

"SAFARI"

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DANIELSON HOME - DAY

The heat of the summer months is just coming to the mid west. The sprinklers come on and cover the lush grass.

The front door slams open and eleven year old SHAYNE chases his fourteen year old older brother THOMAS out and down the steps.

They pull at each other, ride each other and tumble until Thomas reaches the mail box and opens it.

Shayne quickly pulls out the mail.

Eight year old BROOK hangs by the front door and watches the action.

Shayne runs back up towards the house.

Thomas pulls him down and pulls the mail out of his hands.

Thomas stands up and runs for the front door.

THOMAS

Ah-ho, it's here, it's right here.

INT. DANIELSON HOUSE - DAY

Brook steps back as Thomas dives through the front door with Shayne locked onto Thomas' T-shirt.

Thomas runs past Brook and drags Shayne into the hallway and finally into the breakfast room.

INT. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY

SHAYNE

It's mine, give it to me. Give
it!!

CAROLYN and ELLIOT DANIELSON sit at the table enjoying a
quiet cup of coffee.

Shayne pulls at Thomas unmercifully as Brook comes into the
room and takes her place at the table.

ELLIOT

How many times have I told you
two that this is not a playground.

CAROLYN

What is it Thomas?

THOMAS

It's just some lame contest that
Shayne thinks he won.

ELLIOT

(to Shayne)

What contest son? What is he
talking about?

BROOK

The jungle jingle for some fruit
juice company.

SHAYNE

It's not. It's not. It's just
a contest I entered.

ELLIOT

Okay stop it, now. Give me the
mail.

Thomas dutifully places the mail in his fathers hands.

ELLIOT

This envelope, from Safari World,
is address to Shayne.

Shayne takes the envelope from his father and sits at his place at the table.

He carefully tears open the envelope and takes out the contents.

CAROLYN

I hope Shayne, this is not another one of those deals where your dad and I end up paying for something we...

SHAYNE

...won. We - won!

Shayne jumps up and screams.

The envelope flies across the table.

Shayne gets up and runs around the corner of the living room, into the den, through the hallway and back into the breakfast room.

Carolyn reaches over and takes the introductory letter and reads it.

CAROLYN

What? This is crazy. It says here that Shayne and his family have won a four week vacation through...

ELLIOT

May I see that please.

Elliot takes the paper out of Carolyn's hands.

They exchange a look about this particular move and Elliot realizes he is wrong. He reads the letter anyway.

ELLIOT

(he mumbles and talks)
Ahhuh - ah - and the family of
- the South African national park.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

...four weeks - completely paid
for - and - plus ah - and
including...

THOMAS

Did he win?

Elliot looks up at his son and then his wife.

BROOK

Did he?

ELLIOT

Yes. Yes he did. A complete
four week - Safari for the entire
family.

Shayne slides into the room.

SHAYNE

Yeah for the A-team.

BROOK

And are we going to go?

Everything stops and all the attention is focused on Elliot.

THOMAS

To Africa?

Elliot and Carolyn are trying to read the many, many pages
folded up in the business size envelope.

ELLIOT

Shayne? When did you do this?
I mean when did you enter the
contest and why didn't you tell
your mom or me?

SHAYNE

I...

THOMAS

Could we possible go?

CAROLYN

Be quiet Thomas.

SHAYNE

...well I...

BROOK

You mean we could ride on an elephant?

ELLIOT

Shh, your brother is talking, don't interrupt!

SHAYNE

...see, I saw this contest for a jungle jingle and it just came to me right there.

CAROLYN

Right where?

SHAYNE

You know mom, in the store where we buy groceries.

ELLIOT

So, you filled out a form, signed it and mailed it but never told us anything about it.

THOMAS

He didn't think he'd win.

ELLIOT

Thomas, I'm trying to talk with your brother.

SHAYNE

I didn't think I'd win. So can we go? Are we going? It's free isn't it?

CAROLYN

Yes, Shayne, it's free but it's more than a month. Your dad works and that's how we eat and live in this house and...

ELLIOT

...buy gas at these stupid prices, put clothes on your backs and save money so you can all go to college and get a good education so you can take care of your parents as soon as possible.

Everyone laughs except Brook.

BROOK

So, does that mean we're going?

CAROLYN

No Brook, it does not.

ELLIOT

No. It would be almost impossible. A logistic nightmare including all of these shots.

Elliot throws down a page with a long list of shot requirements.

THOMAS

Shots?

SHAYNE

Would it hurt?

BROOK

Like in a hospital...?

CAROLYN

I want all of you to go outside right now and let your dad and me talk.

There is a general grumbling and slow movement until Shayne antagonizes Thomas and the two of them are off and out the front door.

Brook picks up her writing pens and paper and moves off into the living room.

Elliot and Carolyn try to distribute all the paper work into stacks of similar information.

Brook's head peers around the corner and then disappears.

CAROLYN

How could we go to Africa? I
mean - do you want to go to Africa?

There is an expression on Elliot's face that is both horror and ecstasy.

He removes the ecstasy face and looks gloomily at all the paper work.

He silently is dying to go.

Carolyn is silently dying not to go.

INT. DANIELSON HOUSE - NIGHT

The living room is covered with magazines, brochures and print outs from the Internet. There are empty pizza containers, empty Coke-Cola containers and paper plates.

Elliot is on the computer, writing information from different screens on a lined pad of paper.

Carolyn is on the couch with Brook in her lap. Brook is asleep. Carolyn is reading a National Geographic about the South African National Park lands.

Shayne is re-reading his winning letter.

Thomas is looking at a large collection of maps laid out in front of him.

He traces the route down the Blyde River Valley in The Kruger National Park in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.

His hand stays straight as the Sharpie forms a dark line down the huge and deep cut gorge of the Blyde Valley.

The map turns into the magnificent Blyde River Valley.

EXT. BLYDE RIVER VALLEY - DAY

The large escarpment runs through Mpumalanga, north to south dividing the breezy grassland of the high veldt from the bush country.

Along the rim of the escarpment mists roll and tumble through the lush grasslands and the thick jungle forests.

Way down in the bottom in the dryer country the Blyde River cuts a canyon twenty five kilometers across and hundreds of feet down.

The habitat of the whole panorama is like a wild, pre-historic land, untouched by humans.

The forests are full of baboons and monkey's. The grounds are prowled by leopards and bush pigs, brilliant colored birds of three hundred species fill the trees.

INT. DANIELSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone is in the same place except that Shayne is asleep on the floor next to the maps, Brook and her mother are asleep on the couch and Thomas is asleep in a chair with magazines spread across his lap.

Elliot is wandering through the house trying to make decisions in his mind that all turn out wrong.

He stops and looks at his family asleep in waiting expectation.

Elliot sees all the research on the floor and on the chairs.

He sees the line Thomas has drawn down the Blyde Valley across the map.

He leans down and takes a closer look at the map.

Elliot hears the strange sound of a BUSY OFFICE right behind him.

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE - DAY

Elliot's office is on the upper floor of the tallest building in the city. He is an account executive for a large firm that does business on both a national and international level.

Elliot looks up from the map of Africa and sees he is in his office.

The reality around him seems very strange and Elliot can't seem to get his mind on his business.

SAUL LOMEN stops at the glass door and then steps in.

SAUL

So is it true?

ELLIOT

Saul? What - ? What did you say?

Saul walks over casually and picks up a corner of the map and shows it to Elliot.

SAUL

You know it's all over town don't you? Our kids know your kids who know their kids.

Saul points to a large group of employees working in cubicles just outside of Elliot's office.

Some of them wave in a strange kind of recognition.

ELLIOT

What are you talking about Saul?

SAUL

Okay Elliot, are you getting ready to ask me for a month off so you can take your family to Africa, for free?!! Because if you are - the answer is yes.

More employees give Elliot a thumbs up through his glass partition.

SAUL

It's a once-in-a-life-time offer, how could we not wish you the best trip ever.

Saul strolls out and works his way down the cubicles, passing on vital information to his employees.

Elliot is thunder struck and can't make out what he is supposed to do.

The map slides off his desk onto the plush carpet.

Elliot looks down and sees the line that Thomas drew in the South African Park.

The telephone RINGS on his desk and he answers it awkwardly.

ELLIOT

Hello? Carolyn? What - ?
Who is calling? How did they find out? Yes, I understand that Carolyn but its happening here to me, right now. No Saul came into my office and said go, take the vacation of your life. Don't you want to go? All right, yes, tonight, all right, good bye.

Elliot slowly puts down the telephone.

The mail-cart is pushed into his office and the mail, including a book, are set on his desk.

Elliot reaches over and takes the red-bound book and opens to the fly page.

The title is, Things To Know About Africa. There is no signature or note.

Elliot looks out and down the cubicles but there is no sign from anyone.

He opens the book to spiders.

INT. DANIELSON HOUSE - NIGHT

The family is seated around the dining-room table. Shayne has his fingers crossed. Brook has her arms crossed in front of her. Thomas looks like he's sitting on an ant hill.

Carolyn is writing information on some forms as Elliot stirs some milk into his coffee.

ELLIOT

All right. Here is what we know. After spending much of the day in research, calling the juice company, getting confirmation that we won and what we won, your mother doing intense research into airplane reservations, luggage restrictions, shots, diseases, clothing, nutrition information et all, we have come to the decision that we're not going!!

There is a general revolution among the children.

Carolyn looks up coldly at Elliot as he tries to reconvene the meeting.

CAROLYN

All right! All right!! Your father was making a joke. Of course we're going. It's twenty

thousand dollars in vacation.
We would never have this chance
again.

SHAYNE

. . . you mean . . . ?

THOMAS

. . . are you saying . . . ?

BROOK

Does that mean we're going?

ELLIOT

Yes, it means we're going. In
one month with all of our shots
and luggage, we will be in South
Africa, in the Blyde Valley in
the most magnificent animal park
in all of history.

Carolyn looks down and continues writing as her
children look like they have been blown away from
the table by a bomb explosion.

Elliot tries to get things under control but its impossible.

The brothers chase each other unmercifully as Brook
waves on who ever she wants to win at the moment.

The activity of the house slowly disappears as each
brother and sister is finally in their own bed and
the house goes from day to night.

INT. DANIELSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In their bed with the night lights on Carolyn and
Elliot look at each other and wonder what they have
gotten them selves into.

Elliot puts on his reading glasses and tries to read through
more of the literature.

Carolyn turns and fidgets and finally puts two pillows behind
her and sits up.

CAROLYN

I'm scared. I'm scared to death.
I can't even think about the
airports and the shops and
different languages, different
customs we're bringing . . .
Carolyn pulls a Kleenex from the night stand and
blows her nose.

CAROLYN

. . . a nine year old and we're
an eleven year old and our
fourteen year old man, Thomas.
I've never been out of the
United States and we live in a
world now where . . . there
are horrible people who do
horrible things to other people
for some stupid political
advantage and I don't want any
of my family hurt or injured
and . . . there's nothing
I can do about it but go.

ELLIOT

Carolyn, we checked. We double
checked and everything everyone
says is that it's safe, it's
fun, family oriented and in all
the time they've been in business
they've never even had an accident.

Carolyn moves closer to her husband and holds him
around his waste.

CAROLYN

Would you just hold me.

Elliot is slightly amazed at this display of emotion
from his wife.

He carefully puts his arms around her and pulls her closer to
him.

CAROLYN

What's our first mission on this journey?

ELLIOT

Shot's, physical checkup's and then clothes. After that

As Elliot goes on the real life moments in each of the family's next thirty days is seen as short pictures with a short sound bite.

MONTAGE

- A) Each family member receiving an inoculation.
- B) Carolyn trying on Levi's and a safari blouse.
- C) Elliot buying a hat and sun glasses.
- D) Thomas and Shayne playing hunters in a sporting-goods store.
- E) Brook buying a back-pack and canteen.
- F) The entire family at the airport waiting for a flight to New York City.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

The Danielson's have all their luggage and are standing in terrible lines in an over crowded airport trying to make their flight.

Thomas is still going over the map, making notes in his journal.

Brook is asleep leaning against her mother who is exhausted.

Elliot is reading another guide to jungle survival.

Shayne is listening to a CD Player and reading a book about winning contests.

There is an announcement over the P.A. System that

rain and thunder-storms across the Midwest are now causing arrival delays and to check the nearest information screen for updates.

Elliot leaves the line and heads for a bank of television screens.

He shakes his head in disgust and waves everyone out of line and towards a set of empty chairs.

The Danielson family is asleep, all in a row, surrounded by their luggage for the vacation of their lives.

INT. NEW YORK KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAY

The family is pulling their luggage off of the British Airways carousel.

Carolyn stands and receives the luggage and tries to read their written agenda at the same time.

Brook tries to pull one of the suitcases closer but it's too heavy.

Elliot pulls the last piece of luggage off and places it on the pile on top of their rolling cart.

Carolyn points out a direction and the troops fall in, pushing the over loaded cart towards the outgoing gates.

SHAYNE

Where do we go from here?

THOMAS

To London you twit.

Shayne and Thomas get into it briefly but Carolyn puts a stop to it immediately.

BROOK

How long will that take.

ELLIOT

It's about seven and a half
hours to fly from New York to
London.

THOMAS

And then we fly to Cape Town,
South Africa.

BROOK

How do you know Thomas?

THOMAS

I read the maps Brook.

CAROLYN

Can we just have some peace
until we get to our gate, please.

BROOK

And then how long is that flight?

ELLIOT

That's a long one Brooky, about
twelve and a half hours. But,
it's at night so you should be
able to sleep.

BROOK

I'll never sleep till we get
there. I just want to see it.

The family stops in front of a train-shuttle and
waits.

The train comes and the doors open.

The Danielson's struggle to get in with all their
luggage. Shayne's backpack falls off the cart and
rolls out the door.

INT. TRAIN SHUTTLE - DAY

ELLIOT

Never mind!!!

Shayne dives out the doors and grabs his backpack.

The doors close immediately.

CAROLYN

Stop the train! Stop the train,
my son is . . .

An announcement comes on the P.A. telling the passengers to move away from the doors.

Elliot is shouting to Shayne to take the next train to the C Station.

The train starts to move.

Carolyn pushes herself up to the glass and shouts again,

CAROLYN

Shayne, take the next train
to the C station.

She makes a C out of her hand and holds it up to Shayne who gives her a thumbs up.

The train speeds away from the station.

The family looks back as Shayne waves a kind of sad wave good bye.

The train moves at a high speed around a couple of tight corners and finally arrives at Station C.

The doors opens and the Danielson's push their way out along with the cart.

INT. STATION C - DAY

Carolyn goes looking for a telephone as the train pulls away.

Many people move away from the train, up escalators, down hallways or up the staircase to the food courts.

In moments the platform is empty except for the Danielson family.

Carolyn starts to cry as Elliot holds onto her.

THOMAS

Mom, he's only two stations away,
he'll be here any second now.

Brook holds onto Thomas as they wait what seems a very long time.

An announcement is made about an in-coming train.

The train arrives and the doors open.

Even more people get off this train and move in every direction away from the platform.

The train is empty and the doors about to close when Shayne comes out eating an ice-cream from a vending machine.

Carolyn is beside herself as Elliot and Thomas try and get the troops back in formation and towards their gate.

Brook grabs Shayne's hand and holds onto it tightly.

The family struggles towards a check in line. They are surrounded by a sea of people and it seems almost impossible to make a way through them.

The sea of people all become black with the Danielson family being the only white people in sight.

INT. CAPE TOWN AIRPORT - SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

The family is in the same place in a totally different airport surrounded by black Africans in multi-colored clothes that almost look like costumes for a play.

Brook is magnetically drawn to the scene and tries to wander away to look at some of the local dress.

Elliot and Carolyn are obviously very tired and just need rest somewhere.

Thomas and Shayne are taking pictures with throw away cameras.

A porter is now pulling their cart towards a new gate.

Elliot is trying to read the flight schedule and watch Brook at the same time.

Carolyn watches the gate numbers pass as she holds tightly onto Shayne.

The gate for Johannesburg comes up on the left. Carolyn maneuvers the troops off of the moving escalator and into four empty seats.

Elliot walks up to the South African Airlines counter trying to juggle his tickets and a map and a book.

The flight attendant is very kind and helps Elliot check in his family.

The Porter continues on with their luggage.

Carolyn tries to signal Elliot as their luggage goes by her.

The flight attendant sees Carolyn and her distress.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

It's all right mam, he's just taking your luggage down to the aircraft.

Carolyn waves a thank you and then gathers Brook close to her.

The boys are absorbed in a CD Player and Thomas's I-Pod.

Carolyn looks around the airport and sees an entirely new world which seems totally foreign to her.

She tries to smile at Elliot.

He sees her briefly and shoots a smile back.

Another attendant opens the door to the gate.

Elliot hails everyone forward.

The crew stands up wearily and enters the dark passageway towards their vacation.

The last passenger is admitted through the door and the door is closed and locked behind them.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - JOHANNESBURG - NIGHT

In a double-bed in the main bedroom, Carolyn and Elliot are strewn across the bed like flowers thrown out of a vase.

The room has open luggage on the floor, clothes thrown everywhere, wet towels from the bathroom are draped across the chairs and Elliot is snoring away but no one cares.

In the main room, Shayne and Thomas are asleep on roll-in beds.

Brook is splayed across the sofa with her luggage open just below her. Already a collection of gifts is starting to fill up Brook's suitcase.

INT. HOTEL ROOM JOHANNESBURG - DAY

The morning sun begins to shoot bars of light in

between the wood-crafted, horizontal blinds.

The children start to move first. In a slow parade of wakening, one by one, everyone uses the bathroom and then returns to their bed just to lie down.

Thomas writes in his journal as Shayne looks out the Hotel window over the city of Johannesburg.

Carolyn sits up rigidly in bed and looks around like she's in a nightmare.

Brook screams from the bathroom.

Everyone runs to the bathroom, Elliot just waking up.

Thomas opens the door.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Brook is standing on the toilet with a large cockroach scurrying around on the floor below it.

Carolyn looks at the beast and moves quickly out of the way.

Shayne grabs some toilet paper and wraps up the animal and removes it to the balcony porch.

ELLIOT

Welcome to Africa.

Everyone jumps dad as he heads back to the main bedroom.

ELLIOT

Breakfast in ten minutes, no stragglers.

Carolyn and Elliot close the bedroom door.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

The International restaurant inside the hotel is very busy.

The Danielson's are seated on the far side next to windows which show the front of the hotel.

Their waitress is South African. She takes their orders as Elliot shifts between the menu and the daily schedule.

ELLIOT

I'll just have eggs-over-easy,
bacon, rye toast, tomatoes
instead of potatoes, coffee
and fresh orange juice.

CAROLYN

The same, please except I'll
have mine scrambled.

BROOK

I want a root beer float.

ELLIOT

No Brook you . . .

CAROLYN

. . . that's fine . . .!

THOMAS

I want the buffet.

SHAYNE

Me too.

ELLIOT

Okay men, get your plates and
remember, don't take anything
you're not going to eat.

Shayne and Thomas race away towards the buffet.

BROOK

What happens next?

ELLIOT

Well darling, after we eat we load up in one of those safari busses out there and we drive to our home base which is a tiny hotel in the Mpumalanga Province just a short distance away from the Blyde River and all of the tours.

CAROLYN

Is there a time we're suppose to be out there, waiting?

ELLIOT

It says right here that the safari-bus will load us whenever we are ready, after breakfast. Look Carolyn, everything they said about the tour, so far, knock on wood, has been correct, right? Let's just say the tour is going to happen just like it says in the brochure. Come on, just look around us.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Elliot, Carolyn, Thomas and Brook are all standing in front of the hotel, surrounded by their luggage but no bus.

Elliot goes into the hotel and comes out again. He talks to Carolyn.

He goes into the hotel a number of times and finally he comes out waving his hands.

A black driver drives up in front of them in a long, four-wheel drive safari vehicle with three sets of seats.

THOMAS

Is this our ride?

BROOK

But it's not covered, I mean no windows.

SHAYNE

Cool!!

CAROLYN

What . . . is this!!

ELLIOT

The hotel is renting it to us just to get to our base camp and then this driver will drive it back.

Elliot shakes Carolyn's arm for a response.

ELLIOT

Come on Carolyn its only about five hours and . . .

Carolyn begins throwing the luggage in the back of the vehicle.

The driver helps and then everyone helps.

They load up, buckle up and the driver backs the vehicle into traffic and they are finally off.

INT. SAFARI VEHICLE - DAY

The driver drives to the edge of Johannesburg and the city turns into a great flatland with grasses, sparse trees and a deadly heat.

The wind splashes past them as the road goes from paved to dirt to disrepair.

The driver weaves around potholes and drives forward when it seems there is no road at all.

Carolyn is covered with a large hat which is tied to her face and dark glasses.

Elliot wears a nerdy kind of safari, green jungle hat with dark glasses.

The kids all wear some kind of cap but only Brook has dark glasses.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG HOTEL - DAY

A safari bus drives up and a white driver races out of the vehicle and runs into the hotel.

INT. JOHANNESBURG HOTEL - DAY

He flies up to the desk and speaks very loudly.

DRIVER

Where are the Danielson's? The Danielson's, the family that won the vacation, where are they?

The hotel desk attendant leans forward and speaks softly in the driver's ear.

DRIVER

What? You did what? Have you listened to the news? There is a terrorist cell that has activated in the Mpumalanga Province and has killed some tourists in the safari hotels.

The desk attendant steps back in shock. He picks up the telephone and makes a call as the driver races out to his truck.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG HOTEL - DAY

The driver comes running out to his truck.

He reaches in the cab and pulls out a walkie-talkie.

He speaks to someone quickly and then puts the walkie-talkie back.

The driver steps away from his truck towards the route East. He tries to see into the future but can't make it out.

He climbs back in his bus and speeds away on the Eastern road.

EXT. ROAD TO MPUMALANGA - LATE DAY

The Danielson vehicle is driving past wild herds of zebra. Everyone is taking a picture except the driver.

The driver seems concerned as he squints into the distance to see what appears to be a thin line or rising smoke.

Elliot turns off his camera.

ELLIOT
Incredible, just incredible.

CAROLYN
They are so beautiful and to see them this close.

The driver slows down and stops.

BROOK
Are we there? Where is every thing?

ELLIOT
(to the driver)
What's the matter, we're not out of gas, are we?

DRIVER
Look.

The driver points to the smoke.

CAROLYN
What is it?

DRIVER

I don't know, never seen nothen
like dat.

ELLIOT

Shall we . . . keep going?

The driver shakes his head yes and starts out again.

No one is looking for wild animals now, everyone
is focused on the smoke which grows in size and
color as they approach it.

The vehicle comes to the top of a rise and a single
shot is HEARD and the driver slumps forward.

Carolyn and Brook both scream.

Shayne covers his eyes and Thomas grabs hold of Brook.

ELLIOT

Oh my God. Oh my God!!

Elliot drops his camera and holds on to the
steering wheel.

He tries to reach the keys but they are just out
of his grasp as he tries to keep the vehicle under
control.

The driver has been shot through the shoulder but
he comes back to consciousness and grabs the wheel
away from Elliot.

At the top of the rise they all see below them a
scene of horror right out of an epic movie.

EXT. SAFARI HOTEL - LATE DAY

Below them the hotel is burning. There are several
dead laying in the dirt in front of the hotel.

There are other fires further away towards the Blyde Valley.

INT. SAFARI VEHICLE - LATE DAY

The driver turns on the radio in the truck as Carolyn tears off some cloth from a light sweater and tries to wrap the driver's wound.

The radio is a lot of HISSING with some background TALKING in languages different than English.

The driver keeps flipping stations until he gets a strong SIGNAL. They all listen as the driver tries to explain.

DRIVER

There has been some kind of attack, locally from an unknown terrorist group. They struck the safari hotels and took prisoners. They want some kind of government change.

ELLIOT

What will happen to the tourists?

DRIVER

They say they will kill them unless the demands are met.

ELLIOT

My God, we're in the middle of a civil war. What do we do?

DRIVER

We have to go back to Johannesburg, now. It is not safe.

The driver drives the vehicle forward.

THOMAS

I thought you said we were going back.

DRIVER

We have to get fuel or we will walk back.

ELLIOT

Brook, Shayne, Thomas, get down,
below the doors. You too Carolyn.

The kids and Carolyn crouch down as the vehicle comes down the rise and approaches the burning buildings.

The Driver drives way around the front until he finds a safe passage to where the diesel is pumped.

The whole area seems to be evacuated except for the dead.

Brook pokes her head up.

ELLIOT

Keep your head down Brook.

The driver pulls up to the pumps and looks around.
EXT. SAFARI VEHICLE - LATE DAY

He gets out carefully and walks to the back of the vehicle.

He moves cautiously to the pumps and begins to take off one of the hoses.

Suddenly there is gun fire from every direction.

The driver drops the hose and runs into a warehouse just behind the pumps.

Elliot slides over into the drivers seat and turns on the vehicle.

INT. SAFARI VEHICLE - LATE DAY

He slams down the gas pedal and the vehicle burns sand as it grabs onto the small roadway and races down a road towards the jungle.

The children are holding on for their lives.

Bullets ricochet off the sides of the metal truck.

Everyone but Elliot is screaming.

A bullet breaks the front wind shield.

The jungle is approaching quickly as Elliot tears away at the glass so he can see.

Bullets hit one of the tires and the vehicle goes slightly out of control.

THOMAS

Dad, watch out!!

Elliot looks up and they are heading right for a tree.

He turns off the engine just in time and the vehicle enters the dark and steaming jungle.

The vehicle goes only a little further and then stops on its flat wheels.

ELLIOT

Get out!! Everyone out!!

Brook is trying to get her luggage.

ELLIOT

No time for that Brook.

She gets her backpack and Shayne and Thomas both grab their backpacks.

EXT. JUNGLE - AFTERNOON

The SOUNDS of boots running towards them drives Carolyn out of the vehicle.

Elliot takes the lead and Thomas takes the back. They start running, following the road until the road just runs out.

They stop for a moment but they HEAR that someone

is still coming after them.

Carolyn is exhausted as well as Brook.

Elliot picks up Brook and Thomas and Shayne grab their mother and pull them deeper into the jungle.

The jungle is dark and they pick their way through deep, lush greenery and thick tangled vines.

The SOUNDS of rushing water seems to be just in front of them.

ELLIOT

Come on, I hear water. This way.

They move slower now because of the darkness.

The SOUND of rushing water grows as they move towards it.

THOMAS

Dad.

Elliot turns and sees a group of dark skinned MEN combing the low grass very near them.

Elliot motions for everyone to get down and hide.

Brook is crying and Carolyn is trying to sooth her as the men come closer.

Just as the men are about to walk right over them one of their commanders orders a change of direction.

The armed men turn away and move back towards the burning hotel.

The family is frozen in fear under deep and dark underbrush.

They wait until there is no more SOUND coming from the armed men.

Elliot stands up and tests the waters.

He steps out into the open and then signals everyone to join him.

They follow Elliot towards the SOUND of the rushing water.

The vines are thick and the underbrush is uneven. The family moves forward like one unit, everyone helping everyone else.

Brook is terrified and she is almost unconscious.

Carolyn walks right behind Elliot trying to give comfort to Brook who Elliot now carries.

They approach an area in front of them that is light.

They move more quickly towards the brighter part of the dense jungle.

Elliot gets caught up in some vines and he has to put Brook down just to untangle himself.

He lifts Brook up again and they crawl over some big boulders.

The boulders in front of them get larger and larger until they are moving on a solid rock surface and suddenly they break out of the jungle into the light.

In front of them is part of the Blyde River Gorge. It's like looking at the Grand Canyon times ten with greenery and a massive jungle on both sides.

Over a hundred feet below, the waters of the Blyde River boil and tumble down a pre-historic ramp way of ancient rocks and wind chasms millions of years old.

Elliot grabs onto everyone and holds them in a group.

They look down, they look all around them, they are

looking for a direction.

Thomas points to a small animal trail and leads off.

The small rut across the rocks weaves and turns but heads steadily down.

The family works their way down slowly to a point where they are just fifty or sixty feet above a calmer section of the water.

The animal trail leads close to the edge on a steeper section of the climb.

Thomas is leading and Elliot is bring up the back.

Carolyn is behind Thomas with Brook now, right behind her and holding the back of Carolyn's jeans so she won't stumble.

Shayne is behind Brook and helps steady her on the steep parts.

They come to a tricky part where Elliot stands on one side and reaches around to pull everyone, one at a time, over a part where the trail disappears.

Carolyn just makes it around the little outcropping in the mountain.

Brook slowly starts around when she loses her footing.

Shayne dives for her and pushes her around to Elliot's receiving hands.

Shayne starts to slide down some shale and he can't stop his momentum.

Thomas starts to dive for his brother when his dad yells at him.

ELLIOT

Don't Thomas, stay there!!

Elliot gets down on his hands and knees and tries to climb down in the shale but Shayne keeps moving until he is moving too fast to stop.

SHAYNE

Dad!! Dad!!!. Dad, please!!!

CAROLYN

Shayne! Shayne!! Please God
don't take me son. Shayne!!

Brook screams as Shayne flies off the side of the cliff.

He waves his arms trying to keep his balance in the sky as he falls.

His family just watches their son fall all the way into the river below and disappear.

ELLIOT

Shayne!! S h a y n e.

Elliot crawls back up to where Carolyn is holding Brook.

He reaches around the outcropping and pulls his son Thomas into his arms.

Elliot and Thomas search every rock with their eyes but there is nothing below them but moving water and the SOUND of the wind whistling through the rocks.

After many long minutes Elliot turns his son up the path.

Thomas takes the lead followed by Brook, Carolyn and Elliot.

They hike along the path until it branches out to a larger game trail and they follow that trail until it's too dark to see.

EXT. BLYDE RIVER CANYON - NIGHT

Elliot finds a place in the tall grass just off the trail.

They all bundle up against the night cold with Brook in the middle.

Brook and Carolyn go to sleep crying.

Thomas does not sleep, nor does his father.

EXT. BLYDE RIVER CANYON - DAY

The morning breeze blows up the grass around them and Brook wakes up frightened.

Her mother sits up with her and holds onto her daughter.

Elliot guides them away to a more sheltered place under a rock arch.

They form a small circle and put everything they have in the circle.

ELLIOT

Okay, we have Brook's back pack and Thomas back pack. We have my watch, Thomas Swiss Army Knife, my reading glasses and two canteens. A small First Aid kit and two cans of insect repellent. Extra socks, Thomas' s journal and a pencil. Lip gloss, an I-Pod with ear phones some underwear for Brook and a sports bra for a nine year old.

Elliot wipes the perspiration already forming on his brow.

ELLIOT

Lets see, several maps and a few other pencils.

Thomas opens one of the maps and puts an X on the

spot where he thinks they are located.

THOMAS

I think this is where we are
about. And this is where . .
. Shayne fell. It's the season
for tourists all we have to do
is get to one of these spots and
. . .

ELLIOT

That's right Thomas, and someone
will help us.

BROOK

What about those men with the
guns?

Elliot looks at his nine year old daughter and
understands that she understands what is not apparent.

ELLIOT

Yes, your right Brook, it may
mean that those men have driven
everyone away.

CAROLYN

What does all that mean to us?

ELLIOT

It means that we have to try
and get to the closest tourist
site on the map and hope we
can find help.

THOMAS

That would be . . . these
waterfalls, I forget what
they're called.

ELLIOT

Okay, then it's the waterfalls.
Let's go.

Elliot and the rest of his family come out from

under the arch.

They look far down the thirty three kilometer gorge and wonder if they will ever make it.

Thomas starts out and the rest reluctantly follow.

INT. BAR/RESTAURANT - JOHANNESBURG - DAY

At a table near a corner where the television is most visible, JOANNE LINDEY, free-lance photographer working on assignment for the National Geographic is speaking to her guide/porter MASHU as she watches the television news.

JOANNE

Did you hear about that American family, the Danielson's, a vacation trip turned to hell?

MASHU

Yes. Quite terrible. They have been missing now five days . . . there is no chance. This is also another reason we should not go in there.

JOANNE

Terrorists Mashu and I hope you're wrong about that family.

A hotel courier comes to the table and gives JoAnne a message on a platter, marked confidential and urgent.

JoAnne gives the man a tip and Mashu thanks him in the local language.

She opens the post and reads it carefully.

MASHU

Not more trouble, please.

JOANNE

The country of South Africa is closing its airspace temporarily

due to the terrorists. We have
to go now or not at all.

MASHU

You scare me to death JoAnne
Lindey but, if you are going
to shoot pictures of the
Blyde Valley you will have to
have me along.

Mashu stands as JoAnne throws some money on the table.

They leave the restaurant through a side door.

EXT. HELIPORT JOHANNESBURG - DAY

Mashu is putting in the last supplies as the
helicopter pilot starts up the blades.

JoAnne's back-pack is slightly opened and the post
she received in the restaurant falls out.

Mashu captures it quickly and begins to replace it
in the pack when he reads the words, "do not go".

He takes it out quickly and opens the post which is
from JoAnne's editor at the National Geographic. He explains
in the letter that due to excessive danger
the magazine does not clear her for the trip into
the Blyde Valley.

Mashu looks around and then replaces the post and
closes the pack.

He steps back out and turns as JoAnne comes running
up and throws one more bag into the helicopter.

The SOUND of the machine is deafening.

Mashu gives JoAnne a thumbs up and she jumps in.

Mashu takes one more look around, just to remember
the world he is leaving.

He jumps in and the door closes behind him.

The craft climbs slowly into the air and then turns hard for the Mpumalanga Province.

EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The land below has many colors and changes as the helicopter makes its way towards the river in the Blyde River Canyon Gorge.

There is low, dry and arid brush lands where the lion and the rhino are kings and this passes directly into dense jungles which skirt the sides and plateaus of the Blyde Canyon region.

Below, deep in the gorge is the Blyde River running fast, slow, into narrows and out to lake size proportions.

The water color changes from deep slow green to bristling white when it cascades down falls and across rapids.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The gorge comes up in the distance as JoAnne focuses her camera and shoots her introduction to this huge park.

As the helicopter gets closer JoAnne uses larger lenses to zoom even closer to this magnificent paradise.

Through the lens of her camera the gorge comes closer and closer and closer until the mists and the rolling clouds which constantly surround the upper rim, come clearly into view.

Huge trees stand out of the mist like sentinels guarding a sacred entrance.

One of those trees climbs up out of the ground and turns into a giant hand sending five large limbs up into the umbrella of its leaf pattern.

EXT. HUGE TREE - MORNING

In the hand of this very tree Elliot is asleep with Carolyn on one side of him and Brook on the other.

Behind Brook, Thomas is curled into a ball using his back-pack as a pillow.

A large plate spider crawls down onto Elliot's body and walks down to his feet and then out over the edge of the tree.

A large snake drops its head down over Thomas. The animal rocks back and forth and then retreats higher up the tree.

Outside the prehistoric shell of this giant are lanes of tiny insects running constantly up and down in a perpetual food gathering ritual.

Thomas wakes up slowly and discovers a giant moth has attached itself to his shirt.

THOMAS

Dad. Dad!!

Elliot wakes up along with Carolyn and Brook.

Elliot separates himself from the girls and gently lifts the moth onto a branch.

CAROLYN

It's so beautiful.

BROOK

I wish Shayne could see it.

ELLIOT

We all wish that Brooky.

Elliot gets the canteens and checks their water supply.
Everyone takes a drink and then puts on their packs.

BROOK

I'm really hungry dad.

THOMAS

Dad knows we're all hungry.

ELLIOT

That's right and fortunately for us, after reading tons of material about this place food should not be a problem. But first, let's get out of this tree.

Thomas takes the lead as he dips his leg over a large branch and then guides himself down, holding onto the vines like ropes.

Brook follows Thomas followed by Carolyn and then Elliot.

The get to the bottom and work their way out of the dense ferns back onto an animal trail which runs along the ridge with the canyon far below them.

The four walk in a straight line with Thomas trying to clear some of the over-hanging branches and leaves. Elliot keeps a watchful eye out for anything.

He stops for a moment and picks up a large eucalyptus branch and uses it for a walking stick.

A little way down the trail Brook stops suddenly.

BROOK

Look, up there.

High in the canopy above them is a banana tree bulging with ripe bananas.

ELLIOT

Good eye Brook, very good eye.

Elliot and Thomas look at each other and then Thomas turns and begins to climb through and up the vines.

Carolyn holds Brook as Elliot tries to guide his son from the ground.

CAROLYN

Hold tight Thomas and don't
look down.

Thomas struggles until he reaches a large limb where he can stand just under the bunches of bananas.

He takes out his Swiss Army knife and hacks away at the end of a small cluster of bananas.

The bunch breaks off and Thomas throws it over his shoulder and starts down.

He weaves and waves on the vines. He slips and free-falls a few feet but catches himself.

Brook lets out a gasp but then sees he's alright.

Carolyn holds Brook so hard she accidentally hurts her.

BROOK

You're hurting me mom.

Carolyn lets her go just as Thomas drops to the ground and then drops the bananas.

Brook screams and steps back.

Thomas stops and then his dad reaches down and picks up his waling stick.

ELLIOT

Son, don't move.

THOMAS

What is it dad?

ELLIOT

Just don't move.

A large, black tree tarantula is crawling up Thomas' s back towards his neck.

Elliot reaches over with his stick and very carefully works it under the belly of the spider and then lifts it off quickly and places it on the ground.

CAROLYN

It's huge. Is it poisonous?

THOMAS

Wow. That was on me?

The spider glides away into the darkness of the ferns and disappears.

ELLIOT

I don't know. I'm just glad we didn't have to find out.

Elliot brushes his son off as Carolyn picks through the bananas carefully and gives one to Brook.

There is a high SHRIEK above them as several of the local monkeys come out and scream in disfavor of this interruption.

Elliot picks out some of the less ripe fruit and puts it in the back-pack for later.

There is a NOISE in the deep ferns and everyone stops and looks.

Hiding under a dark leaf a pair of amber eyes looks menacingly out of the darkness.

CAROLYN

What is it? Do you see anything?

ELLIOT

I don't know, I can't see anything.

CAROLYN

Let's just go.

Elliot carefully picks up his stick and Thomas takes the lead down the animal trail and around the side of the ridge.

They walk again in a straight line, fighting through denser under-brush and huge ferns as large as tree.

Brook starts swatting insects so they stop and everyone applies some of the precious insect repellent.

ELLIOT

Remember, don't touch your eyes and don't put your fingers in your mouth. This stuff is really strong.

They get back on the trail and forge ahead.

The trail starts to take a more direct route down.

As they move down the cooler mists from the top leave them and the heat of the African jungle comes up and burns across their faces.

The steeper trail slows the hikers down as Carolyn and Elliot are extra careful now not to lose another child.

There is the SOUND of a helicopter off in the distance.

Carolyn stops.

CAROLYN

Wait! Listen!!

Everyone stops on the trail. Everyone listens.

No one hears it but Carolyn.

ELLIOT

I don't hear anything, are you
sure . . .

CAROLYN

Shhhh!! Listen, damn it.

Brook is shocked to hear her mother swear.

Still no one else hears it.

Carolyn breaks down and has to kneel. She can't
control her tears. She is at a total loss.

Brook walks to her mother and wraps her arms
around her.

BROOK

Please mom, don't cry, please.

THOMAS

Shhh!! Listen now.

A small black dot is approaching them in the sky.
It looks like a giant bumble bee from their
perspective but it sounds just like a helicopter.

ELLIOT

I see it. I see it!!

Elliot begins to wave his hands and arms.

Brook moves away from her mom and begins shouting
at the aircraft.

Carolyn stands and waves.

BROOK

Its coming mom, they're coming
for us.

The helicopter does not change its path but passes
the Danielson's without seeing their signs.

The whole family is almost hysterical trying to make
some contact.

The aircraft passes over them and disappears in the
higher mist.

One by one they drop their arms.

One by one they give up a little more hope for being
found.

One by one they sit on the trail in frustration and
fear.

Behind them, in the darkness of the jungle, a pair
of amber eyes follows all of their movement.

The eyes disappear from one part of the jungle and
reappear in another part closer to the family,
closer to Brook.

Suddenly Thomas turns his head and looks right
into the darkness hiding the animal.

ELLIOT

What is it son?

THOMAS

Something's following us dad,
I can hear it and I just saw it.

ELLIOT

Okay everyone, get up slowly and
come with me. Don't look back
just move forward.

Everyone stands and follows Thomas down the trail.

Elliot has a firm hold on his walking stick as he looks back to make sure they are protected from the rear.

The trail gets darker as it descends towards the river below them.

They disappear into the darkness.

EXT. ROUTE 532 - MPUMALANGA PROVINCE - DAY

The helicopter carrying JoAnne and Mashu lands right on the road, Route 532, The Panorama Route which travels the distance of the Blyde River Valley, north to south.

With the blades still running JoAnne and Mashu get out of the helicopter and pull all of their equipment out on the ground.

Without waiting the pilot takes the helicopter straight up and then turns off for Johannesburg.

After the SOUND is clear JoAnne looks up at Mashu as he begins to carry the equipment across the road.

JOANNE

What was that all about?

MASHU

He got orders to get out of here.
They told him it was dangerous.

JoAnne helps him until all the equipment is off the road in a dusty, sandy turn out off the highway.

JOANNE

So now what?

MASHU

We are supposed to have local transportation. Right here at this spot.

Down the road the irregular ROAR of a diesel engine comes closer and closer.

An old US Army style transportation vehicle comes into view.

The truck lumbers on towards them and finally slows down and pulls off into the turn out.

Two black South African BOYS in their pre teens get out of the truck and speak to Mashu in their language.

Mashu listens mostly and answers occasionally.

There is a lot of hand waving and body language but in the end the boys turn away from Mashu and load up the track.

The first third of the truck is a covered cab with three sets of seat. The back part of the truck has a small steel fence welded around it and is used to transport luggage.

JoAnne pulls Mashu aside while the boys load the back of the truck.

JOANNE

What's going on Mashu?

MASHU

The boys are here because their parents are fighting this group who has invaded their land.

Mashu pulls JoAnne a distance away from the boys.

MASHU

The boys say everyone but locals and a few whites have left while the fighting goes on. Almost all of the tourist sites have been evacuated except for some guards to fight looters. There have been many deaths.

JOANNE

Did they say anything about the
American family that's lost.

Mashu turns to the boys and addresses them in their language.

There is more hand waving and then the boys continue
their task.

MASHU

All they know about is some
white people are being cared for
in a village further down river.
They don't know what happened.

JoAnne begins to think in realistic terms about how dangerous
this could be.

The boys finish loading. They jump up in the cab
and wave for Mashu and JoAnne to join them.

Mashu helps JoAnne up to the seat and then climbs
in behind her and closes the door.

The truck bucks forward a few times until it gets
on the road.

The vehicle straightens itself out and heads south.

The diesel engine coughs and the big truck
occasionally weaves out of control as the South
African boy driver struggles to keep it on the road.

Directly across from the direction of the truck,
over the rim of the escarpment and down all the way
to the river and then back up the other side the
little line of descending people dots the progress
of the Danielson family.

EXT. BLYDE RIVER GORGE - DAY

Like ants on a hillside Thomas leads them down a tiny trail which turns around a large boulder and suddenly becomes a very large, well traveled hiking trail.

Everyone walks around and examines carefully what would be a normal trail in a National Park but these weren't normal times.

Elliot finds a small candy-bar wrapper and civilization seems suddenly closer for everyone.

Nothing else is found except that Thomas begins to prickle when he realizes he sees, for the first time, what has been following them.

In a tree, across the trail and down hill from them sits a large leopard.

The animal is lying on a branch with its feet dropped below it like a rag doll.

Everyone stops and looks at Thomas. They follow his stare to the animal which is obvious now.

Carolyn grabs Brook and pulls her close to him.

Elliot goes to Thomas and slowly pulls him behind so Elliot stands between the animal and his family.

ELLIOT

Take the trail down, I'll be
right behind you.

Carolyn guides Brook down the trail with Thomas following.

Elliot moves slowly away but never takes his eyes off the animal.

They move like a crab in jerky motions as they try and stay on the trail and watch for the animal.

Elliot slips but immediately stands back up. He looks back to the tree but the leopard is gone.

He moves quickly forward, pushing everyone along while looking over his shoulder.

They move faster now that they have a rhythm together.

They come to a group of large boulders and the trail passes in between them.

They struggle around the large rocks and then suddenly, they come out the other side and in front of them is one of the lower, safari hotels.

There is no one in sight.

EXT. SAFARI HOTEL - DAY

ELLIOT

Run for it.

Thomas grabs Brook on one side and Carolyn grabs her on the other.

They all make a mad dash towards the tiny set of buildings.

The leopard appears on the top of the large boulders and watches them run.

Suddenly the cat jumps down onto the trail and runs after them in full pursuit.

Elliot reaches the door of the office but its locked.

They move quickly around the side of the office to the small eating area but the two doors are locked.

They move down to the row of small cabins and try each door one at a time but they are all locked.

The cat reaches the office door and smells the door.

The cat moves around the side of the building where the Danielson's are desperately trying doors.

The cat crouches down and moves straight towards the group.

Elliot takes his stick and breaks the window on one of the cabin doors.

He reaches in, cuts himself but manages to unlock the door.

He removes his bloody arm from the door and opens it.

Elliot pulls Brook and Carolyn into the room.

He takes his stick and using it like a spear, throwing at it the oncoming cat and hits it in the shoulder.

Elliot pulls Thomas into the cabin and slams the door.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Carolyn and Thomas throw a towel cabinet in front of the broken window.

Elliot tears the bed sheet and wraps up his arm.

Brook is petrified in the corner where she crouches down next to a window.

Thomas goes from window to window, looking out, trying to see the animal.

Elliot sits on the bed as Carolyn helps him tie the bandage.

Suddenly the window next to Brook crashes open and the top of the animal sticks into the room.

Thomas takes a lamp and pulls the plug out of the wall.

The leopard reaches down with its mouth and yanks Brook off the floor and pulls her out the window.

Carolyn goes temporarily insane.

She screams like a banshee and dives out the window on her daughters heels.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The leopard drags Brook across the ground screaming.

Carolyn screams even louder as she runs to where Elliot's stick hit and picks it up.

Carolyn screams again like a female warrior and in seconds she catches the animal and in one over-the-head stroke she brings the stick crashing down on the leopards head.

The animal immediately drops Brook and moves backward to escape the blows from Carolyn.

Carolyn is like a totally insane person screaming as loud as she can that the ' bitch can't take her daughter'.

Carolyn's hair is fling in every direction. Her clothes are torn and flying about her. She is dirty and her make-up disappeared a long time ago.

She fights for her daughter with the same kind of viciousness as the animal.

Its too much for the leopard finally and the animal runs off in the direction of the trail.

Thomas and Elliot come running from the cabin and pick Brook up off the ground.

Carolyn turns to them.

She is mad with rage but it softens and finally goes away as she drops the stick and helps the men carry their daughter into the cabin.

INT. CABIN TWO - NIGHT

In an adjoining cabin Brook is asleep on the bed

and Thomas is asleep on the floor next to her.

The tiny table in the middle of the room is covered with food which has been devoured.

The windows have the shades pulled and there is a cabinet over the front door.

Elliot and Carolyn sit on the bamboo sofa drinking from a bottle of Absolute Vodka.

ELLIOT

So, you think every place is going to be like this, abandoned?

CAROLYN

I don't know Elliot but I know this. This jungle isn't taking anymore of my children, or my husband. Even if we have to walk all the way to the dam.

Elliot is asleep, sitting up. His arm is bandaged up to his elbow. He looks older but peaceful in his sleep.

Carolyn sits and slowly has another drink. She looks at her family in the room through the candle light.

She hardens her heart and closes her eyes as the tears begin to flow.

CAROLYN

Shayne, I miss you so much my little pumpkin seed. My brave, brave boy. What will I tell your grand parents?

There is a rumble across the sky and then the sky opens up in full rain fall.

The drops spatter across the top of the steel corrugated metal roof of the safari hotel.

Carolyn sits in the candle light and guards her brood as they sleep.

INT. ROUTE 532 HOTEL - NIGHT

The bar is in the middle of a downpour. JoAnne and Mashu sit away from the opening to the courtyard and drink coffee.

The hotel is empty except for a few guards and the owners.

The bar has a two way radio and the bartender is turning the stations looking for local news.

He stops at one channel and listens.

Mashu straightens up and listens very carefully.

JOANNE

What is it?

MASHU

The rebels or terrorists, what ever they are, they seem to be headed for that village that is caring for those white people.

JOANNE

So they can take them for hostages?

MASHU

Yes.

JOANNE

Oh God Mashu, I'm so sorry I got you involved. I have to tell you something very important.

MASHU

The note from your editor fell out of the pack in the helicopter, I read it accidentally, forgive me.

JOANNE

Forgive me for not saying anything.
I wanted to do this spread, I've
always wanted to shoot these
pictures, I'm sorry. It meant
too much and now it seems like
it means nothing. How far is
the village?

MASHU

The boys wont go there.

CAROLYN

Fine, we'll drive the vehicle
ourselves.

MASHU

This is crazy.

CAROLYN

How far?

MASHU

A couple of days. But if the
rain keeps up, more. I'll go
talk with the driver.

Mashu stands and walks out into the rain and
disappears.

The television shows the aerial view from a
helicopter of a small safari hotel burning above
the Blyde River Valley.

JoAnne is fascinated by the scenes and walks closer
to the television.

Mashu comes up behind her and taps her on the shoulder.

She turns around quickly, frightened and then
reassured as she sees Mashu.

MASHU

They will go with us. You should try and sleep. They want to begin as soon as the rain stops.

JoAnne walks back to their table and sits down.

She puts her feet across another chair and leans her head back.

She closes her eyes and drops off to sleep.

INT. CABIN TWO - MORNING

Like Joanne, Carolyn's feet are stretched across another chair. She is sitting up but she's asleep.

Elliot is asleep next to her laid out on the sofa.

Brook is still asleep in the bed and Thomas is up, standing at a window and watching.

Carolyn HEARS a stick crack on the outside and is immediately awake.

She turns to Thomas who gives her a 'be quiet' sign.

Carolyn gently rocks Elliot awake.

Thomas carefully wakes Brook and immediately give her the 'be quiet' sign.

Elliot looks over at Thomas who points out the window and then makes a sign like holding a rifle.

Brook crawls off the bed and joins her mother.

Elliot crawls off the couch to a window and looks out.

In the far brush Elliot can barely make out the movement of armed men moving past the abandoned

safari hotel.

Elliot waves everyone into the closet where he closes the slatted doors.

A face comes up to the window from the outside and looks in.

The face disappears.

In a few moments Elliot opens the door carefully and looks out.

He crawls to the window and more carefully looks out.

He sees the back of a man's head on the other side of the glass.

Elliot ducks as the man turns around. He is urinating on the side of the cabin.

When he finishes he turns and leaves.

Elliot HEARS him calling to his friends.

Thomas sticks his head out of the closet.

Elliot motions for him to bring everyone out.

The family crawls out like a line of ants.

Elliot opens the front door a crack and looks out.

EXT. CABIN TWO - MORNING

The ground is soaked but the rain is gone and it is humid. The biting insects are out and Elliot can see them.

The SOUND of insect repellent hisses inside the cabin.

Elliot, standing comes out the door. Behind him is Brook followed by Carolyn with Thomas in the

back.

They quickly make their way into the jungle, away from the direction of the terrorists.

INT. JUNGLE - MORNING

Under the root of a tree giant the Danielson family squats in a huddle and looks at a map.

THOMAS

We're they the same ones who shot at us before?

ELLIOT

I don't know son, they look the same.

BROOK

Are they still looking for us?

CAROLYN

No!! They're not looking for us, they're looking for anyone they can hurt or kidnap because they're morons, they're inhuman, sick .

. . .

Elliot eyes his wife carefully and then looks back down at the map.

Thomas points to a position on the map just a little ways away from the first set of waterfalls.

THOMAS

I think we're about here. Just past these waterfalls, right here maybe, there is suppose to be a native village, remember, from the brochure.

ELLIOT

Yes, I remember. It's the one
Shayne wanted. . . said we
had to go to.

CAROLYN

Then that's where we should go!!

BROOK

Are they friendly?

THOMAS

Yes Brook, they sell things to
tourists.

ELLIOT

All right then, that's the plan.
Can we make it?

Everyone looks at everyone else. Brook is obviously exhausted and Carolyn is very tired. Everyone's clothing is torn and they look like they haven't bathed in weeks, which is true.

Thomas steps into the lead and the rest follow in a clump.

In just a few minutes Thomas finds the main hiking trail and they begin again to descend, closer and closer to the river valley below.

The family moves slowly even though the trail is well kept.

Brook has to stop often and sit and rest. Elliot and Thomas are always watchful for everything around them.

The SOUND of the fall approaches as the trail begins to rise towards the pool where a vast cascade of water tumbles through the air and falls in spectacular fashion into a deep bottomless pool.

The SOUND of the water gives them new energy and they move faster until they come up to the top and there, thundering before them is the beauty and splendor of this magnificent attraction for tourists world wide.

The family slowly walks up to the waters edge.

Thomas squats down and puts his head in and washes through his dirty hair.

Brook removes her shoes and dangles her feet.

Carolyn and Elliot sit at the side of the pool and watch their children just like it was supposed to be on a real vacation.

Suddenly the SOUND of a helicopter comes over the top of the escarpment high above them.

The aircraft circles down and makes one pass by the falls.

Elliot and Carolyn are jumping up and down, Thomas and Brook are splashing water up.

The helicopter moves further and further away and disappears down the valley.

THOMAS

They had to see us. They had to.

BROOK

Do you think they saw us dad?

Elliot is still waving his hands but drops them now in despair.

CAROLYN

Do you think they're looking for us?

ELLIOT

I hope so. I pray to God, I hope so.

Elliot sits down on the wet rocks and places his head between his hands.

Carolyn slides her arm across her husbands shoulders and pulls him close.

CAROLYN

(to Elliot in a whisper)

Don't let them see you give up.

Elliot pulls his head out of his arms and holds onto his wife.

Thomas fills the canteens while Brook eats a banana and tosses pebbles into the pool.

The African heats bears down as the sun reaches mid day.

INT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - MID DAY

The old, surplus, army vehicle is running better and the boy driver is driving better.

JoAnne is shooting photographs out of the window.

JOANNE

Pull over here! Stop. Pull over.

The boy driver pushes down on the brakes and brings the large truck over to the side of the road.

EXT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - MID DAY

JoAnne gets out of the truck with her camera.

She takes out a very large lens and attaches it to the camera.

She points the camera down and focuses it on the abandoned safari hotel.

She looks at each building and into the jungle

surrounding it.

Her camera fires a picture.

A still frame shows an armed man, crouched in the jungle just beyond the hotel. Behind him are the forms of many more men waiting in the jungle. Mashu comes up next to her.

MASHU

What is it?

JOANNE

The rebel militia, just outside of a small, safari hotel.

MASHU

They are getting close to the village. We must go faster or we will not get there in time.

JoAnne and Mashu jump back in the truck.

The truck speeds away down the main road.

INT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - MID DAY

JoAnne has taken a road map out of her pack. She and Mashu examine it until they find a small, service road that takes off down the escarpment and onto the valley floor.

Mashu calls up to the boys and warns them to watch for the road very soon.

Suddenly the truck lurches off the road and feels like it is in free fall.

The boy driving is holding onto the wheel with all his might as they bounce down an old, gold mining road leading to the mines below.

The road is terrible, full of ruts and boulders.

From time to time the truck must stop and have

debris cleared from the front wheels.

As the truck drives down, the jungle gets thicker and the road gets worse but the boy driver keeps moving forward in his wrestling match with the steering-wheel.

JoAnne tries to hold onto her camera equipment.

Mashu just tries to hold on.

EXT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - LATE AFTERNOON

The vehicle goes helter-skelter down the side of the mountain.

The young driver pops up and down in the seat trying to watch where he is driving.

On different spots the truck hits large patches of mud and just slides through with no traction.

The vehicle is covered with mud and dirt by the time its only halfway down.

Branches, leaves and bushes stick out from cracks which have collected the material on the way down.

The truck comes around a corner which forms a turn out.

The boy driver pulls out and puts on the brakes.

The truck comes to a sliding stop. The driver gets out and runs into the jungle to relieve himself.

The other boy slides over into the drivers seat.

JoAnne and Mashu get out and look out over the expanse of the river valley.

She gets her camera and shoots some frames.

In the far distance she focuses on the village.

The camera fires and a single frame shows a village which seems deserted.

The boy comes out of the jungle and jumps up in the passenger seat.

Joanne and Mashu climb back in and the big rig bucks slowly forward as the new driver gets the hang of the old truck.

The vehicle continues down into the jungle and disappears through a giant growth of ferns.

EXT. BLYDE RIVER VALLEY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Danielson family is moving at a regular pace along the valley floor.

They walk right next to the rapidly moving Blyde River. The sun is intensely hot.

Rocks suddenly come falling down from high up above them.

ELLIOT

We have to get out of here.
Run for those caves.

Thomas turns and sees the dark mouths of several large cave openings.

He grabs Brook and pushes her towards the closest cave.

Carolyn and Elliot, with hands and arms over their heads, follow Thomas up the river bank.

Rocks fall all around them. The rocks range from hand size to basketball size.

Gun fire rings out as the rebels on a high trail shoot at the water below them.

Their rounds hit the river and ricochet off of

larger stones.

INT. CAVE - LATE DAY

Thomas and Brook are crouched down by a large set of boulders just inside the entrance.

Carolyn and Elliot come running up to join them.

Elliot is carrying Carolyn around her waste.

He puts her down on the sand and rips a piece of material from his ragged shirt.

THOMAS

What is it mom?

CAROLYN

Nothing Thomas but I want you to turn around for a minute, please.

Elliot pulls open her blouse and pushes the material up under one of her arms just below her bra.

ELLIOT

Its all right, it just cut the surface slightly. Probably a ricochet.

He pulls her blouse back up and Thomas turns back around.

Thomas and Brook crawl to their mom and hold onto her.

ELLIOT

They must be going to the village. I don't think they're following us and I still don't think they know we're here. All of the rocks and the shooting were just an accident. They 're shooting the water.

CAROLYN

We have to get to that village first if we're going to have any chance of getting out of this.

ELLIOT

Agreed. How are you two doing?

THOMAS

I'm ready.

BROOK

. . . . me too . . .

ELLIOT

All right then. We'll wait here a little longer and then take a shot at it.

The small, family unit huddles together as the blood dampens the outside of Carolyn's torn and filthy blouse.

The light outside the cave is dying and there is a cool chill in the air.

EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

Thomas leads Brook out of the mouth of the cave and back down to the hiking trail.

Elliot helps Carolyn out and down the soft sandy bank where they join their children.

They walk off into the darkness and disappear.

EXT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - EARLY MORNING

The truck is swerving and sliding as it makes it's last ditch effort to come to the bottom of the hill.

The truck rolls out onto the flat sand and begins to pick up speed as it heads towards the village.

The village is almost in front of them but it seems deserted.

The truck slows down and finally stops a hundred meters from the first structures which make up the village.

The boys get out along with Mashu and JoAnne.

They look around carefully but there is no one there and there is no SOUND except for the river.

Mashu and JoAnne carefully approach the village. The grass thatched huts with open doors and windows all seem abandon.

Mashu looks in one as JoAnne looks in another.

The boys come up behind them and follow them into each hut and then out again.

They work their way back until they are at the last hut in the village.

They go in the front and Mashu turns on a flashlight.

INT. VILLAGE HUT - EARLY MORNING

Someone inside the hut says quickly to 'turn it off'.

Mashu and Carolyn wait with the boys right at their side.

As their eyes focus in the dark this hut has several NATIVES in it along with a white boy and a white MAN.

The white boy is wrapped around his chest and one of his arms is in a sling. The white man appears to have been shot in the shoulder and has wounds also on his chest and arms.

Light slowly begins to pour into the hut as the sun clears the escarpment.

JOANNE

Hi, I'm JoAnne and this is Mashu.

I'm a photographer for The National Geographic Magazine. We've come to help you. There is a rebel force on the way here to kidnap you.

WHITE MAN

We know. The village has an old Army Two-Way Radio and we've been picking up their signals.

MASHU

Why have you not left?

The boy stands up next to the man.

BOY

We're waiting.

WHITE MAN

All the rest of the villagers have left. But we also heard on the radio about an American family that is also on their way here. They were spotted by a surveillance helicopter just up a ways at the waterfalls. These villagers have been brave enough to stay with us.

JOANNE

Who are you?

WHITE MAN

I'm Paul Kirby, a businessman from Wisconsin on vacation. This is as far as I got. I was staying at one of the small safari hotels when the rebels came and burned it down.

JOANNE

And is this your son?

There is a loud CRASH somewhere near the front huts.

JoAnne and Mashu look out of the hut so they can see what made the sound.

The two boys run away from the huts into the jungle.

JOANNE

We have a large vehicle in front.
We can take everyone here easily.
Lets go.

The villagers say some quick words to Mashu and they flee out the back of the hut and disappear in the jungle.

The day gets brighter and brighter as the sun reveals everything that is hiding.

MASHU

Come quickly.

EXT. VILLAGE HUT - EARLY MORNING

Paul Kirby and the boy come out of the hut and follow Mashu and JoAnne back towards the truck.

As they make their way closer to the truck the African drivers come running back and talk very quickly to Mashu.

CAROLYN

What is it?

MASHU

They say the men with guns are
coming into the back of the
village, now!!

Everyone picks up their pace.

They come around the final hut but they don't see the cause of the NOISE.

The African boys jump in the front seat and turn

on the engine.

Mashu helps Paul Kirby into the back of the truck.

JoAnne is about to step in when someone behind her YELLS which is accompanied by gun fire.

JoAnne turns and sees the Danielson's running out of the first hut towards the truck.

ELLIOT

Wait for us. Wait for us,
please!!!

Elliot is pulling Carolyn and Thomas is pushing Brook towards the vehicle.

JOANNE

Are you the Danielson's?

Elliot is running and yelling. Rebel forces have spotted them and are shooting at them.

JoAnne fires off a few pictures of the Danielson's and the rebel forces behind them.

ELLIOT

Yes!! Help us!!

Thomas reaches the truck first and pushes Brook up into one of the middle seats and then climbs in behind her.

Elliot just reaches the truck and tries to push Carolyn up into the seat.

Joanne throws her camera into a seat and helps push Carolyn.

A single young hand comes out of the truck and grabs onto Carolyn and pulls her up into the truck.

SHAYNE

Let me help you mom.

Carolyn climbs into a seat.

She turns quickly and finds herself sitting next to her eleven year old son Shayne.

She looks at her son and throws her arms around him crying uncontrollably.

Elliot jumps up into a seat.

He turns around and he can't believe his eyes.

Brook begins screaming and crying.

BROOK

Shayne, Shayne, Shayne!!!

CAROLYN

Shayne?? Shayne?!!

A bullet flies by them and breaks the window.

Shayne pulls his mom all the way into the seat.

JOANNE

Go!! Go now!!!

JoAnne looks up at her boy driver and screams.

JOANNE

Hit it!!!

The African boy pushes the pedal to the metal and the huge lumbering truck coughs and lurches forward and then takes off down the sand towards the old gold road.

INT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - MORNING

Carolyn is holding her son by his face. She looks deep into his eyes to make sure its him. She examines his face with her fingers as the tears flow out of her eyes and onto her shattered clothes.

She holds him and squeezes him as Paul Kirby talks.

PAUL KIRBY

Well, this is a hell of a reunion. I guess your son fell off the escarpment all they way down into the river. He popped up and floated down in the current.

Kirby coughs in pain and stops for moment.

PAUL KIRBY

He told me later he floated passed a hunting party from this village and they fished him out and brought him all the way down here to escape the rebels.

Brook has her hands wrapped around her brother.

Thomas holds Shayne' s free hand as Elliot strokes his sons head.

PAUL KIRBY

Guess he has some cracked ribs and a dislocated arm. Lucky to be alive if you ask me.

EXT. JOANNE'S VEHICLE - MORNING

The truck comes to the old gold road.

The African driver doesn't hesitate as he hits it and the vehicle slides and looses traction but pulls itself up the tortured roadway.

The vehicle bounces and slams against boulders but up it goes and finally disappears into the dense jungle.

Gun fire is HEARD below but the truck is faster than men on foot and eventually the gun fire is to far away to be cared about.

The truck is HEARD crashing and sliding but that SOUND too eventually is replaced by the NOISE of

birds fighting for local nests and the local food supply.

EXT. ROUTE 532 SAFARI HOTEL - NIGHT

The truck coughs and lurches into the wet parking space in front of the hotel.

Lights come on inside and several of the guards and the owners come out armed.

The truck door opens and JoAnne gets out.

JOANNE

Help us please, we have people
who are hurt. The American
family is here.

The men from the hotel immediately come to the truck.

The doors open and they pass Carolyn out along with Shayne.

Elliot follows holding onto Brook who is passed out asleep.

The rain begins to open up on the weary travelers.

Thomas hops out along with the African boys.

Thomas shakes their hands and thanks them.

Mashu gets out and explains to the boys what is said.

The boys shake everyone's hand and then rapidly get back in the truck.

Mashu and JoAnne pull out there equipment as fast as they can.

Men from the hotel help with the equipment as the boys drive their truck home.

JOANNE

Oh God, I didn't pay them.

MASHU

I took care of them don't worry.
Come out of the rain.

Mashu and JoAnne run into the dim lights of the hotel.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Brook is asleep on her mothers lap on a nice, white sofa large enough for six.

Thomas lies on the ground below his brother's feet listening to Shayne tell what happened to him.

Elliot is beside his wife dressing her side with new bandages.

SHAYNE

When I was falling all I could think about was you mom and dad and that I wouldn't see you anymore and that I wouldn't see the rest of the vacation and I won it. And then I hit the water. It was really hard and I think I was unconsciousness for a few seconds and then I remember that I was on the top of the water and moving really fast and I was trying to look up to see if I could see you but it was just all clouds and then I felt like I was really hurt and my side hurt and my arm really hurt.

Then . . . I was in the village and this man was speaking to me in English. He was saying . . . that a family had been spotted by a helicopter and it looked like they were coming to the village and . . . I knew

. . . . it was you.

Shayne holds up his hand to his mother's face and passes into deep sleep.

CAROLYN

(to herself)

Thank you . . . for not taking
my son. Thank you.

She holds her son even tighter.

ELLIOT

Thomas.

THOMAS

Yes dad.

ELLIOT

Bed son.

THOMAS

Okay dad.

Thomas rolls away and finds his blankets on the floor below the main bed.

He crawls up on the blankets and goes immediately to sleep.

Carolyn tries to move Shayne but can't.

Elliot picks up his son and places him on the bed.

Carolyn moves out from under Brook and leaves her on the sofa asleep.

Elliot comes back and collects his wife. He carries her across the room to the bed and lets her down next to her son.

Carolyn is already asleep.

Elliot walks to the front door of the room and opens it.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Elliot walks out in the rain.

He sees some dim lights coming from the bar area.

He walks over and finds JoAnne and Mashu drinking coffee and talking with the owner.

EXT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

ELLIOT

My I?

JOANNE

Please, by all means. Sit here.
I thought you would be exhausted
beyond exhausted.

ELLIOT

I'm too tired to sleep and . . .
. . . we found our son alive,
how could you sleep after that?

MASHU

I don't know. What you care for
some coffee?

ELLIOT

Yes, yes please.

Mashu speaks to the owner who goes for coffee.

ELLIOT

It's a miracle you know. We saw
him fall, a hundred feet straight
down and . . . we . . .
couldn't do anything. Then he
was gone.

The owner brings Elliot a cup of coffee and Elliot

thanks him.

Elliot fixes it the way he likes it.

JOANNE

Well, I hate to be the one to tell you but we're not out of the woods yet. The owner was just telling us the rebels have crossed over the river and are now on this side. They're getting radio reports that the armed men are coming up the same gold road we used to get here.

ELLIOT

When?

MASHU

Tomorrow morning.

ELLIOT

No! God in heaven no!!

JOANNE

I've tried to call the helicopter pilot who brought us here but he won't get the message until the morning. It takes him about two hours to fly out here.

MASHU

We just have to sit it out and wait.

JOANNE

The owners will stay up all night and monitor the radio. If anything changes we'll come and get you. I wouldn't say anything until . . . you have to.

ELLIOT

My son won the vacation. He

wrote a jungle jingle for a juice company. Sounds funny doesn't it. I always wanted to go on a safari even when I was a kid. My wife, Carolyn, never wanted to come. . . she saw bad things happening in her mind. But, in the end, we're still together and . . . we'll have stories for a life time.

JOANNE

We'll be all right. The National Geographic has never let me down yet. You're famous you know? Your family has been all over international news for weeks. There were many helicopters sent out to try and find you so the news has been percolating. Shayne will be a hero. You will all be heroes.

Elliot is shaking his head but he is asleep.

Mashu gently removes the cup of coffee from his hand.

The owner brings a blanket and covers Elliot up.

Joanne raises her coffee cup to Elliot.

JOANNE

To the American heroes, for their will to persevere.

Mashu raises his cup and they drink.

Mashu gets up and walks out to the edge of the covering.

He reaches his hand out and lets the water drop

across his palm.

JOANNE

What are you thinking?

MASHU

I just wonder if we will ever get these photographs out of here. I am going to walk in the rain for a while, the water feels cool on my body.

Mashu walks off the concrete slab and into the rain.

EXT. ROUTE 532 SAFARI HOTEL - MORNING

In the outside bar area Elliot is still asleep, alone.

Coming back from the spot where he left Mashu hurries up to the concrete and gently wakes Elliot.

ELLIOT

What is it?

MASHU

Time to go Mr. Elliot. Go wake your family and meet me in the front of the hotel. Don't bring anything too heavy.

Mashu rushes off into the office behind the bar.

INT. BAR OFFICE - MORNING

The owners are on one side of the room loading up old time fire arms with a couple of modern weapons mixed in.

JoAnne is on a satellite phone to her editor.

JOANNE

No!! You don't understand.

This is the Danielson family
and we're about to face
the rebel forces with almost no
weapons.

JoAnne throws her hands in the air.

JOANNE

Frank, I am a photo journalist
and I have photos of the biggest
story of the century and if I
don't see my helicopter here
before the rebel militia shows
up, I'll sell those pictures
to Life Magazine. Do you
understand? We're in trouble!!

JoAnne puts the phone down and yells into it.

JOANNE

Tell the damn pilot to get his ass
in the air!! Now Frank!!

She hangs up and slams the phone down hard.

JOANNE

What a I mean what
an idiot!!!

(notices Mashu)

Where have you been?

MASHU

I watched last night, waiting
for the rebels.

JOANNE

And?!!!

MASHU

They are coming. They will be
here in an hour.

JOANNE

No, it has to be two hours.

MASHU

One hour, or less.

JOANNE

Oh God, what are we going to do?

MASHU

I was hoping you had a plan.
We could stay here and fight next to the owners.

JoAnne is shaking her head 'no' but she can't think of another alternative.

She stomps out of the office.

EXT. BAR OFFICE - MORNING

JoAnne storms out of the office followed by Mashu.

She walks to the Danielson's room and Mashu walks to the bar.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

JoAnne comes up to the door but it's open. She knocks a few times and the door opens even further.

She steps into the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

The Danielson's are all on the sofa and they are surrounding Shayne who is weak from his injuries.

ELLIOT

I don't think my family is in any condition to go anywhere.

JOANNE

Mr. Danielson, Mrs. Danielson, you have already performed a miracle so this is not the

time to stop. We have a
helicopter arriving within
. . . its coming as fast
as it can. We have to find
a way to hold out for a ride
home. Home!!

CAROLYN

Are you offering any suggestions?

JOANNE

Yes I'm suggesting
. . . . I'm trying to suggest
. . . that we . . .

MASHU

(from behind JoAnne)

. . . . hide!!

Everyone turns and sees Mashu standing in the doorway.

MASHU

We must hide and we must do it
now. Come with me.

Carolyn and Elliot look at Shayne.

SHAYNE

I'll be all right.

Shayne sits up and then carefully stands up.

His brother holds him on one side and his sister
holds him on the other.

They look up at the adults.

THOMAS

Let's go.

Mashu leaves the doorway as JoAnne backs up
through it.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - LATE MORNING

Mashu is walking out towards the front of the hotel.

JoAnne comes out of the hotel room backwards and then turns and waits for Shayne to be helped out the door.

Carolyn and Elliot come out last.

JoAnne instinctively takes their picture with a small digital camera she carries in her pocket.

She turns and they all follow Mashu, around the side of the hotel rooms and into the jungle.

INT. JUNGLE - LATE MORNING

Mashu stands and waits in a small clearing for the rest of the company to join him.

JoAnne and Elliot step into the clearing helping Carolyn.

Thomas and Brook help their brother into the clearing.

MASHU

Perhaps you do not know but this
country was once rich in gold.
It was gold that brought the
white man here for discovery.

Mashu walks a few steps away and pulls away some brush to expose a hole large enough for a person to duck down and walk into.

MASHU

The owners keep certain supplies
here, safe from the help, you
understand. Its a secret.
Go in quickly.

One by one they all enter the hole with Mashu being last.

INT. CAVE - LATE MORNING

The outside hole comes into the mountain for about ten feet and then the cave widens out to a room large enough to stand in.

Elliot finds several battery operated lanterns and turns them on.

In the eerie glow of battery light Mashu drags the brush back over the outside hole and then ducks down and enters the larger room.

The room is solid rock with make-shift shelves stacked along one side containing certain wines, specialty food items and some weapons.

Thomas finds one of the guns.

ELLIOT

Put it down son and let's pray
to God we don't have to use it.

Mashu finds several blankets stacked on the shelves. He and Joanne wrap up Carolyn and Shayne. It is cold in the cave.

Everyone else finds a dry spot and sits.

JoAnne checks her watch.

Elliot glances at his watch.

Brook, Shayne and Thomas are wrapped around their mother.

Occasionally Mashu walks up to the brush and tries to look out.

Some fifty minutes later everyone is sitting still in the cave almost asleep when the first SOUNDS come.

There is the SOUND of men yelling at a far distance.

Then there comes the SOUND of gun fire.

Then all is silent until another round of SHOUTING starts in the distance.

This is again followed by GUN FIRE.

The SOUND of someone running past the cave is followed by GUN FIRE which is much closer.

All is silent again.

Suddenly there is huge GUN FIRE like a war had started.

The brush is ripped away from the cave and the hotel owner sticks his head inside.

He shouts at Mashu and leaves quickly.

MASHU

Everyone out, very quickly,
the helicopter is coming.

JoAnne looks at her watch.

JOANNE

(to herself)
It's impossible.

Everyone is headed for the entrance at the same time.

EXT. CAVE - EARLY AFTERNOON

The hole to the cave explodes with people.

Mashu pulls Shayne out followed by his sister and brother.

Carolyn pops out the hole with Elliot right behind her followed by JoAnne.

The African owner speaks very fast to Mashu with

many hand gestures.

The owner moves quickly back to his hotel as gun fire resumes on the other side of the hotel buildings.

Mashu waves for everyone to follow him as he heads for the front of the hotel.

EXT. ROUTE 532 HOTEL - AFTERNOON

The Danielson's followed by JoAnne all follow Mashu through the hotel outside corridors until they arrive at the front.

Mashu keeps going until he is almost at the street.

A huge EXPLOSION takes place behind the hotel.

JoAnne is shooting pictures with her tiny camera.

The Danielson's come out to the front and move quickly towards Mashu.

The owners guards bring out much of Joanne's equipment and leave it in the parking spaces.

Another EXPLOSION hits behind the hotel followed by GUN FIRE.

The SOUNDS are incredible and Brook has to cover her ears.

Suddenly, over the tree tops a helicopter RUMBLES just above the tree branches and then drops down onto the road.

Mashu slams the big, side door open.

Thomas and Brook bring up Shayne.

The pilot reaches down and pulls him into the craft.

The hands and arms come out again and pull Brook, followed by Thomas into the craft.

Elliot brings up Carolyn as JoAnne tries to throw her equipment into the back of the helicopter.

The pilot pulls Carolyn into the craft when bullets ZING by them breaking the windows in the front office of the hotel.

MASHU

(shouting)

Miss Lindey, leave the equipment!!

Another EXPLOSION rocks the helicopter but it settles again on the road.

JoAnne drops her equipment except for one bag.

She runs to the helicopter where Elliot and Mashu push her in.

Elliot grabs Mashu and pushes him up into the craft.

INT. HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

An EXPLOSION in front of the hotel knocks the Pilot backwards in his seat as he pulls the craft up in the air.

Elliot grabs onto the rails and tries to pull himself in as the pilot tries to steady the craft.

Elliot is about to fall to the ground but Thomas unbuckles himself, drops down on the floor and reaches out and grabs his dad.

Shayne unbuckles himself and pounces on top of his brother and holds him inside.

Mashu reaches out and pulls Elliot over Thomas.

Elliot pulls his sons up and hugs them both as Mashu pushes the big door closed.

Mashu and Elliot get the boys back in a seat and then find a place for themselves.

The pilot makes a sharp turn in space and then levels out.

They all look down through the windows and on the road just a few miles away is parked an Army with canons and tanks aimed at the hotel.

ELLIOT

(to Mashu)

Is it the rebel militia?

MASHU

No Mr. Danielson, that is the South African Free Army. They are attacking the rebels behind the hotel.

JOANNE

(to the pilot)

What took you so long?

The pilot laughs.

PILOT

So long? I left as soon as I got your message. You left me a message, remember?

JOANNE

So you never talked to Frank?

PILOT

No. Why?

JOANNE

He would have told you not to come.

PILOT

Missed that call.

CAROLYN

Thank God.

Carolyn looks at her three children. They were children a month ago and now they are young adults with an experience no one else in the world has.

Elliot sits next to Shayne who suffers intermittent pain.

Thomas holds onto his sister who is asleep.

Carolyn and Elliot share a long glance of love and respect to each other.

Mashu is asleep, his vigil has ended.

EXT. HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

Against the searing African sun the helicopter forms a dark, moving shape.

The light clouds seem to move out of the way as the craft bears its passengers back to the modern city of Johannesburg.

EXT. JOHANNESBURG AIRPORT- AFTERNOON

The front of a huge crowd with television coverage from almost every country wait for the much awaited helicopter to land in a secure area.

The side door slides open and Mashu steps down a small, steel stairway.

The crowd begins to cheer.

JoAnne comes out carrying her one bag and her digital camera.

She quickly steps down the stairs as Thomas and Brook lead Shayne into the sunlight.

There is a huge roar from the crowd as the three children stand on the staircase and wait for their

parents.

Carolyn is helped out by Elliot and they form a natural family pose as the photographers and TV crews shoot up the footage.

The ROAR of the crowd is deafening and the Danielson's don't really understand what it's all about.

JoAnne shoots several frames right in front of them.

The family is very glad to be home but they are physically a mess. The whole group looks like the survivors of the "Swiss Family Robinson" movie.

Carolyn is covered with quite a bit of dried blood as is Shayne. Their clothes are in tatters to almost indecent. Elliot has blood on his arms.

They wave but they are tired.

They smile but they just want to go home as soon as possible.

An official from the South African Government comes up to them and says a few words but he is mostly drowned out by the crowd NOISE.

The family is finally led off the staircase and into a waiting limousine.

The limousine with an American flag waving from both front windows drives slowly away through the crowd.

JoAnne and Mashu wave as JoAnne shoots her last set of pictures.

A window in the back of the limousine rolls part way down and the hand of an eleven year old hero waves back.

JoAnne shoots a single frame of the hand waving out the window and the film freezes in time.

INT. DANIELSON HOME - NIGHT

Carolyn is talking on the telephone to her parents trying to explain certain things but its impossible.

She has a bandage which wraps under her arm and over her shoulder.

The kids are all watching "Lost World" on television and making derogatory comments about the show in light of their own experience.

Shayne is wrapped around his chest almost to his belly button.

His arm is in a cast and held tightly to his body with a sling.

Elliot is trying to work at the table, answering correspondence and other paper related work.

Next to him is a stack of magazines with their pictures on the cover.

One magazine is Time and the photograph is the limousine with Shayne's hand waving alone.

The National Geographic shows the picture of them at the Johannesburg Airport gathered together on the staircase outside the helicopter.

Occasionally Elliot reaches over and flips through one of the magazines to see other photo's.

In one of the magazines Elliot happens to notice that a page has been torn out.

ELLIOT

I thought I told everybody that
I wanted to keep these magazines
just like they were. Who tore

this page out?

Elliot stands and walks through the house trying to get an answer.

He comes into the TV room and addresses the kids.

INT. TV ROOM - NIGHT

ELLIOT

Who did this?

No one moves, no one says anything.

ELLIOT

I'll turn off that television
if I don't get an answer.

Shayne finally turns to him cautiously.

SHAYNE

It was me dad.

ELLIOT

Why did you do that son when
I asked you specifically . . .

Shayne produces the page from underneath himself.

He hands it to his dad.

It is a contest page for a Treasure Hunt style contest where the winner receives a four day and four night stay at a world class resort in an island country where the winner will go hunting for crocodile.

Elliot reads it as his son passes the page to him.

Carolyn can still be HEARD talking to her mother.

ELLIOT

Shayne.

SHAYNE

Yes dad.

ELLIOT

I thought we talked about this contest thing.

SHAYNE

Yes sir, we did. I'm sorry dad, I just wanted to read the rules because I know where the treasure is hidden.

ELLIOT

You do? How?

THOMAS

See dad, Shayne and Brook and me sat down and we figured that . . .

Carolyn has finished and comes into the room.

CAROLYN

What is everyone talking about?

BROOK

Nothing mom, just this dumb old television show.

CAROLYN

All right but this dumb old television show is over and you are all off to bed and not another word about it. There's school tomorrow. Now off.

The children get up and give their parents hugs and leave for their rooms.

Elliot delicately folds up the page and slips it into his pocket.

CAROLYN

What's that?

ELLIOT

Oh . . . just more . . .
paperwork. Just paper.

Carolyn walks back to the living room and sits on
the sofa.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elliot strolls in and sits down next to her.

ELLIOT

How do you feel?

CAROLYN

A lot better than Shayne. Have
you seen that little guy, he's
in a lot of pain.

ELLIOT

I know.

Elliot moves closer to her and slips his arm around
her carefully.

ELLIOT

You know what he told me. He
told me that Paul Kirby was
going to take him out of the
village before the rebels
showed up but he wouldn't go
because he told
Mr. Kirbythat he
had to warn us that the rebels
were following us because they
wanted us as American hostages.
He stayed to save our lives.
Our nine year old son.

CAROLYN

All of our children were brave.
All of them are heroes. I
just hope all this publicity
and television shows and
interviews will just stop so
we can get back to the business
of being a family. It will
stop, won't it Elliot?

ELLIOT

Yes, it will, I promise.

Carolyn slides forward on the sofa and Elliot helps her up.

CAROLYN

Sorry, I'm just not on the
A-Team these days. I have
to go to bed.

He leans forward and gives her a kiss.

She walks off towards their bedroom.

Alone in the semi-dark Elliot removes the torn
contest page and begins reading it.

He gets up and moves over to the table where he
was working.

He scribbles down a few notes about the contest.

CAROLYN (O.S.)

Are you coming to bed?

ELLIOT

I'll be there in just a minute.

Elliot writes down a few more sentences.

He takes the contest page and slips it back in
the magazine it was torn out of.

He closes the magazine and puts it back on the stack.

Elliot walks to the light switch, he looks at the table one more time and then the house goes to black.

Elliot makes his way into his bedroom and closes the door.

The moonlight shining through the kitchen windows finds its way to the top magazine and lights up the photograph of the Danielson family standing in tatters on the staircase outside the helicopter.

Below the photograph and in a corner is the caption:
Photo by JoAnne Lindey and Mashu.

FADE OUT.

THE END