

Don't play games with him. Where's
Sunny, the white girl?

YOUNG LADY JESUS

Why didn't you say so? She's right
over there...

She extends her right arm, points into the blackness of the south side of the barn. Richard looks over, back to her, thinks for a moment.

He releases Laurent, pushes him forward. Laurent rubs his throat and steps backwards to the north, eyes both of them.

Richard pulls a Zippo lighter from his pants, flicks it lit. Cautious, he steps into the darkness, squints, peers around. He looks back at the girl.

YOUNG LADY JESUS

Go on. She is waiting for you on
the other side.

Richard continues into the darkness. Laurent reads Young Lady Jesus' face, grimaces.

LAURENT

What have you done?

YOUNG LADY JESUS

I'm glad you have come, David.
This will make our last night very
special.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Prescott stares out the screen door, fidgets with the rifle.
Makoni and Tutani stare at each other, saucer-eyed.

Makoni's eyes flash over to Prescott, then back to the other
man. Teeth gritted, he nods. They lean their rifles
against the wall and draw their Ka-bar knives.

Both men leap at Prescott...

...and plunge their knives down.

Prescott, battle-honed instincts sharp, swings around, rifle
held straight out. Both men's wrists strike the gun, the
knives slice the air.

Prescott butts Makoni in the temple, drops him. He kicks
Tutani in the groin - the man buckles.

In one movement, Prescott's hand flashes to his side and
zips to Tutani's throat.

The Ka-bar knife severs the black man's windpipe.

He stumbles backwards, hand to throat and eyes wide; blood
bubbles from his airway.

No hesitation, Makoni is on his feet and tackles the white
man; they fly over a recliner and crash to the floor.

PRESCOTT

Silsbury! Goddammit, help me!

Silsbury stares off into the distance, face blank.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

The drum beat tempo quickens; the dancers' intensity
heightens to feverish ferocity. Bodies flail and jerk in
unison, possessed.

Gazi, the wildest, slam dances into the men near him.

The farm-worker men and War Veterans migrate to the edge of
the firelight, their machetes and iron pipes raised.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Richard steps forward, Zippo and pistol held before him, the fear illuminated on his face by the weak flame.

RICHARD
Sunny? Where are you, Honey?

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Makoni lays on top of Prescott; each clutch the other's knife arm by the wrist, knuckles white, strained to the max.

PRESCOTT
Silsbury, you bloody bastard! Kill
this munt!

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Richard's light falls on Sunny's naked corpse, encircled in a pool of blood. Her throat is flayed open, eyes wide, a look of shocked surprise on her face.

RICHARD
Nooooo!

The boy slumps to his knees, all life drained from him. Laurent sees Sunny's body. He looks at Young Lady Jesus.

LAURENT
Oh my God, no! You bloody cunt!

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Prescott and Makoni are in a deadlock, neither able to better the other. Prescott opens his mouth and -

- clamps his teeth down on the black man's nose.

He jerks his head to the left, rips it off.

Blood cascades down, covers Prescott's face and beard. He spits the meat across the floor.

Makoni releases his grip, palms his face.

Prescott drives the blade into the man's stomach

- a quick seppuku -

pulls it out and whips it across Makoni's exposed throat, slices it from ear to ear.

Makoni flops off, claws at his neck, a fountain of blood sprays into the air. Prescott leaps to his feet, staggers backwards into the wall, looks over at Silsbury.

PRESCOTT

Thanks for the bloody help, Billy Boy.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Laurent races toward Richard. The boy tosses the lit lighter over his shoulder. It lands in a pile of straw, ignites it.

He pulls the slide back on the pistol, shoves the muzzle in his mouth - Laurent sprints.

LAURENT

Richard, no!

The boy closes his eyes and squeezes the trigger. The bullet blows the top of his head off -

- blood sprays Laurent.

The Brit falters, shocked.

The flames from the straw pile spread across the floor, climb the wall.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - NIGHT

Prescott lugs the strongbox down the porch steps and over to the Range Rover.

PRESCOTT

(screams)

Richard! Richard!

EXT. DRIVEWAY/RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

Something is very wrong; the vehicle is sunk down to the rims in the dirt. His brain blows a gasket.

PRESCOTT

Motherfucking - cocksucking - munt
- bitches!

The strongbox drops to the ground, lands with a dull thud.

Prescott unslings his rifle from his back, grips it in his hands, shakes with rage. He looks at the Mercedes', the Toyota's and the pickup truck's tires - all flat.

PRESCOTT
(at the top of his lungs)
Fuuuuuuuckk!

Darlington springs out of the shadows of the west wall and sinks the Anzu combat knife blade into Prescott's left shoulder.

Prescott slams into the Range Rover, drops to his knees.

He pivots on his buttocks, catches Darlington in a scissor lock and flips him face first into the dirt.

Darlington moves quick for a stoner; he's up on his skinny legs in an instant and bolts for the southwest corner of the house.

Seated, Prescott fires a round, splinters the corner of the house; Darlington rounds it and disappears.

The grizzled old soldier pulls himself up, the knife lodged in his back; blood spreads across his fatigue shirt.

PRESCOTT
(yells)
You think you can kill me, you
goddamned munt? I am death!
AAAAAGGGHHH!

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Fire has spread to all four walls, the rafters and the roof. Acrid smoke fills the interior, blinds Laurent and burns his lungs. Bent over, he coughs and stumbles toward the front doorway.

He catches sight of Young Lady Jesus. She sits in a meditation posture, eyes closed, the two women curled around her - hands cling to the robe.

Fire spreads to the blanket of straw they sit on.

Laurent makes it to the doorway and collapses outside in the dirt.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/WEST SIDE - NIGHT

Prescott stands with his back against the northwest corner of the house. The front quillon of the knife in his back is hooked on the siding.

He bites down on the blade of his Ka-Bar and, with tremendous resolve, leans his weight forward.

His body slides off the blade; a loud scream blasts through his teeth. The Anzu knife clatters to the ground and he falls against the Mercedes.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

Laurent skirts around the perimeter of the dancers to the south and heads to the Colonial House.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Laurent spots Prescott, runs over to him.

LAURENT

Prescott. We gotta go now.
 (sees his blood-soaked
 shirt and face)
 Good God, what happened?

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - CONTINUOUS

The barn is engulfed in flames. The smoke and scorch embers billow out the front doorway and envelope the possessed mob.

The drum beat tempo increases. Gazi breaks from the group and runs at the War Veterans and farm-worker men, sword raised to the sky. He screams and

SWIPES THE BLADE DOWN ON THE HEAD

of the nearest man, splits it - an explosion of blood and brains.

Other dancers swing their blades and spears, scream Shona war cries. The bloodthirsty mob charge the men.

Blades flash and -

- slice into flesh; bodies flop to the dirt.

Three men of the Blessed Host seize lit timbers from the bonfire and run to the Colonial House.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Prescott points at the tires of the Range Rover.

PRESCOTT
I'm afraid it really is every man
for himself now.

Prescott wobbles, catches himself on the hood of the Mercedes.

The black men race up and toss their torches over the heads of the two men and through the downstairs windows.

They scream at the white men and race back to the bonfire.

The fire catches, flames leap up from the interior of the house.

LAURENT
Silsbury! He needs help!

PRESCOTT
(weak)
You go. I need to find my boy.

Laurent looks at the barn, the bonfire, the bloody carnage, then back to the wilted, depleted man. The Brit debates, his thoughts written on his face:

a life of butchery and murder, a worn-out tool utilized by powerful men to destroy: A tool good for one last job.

The Brit grits his teeth, makes a decision.

LAURENT
Richard is dead.

Prescott slumps. He looks at his feet, claws his hair.

Then a fire ignites from within, spreads through his chest, consumes him. He straightens up, grips his rifle, hisses:

PRESCOTT
Who?

LAURENT
(points over shoulder)
Them.

Prescott emits a low, lion-like growl. All traces of humanity are gone from his face: He is a wild animal.

Prescott bores into Laurent with dead, black eyes. Laurent gives him a knowing look.

LAURENT

Do what you do best, Captain
Prescott.

Prescott lopes to the bonfire, screams the Selous Scout motto:

PRESCOTT

Pamwe Chete! Prepare to die you
fucking munts!

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - NIGHT

Laurent leaps up the porch steps, opens the screen door and runs into the burning house.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Fire burns the walls, licks the ceiling; smoke fills the interior. Silsbury hasn't moved from his spot on the love seat.

The Brit leans over, wraps the farmer's left arm over his shoulder and hoists him to his feet. Silsbury slumps against him, a bag of wet sand.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Darlington peeks around the southwest corner of the house; the driveway is empty.

He runs over to the strongbox, green duffle bag and axe in hand. He drops the bag and pushes the box over on its side.

Axe raised above his head, he chops down into the padlock.

The lock shatters and the lid springs open.

Bundled currency, bearer bonds and gold coins spill out into the dirt. Darlington picks up a coin, flips it in the air and then stuffs the contents into his sea bag.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

A battle rages between the War Veterans and the Blessed Host. Young Lady Jesus' followers swarm the handful of desperate men.

Prescott takes a bead on a man -

BANG!

- drops him. He blows the head off another and shatters the spine of a third.

PRESCOTT
 (yells)
 Come on you black sunsuvbiches!
 Take me on!

The Blessed Host spread out and circle around the infuriated father.

The War Veterans stop and stare, not sure if this is a good thing or a bad thing.

Prescott shoots the nearest War Veteran between the eyes. They flee.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Laurent half-drags the catatonic farmer to the screen door. Silsbury comes to life.

SILSBURY
 No!

He ducks under Laurent's arm, gets behind him and shoves the Brit out the front doorway. Laurent stumbles onto the porch. Silsbury slams and bolts the oak front door.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent jiggles the door handle, places his face against the tiny glass window.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

LAURENT'S POV - THROUGH WINDOW:

Silsbury shuffles back over to the love seat, sits down and stares into the inferno. Smoke blankets the window and that is the last Laurent sees of Silsbury.

EXT. COLONIAL HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Laurent looks over to the bonfire.

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

The Blessed Host circle Prescott, run and leap into the air, wave their weapons.

BANG! BANG!

Prescott the killing machine drops two more.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Laurent races out the driveway, dodges around dozens of black miners and tears east down the communal road.

He runs about fifty kilometers, slows and stops. He looks back to the farm, back to the road, back to the farm.

LAURENT

Dammit.

EXT. NCUBE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Laurent, oil lamp in hand, runs up to Ncube's front door and beats it with his fist.

LAURENT

Ncube! Open up! It's time to get out of here!

The windows are dark. Laurent races around the southwest corner, heads north to the other worker homes.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - SECOND WORKER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Laurent sprints to the door and bangs on it.

LAURENT

Please open up! It's Mr. Laurent...
Mr. Laurent, the Englishman. I want to help you!

Moments pass, and then the door cracks open. A wide, terrified eye peers out.

LAURENT (CONT'D)

Yes! Hello, it's me, Mr. Laurent.

The door creaks open a bit further. An old, bald black man sticks his head out.

LAURENT

Good, yes. You need to gather your family together and follow me. We need to get away.

BALD MAN

Yes, okay, sir.

LAURENT

I need your help in rounding everyone up. Tell them to meet in the wheatfield, just north of the houses. Now!

EXT. BARN/BONFIRE - NIGHT

Prescott advances toward the bonfire, with each step another round fired, another body dropped. He empties the rifle, chucks it at a man's head.

Semi-auto pistol now in hand, he continues to shoot.

A muscular woman races up behind Prescott and -

- hacks him in the calf with her machete.

Prescott drops to one knee, spins and fires a round into her forehead. The woman flies backwards.

Two of the blessed Host slide behind the Ten-meter tall cross that leans against the burning barn. They press their bodies into it and:

THE CROSS, top on fire, straightens up...

...tips forward...

...crushes Prescott's chest and flattens him in the dirt.

The grizzled war dog lays on his back, wheezes from punctured lungs. Flames torch his clothes and skin. He looks at his pistol two meters away in the dirt.

One of the men bends down over Prescott's face, laughs.

Prescott buries his Ka-Bar knife in the man's neck.

Blood spurts from the wound; the man falls backwards, the knife lodged in him.

The Blessed Host close in around the helpless scout.

PRESCOTT'S POV:

A circle of faces peer down at him. Gazi leans in close and grins.

BACK TO SCENE

Machetes chop, spears sink into flesh; a brutal dissection.

EXT. NORTH WHEATFIELD - NIGHT

Laurent leads a group of ten women and children through the tall wheat.

They approach the bald black man and his group of twenty or so people, crouched in the stalks. Children cry and clutch their mothers.

Laurent looks back at the giant fireball that lights up the night sky.

LAURENT

Everyone here? Good. We need to keep moving. Follow me.

BLACK WOMAN #1

But where do we go?

LAURENT

(points northeast)
The minefield.

EXT. SILSBURY FARM - NIGHT

Hell on earth. Every building has been torched. The barn has collapsed in on itself, the roof of the Colonial House disintegrates, flames shoot out the top into the night sky.

Massacred bodies litter the ground. Near the northern farmhouses The Blessed Host chase down the final group of three War Veterans and chop them to pieces.

EXT. NORTH FARMHOUSES/WHEATFIELD - NIGHT

Gazi and thirty of the Blessed Host gather on the edge of the North Wheatfield, several hold lit wood torches.

Orgasmic from the carnage, they whoop and holler, lust for more death. They look to their blood-drenched leader.

Gazi points northeast at the oil lamps that float through the wheatfield in the far distance.

He screams a Shona war cry and the horde charge. A few drag their torches through the wheat - the field blazes.

EXT. NORTH WHEATFIELD - NIGHT

Laurent and the others race through the thick stalks and head northeast. The screams of the bloodthirsty killers emanate through the African night.

The sky behind them brightens; the wheatfield fire rages and spreads.

EXT. EAST MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

They pass through a thin line of trees, stream out from the wheatfield and into the katambora grass of the quiet meadow.

Laurent holds the oil lamp high, takes a cautious step forward. He gets his bearings, points north.

LAURENT

It's this way! Form a single line
and follow me. For God's sake,
stay right behind me and don't
stray away!

They double-time it north through the meadow, Laurent in the lead.

EXT. NORTH WHEATFIELD - NIGHT

The Blessed Host race through the field, seconds away from the meadow.

EXT. EAST MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

The horde burst into the meadow, spread out. Gazi jerks his head back and forth, spots the workers' oil lamps a quarter kilometer north. He smiles: The gap closes.

EXT. BUSH WAR MINEFIELD - NIGHT

Lamplight illuminates a pile of rocks that mark the first of the minefield's safety zones. He sees another pile five meters to the north.

LAURENT

Listen carefully. You can cross the minefield here...stay between the rock piles and you will safe. Do not - I repeat - do not wander past the rocks or you will die. Now go!

Two-by-two the families file into the safety zone, lead by the bald black man. Laurent hustles them along.

LAURENT

Go! Hurry!

EXT. EAST MEADOW - NIGHT

The mob sprints north, Gazi in the lead.

EXT. BUSH WAR MINEFIELD - NIGHT

The families, trailed by Laurent, travel seventy-five meters and clear the east edge of the minefield. They huddle and stare at the torch light in the East Meadow.

LAURENT

Head east to the river. Follow it south until you hit the bridge. Go dammit!

OLD BLACK MAN

Are you not coming?

LAURENT

I will, I will. I have to finish something first. Get going.

The group pushes on through the katambora grass. Laurent runs south, along the minefield's eastern edge.

Laurent waves the oil lamp, stops parallel to the torch lit group of murderers, hollers:

LAURENT

Over here, you bastards! It's me, the pinkie English!

Seventy-five meters of grass separate Laurent from the Blessed Host.

Gazi and the pack veer right, beeline for the Brit and shoot out into the minefield...

BAM!

MASSIVE EXPLOSION: A geyser erupts under a man's feet; dirt and rock blast to the heavens.

The shredded man ragdolls into the air.

Rock, dirt and body parts rain to the earth in a cacophony of sickening crunches.

Laurent hunkers down, covers his ears, squints.

BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

A chain reaction - men and debris trigger more and more landmines.

Bloody meat, dirt and rocks cascade down on the runners.

Gazi, undeterred, charges forward - the face of madness.

HE CLOSES IN: thirty meters, twenty, ten, five -

- Gazi raises his sword, goes in for the kill:

BAM!

Gazi vanishes -

- his dismembered torso tumbles to the earth and lands near Laurent...

...the Blessed Host are no more.

An eerie stillness permeates the night air.

Laurent stands, limp, looks around at the eviscerated and mangled corpses.

Dawn approaches, the sun peeks out over the eastern horizon.

EXT. SAVANNA - DAY

Ncube reclines in the shade of a giant acacia; his seabag lies in the grass at his feet. Legs crossed, he smokes and soaks up the peaceful scenery.

Darlington approaches from the south, back bowed under the heavy seabag. He drops it on the ground in front of his brother and lights a cigarette.

DARLINGTON

Hillary.

NCUBE

Darlington.

Seconds pass, the men stare into the sunrise. Ncube stands and picks up his seabag. Darlington throws his bag onto his back, grunts.

DARLINGTON

Where to?

NCUBE

(thinks a moment, smiles)

I hear England is nice.

The men walk through the grassland toward the rising sun.

EXT. SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS JETLINER - DAY

The airplane speeds along above the clouds.

INT. JETLINER/FIRST CLASS - DAY

Black and white women and men chat, read, work on laptops. Laurent sits in the aisle seat next to a gorgeous blond-haired woman in a business suit.

The woman, pale skinned and vibrant, flips through an in-flight magazine. Laurent sunburned, haggard in appearance, stares at the seatback. The woman turns and smiles at him.

WOMAN

First time to Zimbabwe?

LAURENT

Yes.

WOMAN

It's beautiful.

A flight attendant pushes a drink cart down the aisle from the front. She stops beside Laurent.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Would you like something to drink, sir? We have a wide variety of liquors and beers.

LAURENT

Diet soda would be just fine, thank
you.

She hands him a glass of soda pop. Laurent sips, stares at
the seatback.

INT. LONDON HEATHROW AIRPORT/CONCOURSE - DAY

A mass of people criss-cross the wide concourse area.
Loading/unloading information pours from the intercom
system.

Laurent maneuvers through the crowd, cranes his neck.

He spots Mrs. Laurent near a coffee kiosk; she waves and
smiles.

He runs to his beautiful spouse and pulls her in - a tight
embrace - his torso bent around the bulge in her belly.

MRS. LAURENT

Whoa - easy, Honey...I missed you
too. How was Africa? Did you
bring anything back with you? I
had my heart set on an mbira.

LAURENT

(rests chin on
her shoulder)

Zimbabwe was...eventful. I was
very busy. I'm sorry, I didn't get
a chance to do any shopping.

MRS. LAURENT

That's okay, I'm just glad you're
home.

She pulls back from him, grips his elbows.

MRS. LAURENT

Gosh, what happened to your face? And
where are your bags?

Laurent leans in - a long, passionate kiss. The couple walk
away hand-in-hand and disappear into the crowd.

FADE OUT.

THE END

TITLE: MANICALAND MINE

LOGLINE: A British postwar land surveyor on a routine assignment to Zimbabwe fights to escape a commercial farm after it is cut off from the world and overrun by violent local cliques.

SYNOPSIS: In 2001, David Laurent, a British postwar land surveyor, travels to a large commercial farm in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe, a country in the midst of great political unrest and on the verge of economic collapse. Upon his arrival, plans turn sour after the owner, William Silsbury, receives his Section Seven eviction notice ordering him to vacate the family farm, courtesy of Dictator/President Mugabe. A local opportunist, Hillary Ncube, is granted permission to move onto the farm to help in the transition of ownership of the land from Silsbury over to him.

Laurent attempts to leave and is horrified to find that the farm has been cut off by an armed militia. To make matters worse, a doomsday cult, lead by a charismatic young messiah, has moved onto the property and prepares for their final voyage to the great beyond - and everyone is invited.

The danger intensifies, and Laurent begins a downward spiral into self-destruction when his personal demons surface and take over. He hits rock bottom, and soon realizes that it's not only his life in jeopardy, but the lives of the farm families and innocent farm workers as well.

He comes to a crossroads where he must decide whether to save just himself, or rise above his selfish fear and save the helpless families. A final showdown culminates between the militia, the cult and the white farmers, with Laurent stuck in the middle fighting to survive the violence and make it back to London with his head still attached.

This is a fictional story based on factual events that occurred in Zimbabwe during the early 21st century: A reflection of corrupt government, a collapsed economy and an imploded infrastructure and it's effects on a culture & people on the brink of complete self-annihilation.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

This is a fictional story based on factual events that occurred in Zimbabwe during the early 21st century. In the late 1990s I was married to a black citizen of Zimbabwe and was given the opportunity to visit areas not accessible to the general tourist population, especially white Americans. I was fortunate enough to have the chance to see the 'real' Zimbabwe, and it was truly an eye-opening experience. I was

involved with the black Zim community of Seattle, WA for several years and allowed an insider's view into the perspective of ex-patriates infuriated with a corrupt government systematically destroying their beloved country and who, in turn, fought to bring about change.

Raymond Joseph Wattenhofer, III
18873 County 18
Park Rapids, MN 56470
(218) 732-8814
rjwattenhofer@gmail.com
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