

Snapshots of War

by
Troy Oates

FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN - DAWN

The small South African town is hit by the first ray of sunlight. It illuminates the small houses, the brick buildings littered with graffiti, and the streets are filled with people.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

The room is filled with light, the large window facing the sun rising above the hills.

RYAN EDWARDS

A 26 year old man with shaggy brown hair and blue eyes. He wears a white shirt and jeans. He looks out the window, watching the sun rise and the people on the street as they hurry to get to their destination.

Smoke

From Ryan's cigarette fills the air. The light shines through it. He inhales, and exhales slowly as he watches the sun rise.

A camera

Sits on the table behind him. He turns and grabs it, removing it from it's satchel. He puts the cigarette in his mouth, winds the film to the end, and removes it. He puts the camera down and pulls out a small black film canister. He puts the film inside, and places it back in his pocket.

A cellular phone

On the bed, starts to ring. Ryan turns to look at it, then turns back to the sun, ignoring the ringing. After five rings, it stops. A few seconds pass, and it starts to ring again. Ryan turns and walks to the phone, picks it up and answers it.

RYAN

Hello?

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE

The office wall is littered with cutouts from newspaper articles. In the office is a desk, littered with papers, a computer.

SIMON BROWN

Sits at the desk, holding the phone to his ear.

SIMON

Ryan? It's me.

NOTE: THE SCENE INTERCUTS BETWEEN THE TWO

RYAN

How are you? What time is it there?

SIMON

It's almost 11 pm.

RYAN

Why so late?

SIMON

I tried calling you before, you didn't answer.

RYAN

Yeah, I was getting some water.

SIMON

How's the weather down there?

RYAN

Hot. Sticky. Just like you'd imagine.

SIMON

It's shitty here. Fucking rain won't let up.

Pause

RYAN

What's up Simon?

SIMON

Nothing. Just calling to let you know we got your pictures.

RYAN

How'd they turn out?

SIMON

They're OK.

RYAN

Just OK?

SIMON

Yeah, just OK. The pictures are good, but it's just not what we want.

RYAN

That's what you said last time.
And the time before.

SIMON

I know.

RYAN

Well maybe if you knew what you
wanted.

SIMON

We want something that represents
the mood down there a little
more, you know?

RYAN

No. I don't. There is nothing
happening down here. The news is
over. It has been for weeks. Why
you insisted on me staying is a
mystery to me.

SIMON

It's just we want to be able to
show what's going to happen after
the fact. We want to show these
changes Yugandi promised in
progress.

RYAN

You know as well as I do that
he's just the same as the last
guy. He makes empty promises to
get people to help him. And when
he's at the top, he forgets the
little people.

SIMON

Well, Alan saw your pictures.
These are his words, not mine.
Your pictures are good, you have
talent. But they don't have any
heart to them. They don't want to
make me read the story attached
to it. And that's what we want
these pictures to be. A drawing
card. Because without a drawing
card, people will stop buying our
paper. Do you understand?

RYAN

Not at all.

SIMON

Just maybe try something
different, OK?

RYAN

Sure. I'll see what I can do.

SIMON

Is your guide there yet?

RYAN

Should be here soon. Who set this up, by the way?

SIMON

Alan has some friends down there. They said this guy knew his way around.

RYAN

Let's hope he's better than the last guy. I'm not getting stranded in the middle of nowhere again.

SIMON

You have any problems, just call me. Understand?

RYAN

Yeah. I got it.

SIMON

Alright, I'll talk to you later.

Ryan hangs up the phone, and drops it on the bed. He flicks the cigarette butt out the window, then picks up his camera. He looks through the viewfinder at the sun, then down at the street. He puts the camera away, and exits the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

Ryan walks out the front door of the hotel, and rests against the front wall, watching the people on the street.

A car

Pulls up outside the hotel sharply, grinding the brakes.

YANDE

A big black man with a bald head and no shirt jumps out of the car, and circles around to Ryan.

YANDE

Mr Edwards?

RYAN

Yeah.

YANDE

My name is Yande.

Ryan extends his hand to Yande. Yande shakes it.

RYAN

How are you Yande?

YANDE

I am good. Thank you for asking.

RYAN

It's no problem.

YANDE

Shall we go Mr Ryan?

RYAN

Please, just call me Ryan.

YANDE

OK.

RYAN

Let's go.

Ryan walks to the car and gets in the passenger side. Yande circles back around and gets in the drivers seat. Yande starts the car and they drive away.

INT. CAR

Ryan looks around as they pass the people. Some of them watch the car as it goes by.

YANDE

So how long have you been here for?

RYAN

Two weeks. I came down just before Yugandi took over.

YANDE

So you take photographs?

RYAN

Yeah.

YANDE

Do you like taking photographs?

RYAN

Yeah, it's good I guess. You like being the guide for white tourists?

YANDE

I don't really do this sort of thing that often.

RYAN

You have a family Yande?

YANDE

Yes. A wife and two sons. One is eight and the other is three.

RYAN

So have things changed for you much since he took over?

YANDE

When you've lived here as long as I have Mr Edwards, you learn one thing very quickly. As long as you're not in trouble, it doesn't matter who's in charge. My family is safe, I can work to buy the things we need. I have no need to complain.

RYAN

OK. So where are we going?

YANDE

Upriver. There is a small town there where the Americans have set up a medicine camp. I thought you would like to start there.

RYAN

Yeah, that sounds good.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICAL CAMP

There are a few tents set up. About fifteen Americans are walking around in white coats, and about forty five Africans are waiting around. The people there are only being treated for small things, like cuts, bites and internal sickness. There are a few African soldiers there, keeping watch.

The car

Pulls up just on the outskirts of the camp. Ryan and Yande get out of the car, and walk towards the camp.

Ryan looks around, as he holds his camera. He holds it up, and takes a wide picture of the camp. Yande watches him take the picture.

YANDE
Is that easy to do?

RYAN
What's that?

YANDE
Take the pictures.

RYAN
It's easy. I can show you if you like.

YANDE
Is it OK?

RYAN
Sure.

Ryan takes the camera from around his neck, and hands it to Yande.

RYAN (CONT'D)
You look through here. What you see here is what you're taking a picture of. Do you see the camp?

YANDE
Yes.

RYAN
OK. What you need to do is take your finger and press this big button on the top here.

Yande presses the button, and jumps a little as it clicks.

YANDE
I'm sorry.

RYAN
It's OK. Do you want to try again?

YANDE
Sure.

RYAN
OK. What about if I stand in front of you, and you can take a picture all by yourself?

YANDE
OK.

Ryan walks out and stands between Yande and the camp. Ryan smiles, and Yande takes the picture.

RYAN
Look at that. You're doing it
like a pro.

YANDE
Thank you Mr Edwards.

Yande hands the camera back to Ryan.

YANDE (CONT'D)
Would you like me to show you how
to drive the car?

RYAN
No thanks. I can do that.

Yande laughs a little.

YANDE
OK. I'm sorry.

Ryan smiles.

RYAN
It's fine.

Ryan and Yande walk towards the site.

RYAN (CONT'D)
So how long has the camp been
here?

YANDE
A week. They came when they heard
about the militia attacks. The
soldiers made them set up down
here, to keep them out of danger.

RYAN
The militia?

YANDE
The rebels. The ones who refused
to work with Yugandi. They
believe that a dictator should
not be in power. So they attack
his camps. They don't care that
the camps house women and
children who have no place to
live. They think they are making
a point.

Ryan walks past a doctor. The doctor turns to him.

DOCTOR
I'll be with you in a moment.

RYAN
I'm just here to take pictures.

DOCTOR
An American?

RYAN
Yeah. New York.

DOCTOR
Boston. How are you?

RYAN
Good. How are you guys doing?

DOCTOR
Fine. Not much to do really. The
worst thing we've treated all
week was an animal bite. Took a
chunk out of a mans arm.

RYAN
Ouch.

DOCTOR
Yeah.

Ryan walks away from the doctor. Yande follows him. Ryan looks around the camp with his camera, and takes a few pictures.

YANDE
So they print these pictures of
yours in the newspapers where you
live?

RYAN
They sure do Yande.

YANDE
Will they print mine?

RYAN
I'm sure they will.

Yande smiles. Ryan walks towards one of the tents.

A little girl

Sits in a chair, being examined by a female doctor. The doctor has her hand on the girls chest.

FEMALE DOCTOR
OK, cough.

The girl coughs. Ryan holds his camera up and takes a picture. The female doctor turns to look at Ryan.

FEMALE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

RYAN
No. Just taking pictures.

FEMALE DOCTOR
Well I'm working. So please leave
me alone.

Ryan turns and walks away. He takes another couple of pictures.

RYAN
(To Yande)
I think I'm finished here.

YANDE
So soon?

RYAN
There's not much going on.

YANDE
I think it will get busier later.

RYAN
Let's go.

Ryan and Yande walk towards the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

The car pulls up outside the hotel.

RYAN
OK. Thank you for today Yande. I
really appreciate it.

YANDE
It's no problem Mr Edwards. How
many pictures did you take today?

RYAN
About three rolls.

YANDE
Is that a lot?

RYAN
It's a few, yeah.

YANDE

Why do you need so many pictures
for your paper?

RYAN

I don't really know. I'll see you
tomorrow afternoon?

YANDE

Yes.

RYAN

OK. Have a good night.

Ryan gets out of the car. Yande drives away.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Ryan walks in and places his camera down on the bed. He looks around the room, then grabs his wallet of the table, and walks out.

EXT. STREET

Ryan walks along the street, looking at all the people. Some of them turn to watch him walk by, others whisper to the people they're walking with. Ryan stops to look at a few soldiers examining a car. Inside, two people sit in the front. Both have been shot in the head. The car's front windscreen is splattered with blood.

SOLDIER

Hey.

Ryan looks at him.

RYAN

What happened here?

SOLDIER

None of your bloody business.
Move alone.

Ryan keeps walking, looking back at the car. Ryan stops walking outside a building. He walks inside.

INT. BAR

The bar is fairly bland. A couple of tables and a bar that stretches along the back wall. The place has about a dozen people in it, most of them keeping to themselves.

Ryan

Walks up to the bartender.

BARTENDER

What can I do for you, white man?

RYAN

I'll have a beer if you've got one.

BARTENDER

Do you have beer money?

Ryan pulls out his wallet and pulls out five American dollars. The bartender looks at it for a second, then takes it.

Ryan turns to look at the people in the bar. They're all talking amongst themselves. The bartender comes back with a beer in a bottle. Ryan takes it.

RYAN

Thank you.

BARTENDER

You're American?

RYAN

Yeah.

BARTENDER

What does an American do here in South Africa?

RYAN

I take pictures.

BARTENDER

Take pictures? Take them from who?

The bartender laughs at his own joke.

RYAN

I work for a newspaper.

BARTENDER

This place has been filled with reporters and photographers the last two weeks. I thought we'd gotten rid of them all.

SOL

So did I.

Ryan turns to his left. At the end of the bar sits

SOL

A black man in his early forties. He wears shorts and a singlet. His head is shaved, and he talks with an African accent.

BARTENDER

Looks like we're going to have to work a little harder to get rid of the rest. Don't you think so Sol?

SOL

I thought that since there is no story to cover, everyone would have gone home by now.

RYAN

Not everyone apparently.

Sol stands up and walks over to Ryan.

SOL

So you chose to stay here?

RYAN

Sort of. My boss asked me if I wanted to stay. I said yes.

SOL

Why would anybody choose to stay here. The only difference between this place and hell, is that everybody in hell knows who is in charge.

BARTENDER

That's right my friend.

RYAN

And what do you do down here, Mr Sol, was it?

SOL

As little as possible, photo boy.
As little as possible.

RYAN

OK.

Ryan stands up and walks out of the bar.

EXT. STREET

Ryan stands on the street, holding his beer. He places it down on a table outside and pulls his packet of cigarettes from his pocket.

SOL
Are they American smokes?

Ryan jumps as Sol walks up behind him.

RYAN
Yeah.

SOL
Can I have one please? It's been
so long since I've had American
tobacco.

Ryan pulls out two cigarettes, one for himself and one for
Sol. Ryan lights his, then offers the lighter to Sol.

SOL (CONT'D)
I'm saving it for later.

Sol puts the cigarette in his pocket.

SOL (CONT'D)
So do you enjoy taking pictures
down here?

RYAN
It's OK.

SOL
Honestly? Do you like it down
here. Where a cold day is 100
degrees, and the soldiers would
rather shoot you than talk to
you. You enjoy taking pictures
down here?

RYAN
Like I said. It's OK.

SOL
Maybe you should think about
selling your passport to somebody
down here. I'm sure it could go
for a pretty penny.

RYAN
Sorry?

SOL
Lot's of South African people
don't like it here. If they had
their way, they'd be living in
America. Sitting on the beach,
sipping your fruity alcoholic
drinks while listening to rap
music. The American dream isn't
just American any more. Know what
I mean?

RYAN

Yeah.

SOL

How much longer you gonna stay
down here, eh?

RYAN

Don't know. Another week, maybe.
I'm trying to be smart and stick
around, see if another story
breaks.

SOL

If you were a smart man, you'd be
gone already. Take a page from
the books of your co-workers. Get
out of South Africa. Take your
camera, your piece of shit
sneakers and get the fuck out of
here. The first plane out of here
tomorrow.

RYAN

Thanks. But I think I'm gonna
stick around.

SOL

Do you want some advice?

RYAN

Sure.

SOL

If you think you need to stay,
and you really want to get a good
photo, you don't need to be
scared to get a little dirty.

RYAN

I don't follow.

SOL

All you Americans, with your
perfect white shirts and your
pressed jeans. You're all too
scared to get down in the dirt
and play like the rest of us. But
nobody down here cares how good
you look. You're impressing
nobody.

RYAN

Thanks for the advice.

SOL

Consider us even, for the
cigarette.

Sol turns and walks back inside the bar. Ryan watches him go, shakes his head and walks down the street. He walks back past the car, where the soldiers still stand. The soldier notices Ryan, and grabs his rifle.

SOLDIER

I fucking told you before. Keep moving. Stop causing trouble.

Ryan turns his head and keeps walking. He walks to the hotel, and walks inside.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION

Ryan walks through the small reception area. The man behind the desk stares aimlessly out into the street. He notices Ryan walk in.

RECEPTIONIST

Mr Edwards.

Ryan turns.

RYAN

Yeah?

RECEPTIONIST

You have a message.

RYAN

A what?

RECEPTIONIST

A message. Somebody called for you and left a message for you.

Ryan walks to the desk. The Receptionist picks up a piece of paper, and starts to read it.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

"Keep your phone turned on, and take it with you. If you don't answer my next call, consider yourself unemployed when you get back". What does that mean?

RYAN

Inside joke. When was the message left.

RECEPTIONIST

A few hours ago. A joke? It's not that funny, you know.

RYAN

Yeah, you're telling me.

RECEPTIONIST

So how are you finding things?

RYAN

Good, I guess.

RECEPTIONIST

Getting all the pictures you were after?

RYAN

Not really. I don't know exactly what I was expecting, but this just isn't it.

RECEPTIONIST

You people. Always coming down here, looking to take pictures of our massacred masses. You people don't think that we're people too.

RYAN

I didn't think that at all. It's just, there was this big build up, and then when I got down here, it was all over.

RECEPTIONIST

How about this. I've got a gun in the back. I'll get it for you. You go outside and start shooting the soldiers. I'll take the pictures while they mow you down with bullets. Does that sound OK?

RYAN

I didn't mean anything by it.

RECEPTIONIST

They never do. All you bloody journo's are the same. Complain when there's conflict about getting shot at, and complain when things get calm because there's no story. How about this. You and your friends stay the fuck out of our country. Mind your own business. It's enough that we have to worry about the rebels, but we need to be worried about you people too. I'm sick of you people.

RYAN

Yeah, but you make a sweet buck off us staying here.

RECEPTIONIST

The money doesn't make up for the
bullshit. Know what I'm saying?

RYAN

Yeah.

Ryan turns and walks away.

RECEPTIONIST

(Calling after him)

Tell your friend to stop calling.
I'm not your bloody answering
machine.

RYAN

Will do.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Ryan walks in, still holding the beer. He places the beer
down on the table, still half full. He walks over to the
bathroom and shuts the door. He walks back out, walks over
to the bed and lays down above the covers. He stares at the
roof, then closes his eyes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Ryan wakes up.

EXT. HOTEL

Ryan waits outside the hotel, waiting for Yande. Yande pull
up, but in a jeep this time. Ryan gets in the jeep, and
they drive off.

RYAN

Nice car.

YANDE

Thank you.

RYAN

What happened to the one from
yesterday?

YANDE

I have many cars.

RYAN

OK.

EXT. STREET

The car pulls up outside a house, sitting by itself in the middle of nowhere.

RYAN

Where are we?

YANDE

This is where Yugandi grew up.
This is where he was born.

Ryan and Yande get out of the car, and walk inside.

INT. YUGANDI HOUSE

Ryan and Yande walk in the front door. The house is practically empty, save for a few pieces of stray wood and leaves. Ryan walks around, looking at the house.

RYAN

You know, when I asked for a guide, I asked for someone who knew their way around.

YANDE

What's wrong with this place?

RYAN

Nothing. It's fine. It's just I want something with a bit more flesh to it. Know what I mean?

YANDE

Like a pig?

RYAN

No. I mean, more than just an old house. I mean where the action is, you know what I mean. I want pictures of the soldiers, or pictures of the victims. Something like that.

YANDE

The places where those things are, you do not want to go there.

RYAN

Why not?

YANDE

You're a white man in South America. All they see is someone who doesn't belong. If I take you to one of these places, I cannot guarantee your safety.

RYAN

I didn't ask you too.

YANDE

I need the money.

RYAN

OK Yande. How about this. We go out to these places tomorrow. I'll pay you in advance, so if anything happens to me, you've still got your money.

YANDE

That sound good.

RYAN

OK.

Ryan takes a picture.

YANDE

Can I ask you something?

RYAN

Sure.

YANDE

Since you were born in America, you are an American citizen, is that right?

RYAN

Yeah, that's right.

YANDE

How easy is it to become an American citizen? Can someone who wasn't born there become one?

RYAN

Yeah. All it takes is a bunch of tests and papers and legal stuff. Why do you ask?

YANDE

I'm just wanting to know. America is someplace I'd like to visit before I die. Go and see all the big landmarks. Like the liberty statue, the grand canyon, the Clint Eastwood.

RYAN

You know Clint Eastwood?

YANDE

Yes. I think that he is a very funny man.

RYAN

Never heard that before.

Yande smiles, and Ryan takes another picture.

INT. JEEP

Yande is driving, and Ryan sits alongside him. Ryan holds his camera up, looking into the viewfinder.

YANDE

What are you doing Mr Edwards?

RYAN

Do me a favour. Hold still and look ahead at the road.

Yande does this. He holds still and waits. Ryan takes the picture.

RYAN (CONT'D)

One more.

Ryan looks through the viewfinder.

A car

From a road to the left smashes into the jeep. The car spins on the road, then stops. Ryan and Yande are dazed by the accident. From the car

Two men

Jump out. Both are black, and both carry automatic weapons. They run up to the drivers side of the car, open the door and drag Yande out of the car. Ryan turns to look.

RYAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

One of the men brings his rifle up and points it at Ryan. Ryan stops moving, and just watches what happens.

EXT. ROAD

The two men drag Yande into the middle of the road. They let go of him and he falls to his knees. From the back seat of the car

VANDY

A big black man, muscle bound with short black hair and sunglasses on, gets out of the car. He holds a handgun, and attached to his pants is a machete in a holster. Vandy walks up, and stands in front of Yande.

YANDE

Mr Vandy.

VANDY

Yande, Yande, Yande. Why do you force me to come and look for you.

YANDE

I was coming to see you, I promise.

Vandy looks in the jeep at Ryan.

VANDY

Who is the white boy?

YANDE

A photographer for a newspaper in America.

VANDY

Is he paying you?

YANDE

Yes. I'm his guide.

VANDY

So if he's paying you, why aren't you paying me.

YANDE

I'm sorry Mr Vandy. I needed some money for food for my family.

Vandy hits Yande over the face with his pistol. Ryan picks up his camera and places it on the dashboard. He starts taking pictures.

VANDY

Why do you lie to me Yande. Do you think my brother would appreciate this?

YANDE

No sir. No he would not.

VANDY

So you're both a thief and a liar.

YANDE

Yes sir.

VANDY

I can think of a punishment for a thief. I can think of a punishment for a liar. But I cannot think of one for someone who is both.

YANDE

I promise you I will give you the money.

Vandy hits Yande with his pistol again. Vandy turns to the jeep.

VANDY

Hey, white boy.

Ryan stops taking pictures.

VANDY (CONT'D)

You have money?

Ryan doesn't answer.

VANDY (CONT'D)

Enough money to get your friend out of trouble? He needs your help.

Ryan shakes his head "no".

VANDY (CONT'D)

Look at that. Not good for you, my friend. Not good at all.

YANDE

Please. I have a family.

VANDY

I know. We were there this afternoon. After you left.

Vandy pulls his machete out, and lets Yande see the blood on it.

VANDY (CONT'D)

Your wife moans like a whore. And your sons, they hid in the corner while we butchered your beautiful wife. Beautiful. Not beautiful anymore.

Yande starts to cry. Vandy holds the machete out in front of Yandes mouth.

VANDY (CONT'D)
I want you to lick the blade.
Taste what your familys taste
like.

Yande slowly sticks his tongue out, resting it on the machete. Quick as a flash, Vandy slices Yandes tongue off, and it falls to the ground

VANDY (CONT'D)
Now maybe you've learnt to give
me what you owe. Now we won't
have to listen to your lies
anymore.

Vandy turns, his back facing Yande. Vandy swings around, slicing the machete through the air. The machete slices through Yande's neck, decapitating him. His head falls to the ground, his headless body doing the same.

Ryan

Sits back in his seat, in shock of what's just happened. He continues to watch.

Vandy

Turns his attention on the jeep.

VANDY (CONT'D)
Kill him.

Ryan hears this. He climbs into the back seat of the jeep, and climbs out the back. The two other soldiers start firing their automatic weapons at the jeep. Ryan dives down into the jungle.

VANDY (CONT'D)
Go.

The two soldiers run after Ryan.

EXT. JUNGLE

Ryan is running as fast as he can. The two soldiers are following him. They fire their weapons, Ryan ducking his head as he runs. Ryan comes to a hill. Without thinking, he jumps down, falling a few feet. He stumbles on the landing, but keeps running.

The two soldiers watch him run. They aim carefully, waiting. Ryan trips on a root of a tree, and falls to the ground. The two soldiers fire, missing him by inches. Ryan looks at them and lays flat on the ground. They fire, hitting the ground around him.

Ryan looks around. He listens carefully to the soldiers yell something. Ryan doesn't move. The soldiers fire again, and then watch. After a few seconds, they turn around and start to walk away.

Ryan stands up and runs off away from them. The soldiers hear this and turn to shoot at him. Ryan dodges around some trees, and is out of sight. The soldiers start yelling at each other, and pointing to the trees.

EXT. ROAD

The two soldiers walk back up to the two vehicles.

VANDY
Where is he?

SOLDIER #1
He's gone boss.

VANDY
Dead?

SOLDIER #1
No. He ran off into the jungle.

Vandy thinks about this for a second.

VANDY
Which one of you is the better driver?

Soldier #2 raises his hand. Vandy aims his gun at Soldier #1 and shoots him in the chest. Soldier #2 looks scared.

VANDY (CONT'D)
Take me home. We know where he's going.

EXT. TOWN

Ryan runs out of the clearing and is standing outside the town. He looks around, and runs towards it.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Ryan runs into the hotel room, out of breath. He sits down on the bed, and wipes the sweat off his forehead on a pillow. He grabs the phone from next to his bed, and punches in a number.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Simon sits at his desk. The phone starts to ring. After a few rings, he answers it.

SIMON

Hello?

RYAN

I need your help. They killed him. They killed him. Oh Jesus Christ.

SIMON

Slow down. Slow down. Tell me what happened.

RYAN

The driver. The fucking driver. These guys came out of nowhere, smashed into us. They were talking about money and they killed him. They cut his head off. They cut it off. Then they came after me. They shot at me. I ran through the jungle for an hour. I need you to help me.

SIMON

Where are you now?

RYAN

In my hotel room. They're after me. They're gonna kill me.

SIMON

They're not going to kill you. Listen to me! Leave the hotel. Find someone with a car. Give them all the money you have. Tell them to drive you to the border. From there you need to go to the embassy. They'll be able to help you out.

From downstairs, a gunshot is heard.

RYAN

They're here.

SIMON

What?

RYAN

They're here. They're shooting downstairs.

SIMON

How do they know where to find you?

RYAN

I'm the only white man in South fucking Africa with a camera, Simon. Figure it out.

SIMON

Leave the room now. Take the phone and your camera. Leave everything else

Ryan walks to the door, and opens it a crack. He peers out, grabs a hat on the table near the door, and then exits the room.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Ryan turns and walks quickly towards the stairs. From the other end of the hall, a group of three soldiers walk onto the floor. They don't notice Ryan.

Ryan walks down the stairs, all the way to the bottom floor. He walks out the door, and onto the street.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Ryan walks out onto the street. He sees three jeeps and the car parked outside the hotel. He quickly turns and walks the other way, pulling the hat down over his head. He walks down the street, stopping outside the bar. He walks in.

INT. BAR

The bar is empty, save for the bartender and Stuart.

BARTENDER

Get the fuck out, white devil!

RYAN

I need your help.

BARTENDER

Those boys with the guns out there are here for you. Don't bring your trouble in here.

RYAN

Please. They'll kill me.

BARTENDER

Not my problem. Leave. Go. I won't tell them you were here.

Ryan turns and walks out.

EXT. STREET

Ryan stands on the street, looking around. He takes a few steps out onto the street.

Sol

Grabs a hold of his shoulder.

SOL
(in an American accent)
No. Follow me.

Sol runs down the street. Ryan follows him. Sol cuts down an alley, then another. Ryan follows. They stop outside a door to a small apartment type building. Sol looks around, then opens the door. Ryan ducks inside, Sol follows.

INT. SOL'S HOUSE

The house is small. The kitchen and living room are the same, and the bedroom is in the back. There is little furniture, save for an old couch and a table.

SOL
Sit down.

Ryan sits down on the couch. Sol runs into the bedroom.

RYAN
You're American?

SOL
Pennsylvania, born and raised.

RYAN
What's with the accent.

SOL
Helps me fit in.

RYAN
Will you help me?

SOL
You got money?

RYAN
I can get you some.

SOL
How much?

RYAN
 Five thousand. I need you to take
 me to the embassy on the other
 side of the border.

Sol thinks about this.

SOL
 Ten.

RYAN
 Deal.

SOL
 Can you get that?

RYAN
 Hold on.

Ryan pulls out the phone.

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Simon sits at his desk, on the phone.

SIMON
 I know. Just put me through now.
 Hold on.

Simon presses a button on the phone.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Ryan?

RYAN
 I'm OK.

SIMON
 Where are you?

RYAN
 This guy, an American. He helped
 me. We're at his place now.

SIMON
 So now they're looking for two
 white men.

RYAN
 He's black.

SIMON
 What?

RYAN
 He's black.

SIMON

Can you get to the border?

RYAN

He said he'll take me for ten thousand.

SIMON

Yeah, no problem. We'll organize that and it'll be there when you arrive. What time?

Ryan holds the phone away from his mouth.

RYAN

How long will it take?

SOL

Three hours.

RYAN

You hear that?

SIMON

Yeah. Where'd you find an American down there?

RYAN

At a bar. Isn't that where we find them all.

SIMON

You call me as soon as you're at the border. You've got your papers?

RYAN

Yeah.

SIMON

Alright.

Simon presses a button on the phone.

INT. SOL'S HOUSE

Ryan hangs the phone up and puts it in his pocket. Sol comes out with a shirt. He throws it to Ryan.

STUART

Put this on.

Ryan takes off his white shirt and puts on the camouflage one.

SOL

It fit?

RYAN

No.

SOL

Good. What'd your man say?

RYAN

He said the money will be there
when we get to the embassy.

The front door opens, and two men with guns storm inside. They swarm around Ryan and Stuart, keeping their guns on them.

Vandy

Walks through the front door.

VANDY

Look at this.

Vandy walks up to Ryan, standing a few inches away from him.

VANDY (CONT'D)

We didn't think you'd make it
back into town.

Vandy turns to Sol.

VANDY (CONT'D)

And who are you?

SOL

(South African accent)
My name is Sol.

VANDY

Why are you helping him?

SOL

He offered me money. To take him
away from you and your men.

VANDY

Well here's the deal. You let me
take him, and I'll let you live.

SOL

Deal.

Vandy whispers to one of his men. The man stares at Sol.

RYAN

Please help me.

VANDY

Don't beg. It will do you no good now.

RYAN

We had a deal.

VANDY

And we made another one.

Sol quickly whips out a handgun from under his shirt. He shoots the soldier closest to him twice, then Vandy once, then the other soldier twice. All three men go down. Ryan looks uneasy.

VANDY (CONT'D)

Don't you know who I am?

Sol shoots Vandy again in the head, killing him. Stuart stands over Vandy, looking at him.

SOL

You don't know who this is?

RYAN

Should I?

SOL

They call him Vandy. You'd probably know his brother. Yugandi.

RYAN

As in the dictator.

SOL

As in we're both fucked if we don't go now. When we get outside, get in the back seat. Stay low. If we get stopped, pretend to be asleep. If they ask you, you're the son of an ambassador. Can you do an accent?

RYAN

(in a poor South African accent)
How's this?

SOL

Talk as little as possible. Let's go.

Sol and Ryan walk out.

EXT. SOL'S HOUSE

Sol walks along the side, pointing his gun in front of him.

A soldier

Comes running round the corner, holding a rifle. Sol reacts, shooting him twice quickly. Sol runs up to him, grabbing his rifle. Ryan gets into the back seat, and Stuart runs up and gets in the drivers seat.

INT. SOL'S CAR

Ryan watches Sol drive the car from the back seat. The car slows, then speeds quickly out of the town.

RYAN

What's your name?

SOL

What?

RYAN

Your name.

SOL

Just keep calling me Sol.

RYAN

My name is Ryan. Ryan Edwards.

SOL

OK.

Pause

RYAN

Were you really going to give me up back there?

SOL

No.

RYAN

Really? Because you seemed pretty convincing back there.

SOL

Let's get one thing straight. I'll help you. But I'm not gonna put my life on the line for you. If it comes to me having to make a choice between me and you, I'm the one who's gonna be waking up tomorrow. Understand?

Ryan nods.

SOL (CONT'D)

Good.

Pause

RYAN

What are you going to do now? Now they know you're helping me.

SOL

I don't follow.

RYAN

After you've dropped me off at the front gates of the embassy, I don't think it'd be a good idea for you to go back home after helping what pretty much the most powerful man in South Africa calls an enemy.

SOL

I'll go somewhere else.

RYAN

Why don't you come home.

SOL

There's a good reason I left. And I don't have the strong urge to go back.

RYAN

How long have you lived here?

SOL

Five years.

RYAN

Why'd you come here?

SOL

I worked with the military for most of my life. Got bored. Wanted a change. Came down here for a vacation. Never went back.

RYAN

What about your family?

SOL

My father's dead. I don't have any brothers or sisters. Never married and no kids.

RYAN

Mother?

SOL
Still alive. Lives in an old
folks home. She doesn't miss me
though.

RYAN
You have a falling out?

SOL
Dementia.

RYAN
I'm sorry.

Pause

SOL
Don't be.

RYAN
My family's all gone too. Parents
died in a car crash when I was
about 16.

SOL
(Interrupting)
Stop. Just stop. I don't care.
You don't need to know about me.
You should be grateful I'm
helping you.

RYAN
I am.

SOL
Good. Because this getting to
know you shit is just a waste of
time for both of us. In a few
hours, you'll be gone and I'll be
trying to figure out what the
fuck I'm gonna do now that I'm
homeless and considered a public
enemy here. So please. Give it a
rest. OK?

Ryan says nothing. Sol glances in the rearview mirror at
Ryan, then focuses back on the road.

CUT TO:

INT. SOL'S HOUSE

Four soldiers stand in the small living room.

YUGANDI

A big overweight man in his late forties, walks into the room. One of the soldiers walks up to him.

SOLDIER

Mr Yugandi.

YUGANDI

Tell me what happened here.

SOLDIER

We heard shots coming from the house. One of ours came to see what happened. Their body is outside.

YUGANDI

I saw. Who are the bodies?

SOLDIER

(to other soldiers)
Step aside.

The other three soldiers step away from the bodies on the floor. Yugandi sees his brothers body.

YUGANDI

Who did this? How long ago?

SOLDIER

Less than fifteen minutes. A white man, and the man who lives here. They killed them, and drove away.

YUGANDI

In which direction?

The Soldier points north.

SOLDIER

That way.

YUGANDI

They're going for the border. Do you know the man who lived here?

SOLDIER

The locals called him Sol.

One of the other soldiers hands Yugandi a framed picture. In it, Stuart wears an American soldiers uniform, and holds a rifle.

YUGANDI

If this him?

SOLDIER

We think so.

YUGANDI

Get the picture to the people at the border.

Yugandi notices Ryans white shirt on the floor.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

Whose is this?

SOLDIER

The white mans. He's a photographer for the Americans.

Yugandi picks up the shirt, and a black film canister falls out of the pocket. Yugandi picks it up.

YUGANDI

Get this developed. If you see a white face in any of the pictures, I want you to make as many copies as you can. Get it to the border, and every soldier patrol between us and them.

SOLDIER

I understand sir.

YUGANDI

Send as many patrols after them as we can.

SOLDIER

Sir?

YUGANDI

These Americans need to be taught a lesson.

SOLDIER

Yes sir.

YUGANDI

Leave me with my brother.

The Soldier turns to the other three, and signals to the door. The four soldiers turn and walk out. Yugandi kneels at his brothers body. Yugandi picks his head up, and cradles it.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

I told you to stay out of trouble. I told you. I'm sorry I wasn't here to protect you. But I'm going to make sure the people who did this pay. I promise you that.

Yugandi leans down and kisses his brothers head softly. He stands back to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. SOLS CAR

Ryan sits in the back, his eyes closed. The phone in his pocket rings. He scrambles to answer it.

RYAN

Hello?

SIMON

How far away are you?

RYAN

How far away?

SOL

Twenty minutes.

SIMON

So he's an American?

RYAN

Yeah. A soldier, as best as I can tell.

SIMON

Give me his name. I'll call my buddy Ken at the administration office and we'll get his jacket.

RYAN

He won't give me his name. He calls himself Sol.

SOL

Stuart.

RYAN

What?

SOL

Stuart. My name is Stuart. Stuart Bradley.

RYAN

(into phone)
You get that?

SIMON

Got it. Call me back when you're across the border.

RYAN

Alright.

Ryan hangs up the phone.

SOL

Don't call me Stuart.

RYAN

I wasn't going to.

SOL

Good.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDER GATES

The border gates are littered with soldiers, armed with rifles. The area is lit up with flashlights, lamps and small fires in tins.

Sol's car

Drives up slowly to the border gates. It stops in front of them.

A soldier with a clipboard

Walks slowly to the car. Sol winds down the window.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER

Little late to be crossing the border, isn't it?

SOL

These kids. Party hard. Forget their daddys want them home before dark.

Clipboard soldier looks in the back seat.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER

Hey, white boy.

Ryan opens his eyes, and looks at Clipboard Soldier.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER (CONT'D)

What's your name?

RYAN

Daniel Banks. My father is an ambassador. Works in the American embassy.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER
 (to Sol)
 And who are you?

SOL
 My name is Sol. I'm his driver.
 He needs someone responsible to
 wipe his ass when he needs it.

Clipboard Soldier laughs at this. He looks at his clipboard, then flips over the top piece of paper. Beneath them are two photos. The one of Sol from his house, and the one that Yande took of Ryan outside the medical camp.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER
 Did you hear about what happened?

SOL
 No. What?

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER
 Somebody murdered Yugandi's
 brother. Shot him dead, in cold
 blood. Yugandi's sent the entire
 army looking for the people who
 did it.

SOL
 I'd hate to be those guys at the
 moment.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER
 Me too. Can you do me a small
 favour?

SOL
 Sure.

CLIPBOARD SOLDIER
 I can't see your boy very well.
 Would you mind turning on your
 inside light.

SOL
 I'm sorry, it doesn't work.

Clipboard Soldier stands back and waves to a group of soldiers. Clipboard Soldier grabs his rifle. Sol pulls out the handgun from under his leg and shoots Clipboard Soldier in the chest.

Sol slams his foot down on the accelerator, and the car crashes through the border gates. All the other soldiers start to shoot at the car.

SOL (CONT'D)
 Keep your head down!

Ryan grabs the rifle from underneath him and holds it tightly.

A jeep

Speeds after Sol. Sol turns the car off the main road and into the jungle. The jeep follows.

The jeep slowly catches up with Sol. As they pass, Ryan fires the rifle out the window. The bullets hit the side, but don't hit anybody in the jeep. The jeep turns hard, slamming into Sol's car. Sol's car veers hard right, driving into a large rock, flipping the car upside down.

The jeep speeds past, then stops almost immediately.

Sol

Quickly pulls himself from the car, grabbing the rifle from the back. As the jeep backs up, Sol opens fire on it, spraying the car with bullets. The jeep stops reversing. Sol runs up, holding the rifle at eye level. He examines the three bodies inside. All dead

Sol turns and runs back to the car. He pulls open the back door, and helps Ryan out. Ryan stumbles, falling to his feet.

Another jeep

Starts to drive towards them. A gatling gun is mounted on the back. The jeep pulls up alongside the first jeep. The man on the gun turns it to Sol's car, and opens fire, shredding the car with bullets.

Sol runs across from a group of trees, and jumps on the back of the jeep. He pulls a knife out, cutting the soldier's throat. Sol grabs the handgun from his waist and fires it straight down through the roof, hitting the driver.

Sol jumps down, and opens the jeep door. He grabs the soldier's rifle, then does the same with the first jeep. He slings two rifles over either shoulder, and holds the third in his hands. He runs back to the group of trees, where Ryan watches.

RYAN

Why'd you do that?

SOL

We couldn't outrun them. They'd have cut us to pieces as we ran.

RYAN

What now?

SOL

Run.

Sol runs in the opposite direction of the border check. Ryan follows him. They run through the jungle, running blind in the darkness.

They come to a river. A lone boat is patrolling the river, a spotlight running along the water.

SOL (CONT'D)

Put your hands on your head.
You're my prisoner.

Ryan puts his hands on his head.

SOL (CONT'D)

(yelling)
Hey!

The spotlight swings around and illuminates Sol and Ryan. Sol points his gun at Ryan. The boat starts speeding towards them.

SOL (CONT'D)

I've got the white boy!

The boat comes in close. There are three soldiers on the boat. One driving, one operating the light, and another holding a rifle. Quickly, Sol pushes Ryan forwards to the ground, and fires his rifle seven times in quick succession.

All three soldiers are hit with the bullets. The driver and the spotlight operator fall out of the boat. The rifleman falls into the boat. Sol grabs Ryan by the shirt, lifting him back to his feet. The rifleman reaches forward for his rifle. Sol shoots him in the head, killing him.

SOL (CONT'D)

Help me get him out.

Sol jumps into the boat, then helps Ryan up. They grab the body, and roll it out of the boat. It hits the water, covering them with water. Sol walks to the back of the boat, and starts to drive.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Simon sits behind his desk.

KEN WILLIAMS

A husky man with a goatee and wearing a suit walks into the room. He carries a briefcase.

SIMON

Thanks for coming so soon.

KEN

No problem. I know the urgency of the situation.

Ken opens his briefcase and pulls out an envelope.

KEN (CONT'D)

Stuart Bradley, born August 23rd, 1967. Joined the marines at 18, promoted rapidly until six years ago when he went AWOL. It's a very impressive jacket. Fathers dead, mother lives just outside the city in Flowering Gardens nursing home. Bills get paid every months from a designated bank account.

Ken hands the folder to Simon, who looks over it.

KEN (CONT'D)

So him and your boy are on the run down there?

SIMON

Yeah. Making a run for the embassy across the border.

KEN

Why'd your boy stay down there so long?

SIMON

I asked him. Gave him the choice. He stayed.

KEN

And what about the guide situation?

SIMON

The guide you recommended apparently had a beef with the wrong people. They got ambushed, and he was killed. Now the whole country's after him. You know Yugandi?

KEN

Of course.

SIMON

His younger brother. Tried to kill them. Stuart was quicker, apparently.

KEN

So you're telling me that these two just pissed of the most powerful man in South Africa? The man whose rise to power included him killing the entire office of staff of his predecessor?

SIMON

That's what I'm saying.

KEN

Jesus.

The phone on Simons desk rings. Simon presses a button, turning it onto speakerphone.

SIMON

Hello?

RYAN

It's me. They were waiting for us at the border.

SIMON

What?

RYAN

They had our pictures. Mine and Sols. They had our fucking pictures!

SIMON

How did they get them?

RYAN

A picture at Sols place. And I dropped a roll of film in the house, I think. Had a picture of me in it.

SIMON

Are you across the border?

RYAN

Yes.

SIMON

Are you OK?

RYAN

Yeah, we're fine. We're travelling by boat now. They tried to kill us. Fought us back into the jungle. We're headed upstream now.

SIMON
I'm here with Ken.

KEN
Hey Ryan.

SIMON
He's been giving me some
information on your man there.

RYAN
OK.

KEN
He was in the military for
fifteen years. From what we can
see here, an excellent example of
the perfect soldier.

RYAN
Yeah, he's doing pretty good.

KEN
So as long as you stay with him,
you'll be fine.

RYAN
Alright.

SIMON
How long will it take you to get
to the embassy?

RYAN
Don't know.

SIMON
Alright. I'll call them, send
them a picture so they can keep
their eyes open for you. Tell
them to expect you soon.

RYAN
Thanks.

SIMON
Stay safe.

RYAN
I'll try.

Ryan hangs up.

INT. BOAT

Sol drives the boat, and Ryan sits up front with a rifle at
his feet.

He takes his passport out and puts it in a zip-lock bag. He does the zip-lock bag up, and drops it back into his backpack. He takes his camera out and does the same, placing it in a zip-lock bag.

SOL

Talk to me.

RYAN

What?

SOL

Talk to me. Tell me something.
The silence is killing me.

RYAN

Thought you didn't want to talk.

SOL

You can get out if you don't like
it.

Pause.

RYAN

My parents died in a car crash
when I was 16. Went to live with
my aunt on my mothers side for a
year. Lived on my own when I
turned 17. Got a job as a
photographer when I was 20. Been
doing it ever since.

SOL

You ever been to a place like
this before?

RYAN

No. I was mostly taking pictures
of the shitty articles. You know?
The ones about stupid records, or
shitty landmarks.

SOL

So how do you go from doing that
to being here?

RYAN

I volunteered. Nobody else wanted
the job. They needed someone down
here to take photos.

SOL

Regretting it now?

RYAN

Oh yeah. Should've kept my mouth
shut.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

I should've taken that story on the woman and the giant cookie.

Sol smiles.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I just wanted to make a difference.

SOL

Trust me kid. I've lived here for five years. Nobody comes here and makes a difference. They try as hard as they can, but it proves to be pointless. The story moves to the back part of the paper, and the biggest reaction you'll get is some rich housewife who decides to donate \$20 to a charity. Nothing you or anyone else tries to do will change that.

RYAN

Is that why you came down here?

SOL

I came down here because it was an easy place to get lost. Don't cause trouble, and you'll be fine. For the most part, people don't try to make trouble and they don't want to get involved.

RYAN

Tell me about your mom. You said she had dementia?

SOL

Yeah. Doctors had mentioned it being a possibility when she was younger. She didn't believe them though.

RYAN

When did it happen?

SOL

I was stationed in the middle east. The start of my career. Me and my troop were stationed in this town that had surrendered. We're all standing around, making jokes about something, and next thing I know, the guy next to me falls to the ground. His brains all over me and the wall.

(MORE)

SOL (CONT'D)

Shots keep ringing out, we're all running for cover. I took one in the shoulder. I spot the muzzle flash, and open fire on this small window of a house. The shooting stops. I pick myself up, and with what's left of my troop, we storm the house. We kick in the door, run in strong. We come to the room, open the door. This kid, a boy. No older than 12, laying on the ground. He has a sniper rifle in his hands. A box of ammunition on the table next to him. He's breathing heavily, spitting blood bubbles all over himself. He's reaching for the rifle next to him. I look at him. And I beg him, "don't. For the love of god, please don't". He grabs the rifle, tries to lift it up. He struggled so hard to get that rifle off the ground. And even when he was laying there, bleeding to death on the ground, he still had that determination in his eyes. He gets the rifle up, and I have to shoot him. Once, through the head. And all the boys are patting me on the back, congratulating me. And all I can do is try and not to throw up. So they patch me up, and send me to the hospital. After two days, they let me use the phone. All I wanted to do was talk to my mother. Just to tell her I loved her, and how much I miss her. She answers the phone and starts to talk to me. She thinks I'm my father. I get told to bring home some milk, and she hangs up. Shortly after that, she takes her car, drives it through the front all of a shopping market. They put her in a home after that.

RYAN

I'm sorry.

SOL

No, it's OK. It's not your fault, right? So I've had time to get used to the fact that my mother isn't my mother anymore. What's they saying? Every man is an island?

RYAN
I think it's "no man is an
island"

SOL
You know what I mean though?

RYAN
Yeah.

Pause.

SOL
You have a girl back home?

RYAN
No.

SOL
Why not?

RYAN
Because.

SOL
Because is not a reason.

RYAN
I just get nervous, that's all.

SOL
What's there to be nervous about?

RYAN
Are we really going to have this
conversation? Now, of all times.

SOL
Got anything else we can talk
about?

Pause.

RYAN
Got a plan?

Sol smiles. He pulls a map from his pocket. He unfolds it and sits it down. Ryan leans over it.

SOL
We're about here. Where the river
curves, we'll get off. Walk up
this hill, then through the
jungle. Should only take about a
half hour of walking. We'll hit
the city, and it's a very short
walk to the embassy.

RYAN

OK.

Ryan sits back down.

SOL

So why'd you become a
photographer?

RYAN

Because I can't write for shit.

Sol smiles.

A rocket flies past the boat, hitting a tree on the other side of the river. Sol and Ryan turns, and see another boat speeding behind them.

SOL

Drive!

Sol stands up and grabs the rifle from Ryan. Ryan sits down, and drives the boat. Sol stands, aims the rifle and fires at the other boat. He keeps firing. Another rocket is fired.

The second rocket misses the boat by a few feet. Sol quickly reloads the rifle.

SOL (CONT'D)

If he gets a third one off, we
need to jump.

Sol fires at the boat. A scream is heard in the darkness. A third rocket comes flying straight at the boat.

SOL (CONT'D)

Go!

Ryan stands, and jumps into the water. Sol grabs another rifle, and jumps into the water at the rocket hits the boat. An explosion rocks the top of the water. The wreckage of the boat floats on the top of the water. Sol and Ryan look at the surface.

Sol swims towards the surface, coming up underneath the boat. He inhales, then goes back down. Ryan comes up, inhales, then drops back down.

Sol points to the shoreline. Sol and Ryan swim towards it, keeping low in the water. The attacking boat has stopped. A spotlight skims the water surface. The spotlight comes close to Sol and Ryan. Sol grabs Ryan and they duck down underneath the water as the light skims across where they were just seconds ago.

The light moves on, and Sol and Ryan keep swimming.

EXT. SHORELINE

Sol and Ryan creep slowly onto the ground. They lay low on the ground, watching the boat as it powers around the water. Sol and Ryan crawl across the open ground, and they come to a bunch of trees. They stand behind the trees.

SOL
(Whispering)
Walk, softly. Watch your feet.

Sol walks slowly away from the shoreline into the jungle. Ryan follows him. They walk through the trees, passing plants and flowers as they walk.

From ahead, yelling is heard. Sol stops walking, kneels down and grabs the rifle. He passes one to Ryan, who holds it like an amateur.

A few feet ahead

Two soldiers stand together, urinating. They yell between themselves. They finish, and walk away. Sol and Ryan watch them go, until they're out of sight.

SOL (CONT'D)
(whispering)
They're following us.

Sol stands, but keeps his rifle prone. Ryan walks behind him.

From the distance, shots ring out. Sol turns his gun in the same direction, and fires back. From behind them, more shots are heard. Ryan fires blindly at the source.

Sol and Ryan run through the trees. They come to a small clearing. A group of logs sit together in a pile, almost in a triangle shape. Sol runs and jumps, hiding behind a log. Ryan does the same.

SOL (CONT'D)
We can't stay here.

RYAN
What? Why?

SOL
They can come at us from all directions. We don't have the ammo.

RYAN
What are we going to do?

Pause.

SOL

Get down.

Ryan covers his head with his hands. Sol aims the rifle in the air, and fires off a couple of shots. Shots from either side of them whiz past.

SOL (CONT'D)

(Yelling)

Come and get me!

Running footsteps are heard. They get closer from different directions. Sol kneels up holding both rifles, pointing them in the same direction of the footsteps. He fires off a short burst from both rifles. The soldiers running from either side shoot back. Sol ducks down.

From the darkness, a grenade is thrown. It lands at Sol's feet. Reacting quickly, Sol grabs it and throws it back in the direction it came. An explosion rings out through the jungle, a scream shortly after it. Sol stands up.

A soldier from the opposite direction of the explosion comes out from the darkness. Sol shoots him quickly, twice in the chest.. Sol grabs Ryan, and they jump out of the pit. They run into the darkness

EXT. SMALL HOUSE

Sol and Ryan come to a small wooden house. It's all alone, with a small path leading to a road. A jeep drives past on the road. Sol and Ryan stop running.

RYAN

We can't run anymore.

SOL

What?

RYAN

They've got us trapped. We need to hide. We need help.

SOL

These people aren't going to help us.

RYAN

We don't have a choice!

Ryan runs up to the front door, and pushes it open. Sol follows him inside.

INT. SMALL HOUSE

Sol and Ryan stand in the small kitchen area. From a back room

NALA

A pregnant 35 year old African woman comes running out.

NALA

Who are you! What do you want!

RYAN

We need your help. Please.

NALA

No help. Get out.

RYAN

They'll kill us if we go back out there.

NALA

Not my problem.

RYAN

Please.

NALA

No.

Sol grabs Ryan's wrist, and pulls off his watch. He offers it to Nala. Nala looks at it, then takes it.

SOL

We need to hide.

Nala thinks about this for a second.

NALA

Follow me.

Nala leads them to the back room. She moves a small mat to reveal a small door leading under the house. She pulls the door up.

RYAN

Thank you.

Ryan jumps down into the hole. Sol follows him. Nala shuts the door, then pushes the mat back over it.

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE

Ryan and Sol walk hunched over through the small area. They stop walking, and sit down under the main room they were just in. There is a small hole in the floor. Ryan peaks through.

Nala puts the watch on her wrist. She looks at it.

The front door is opened, and a group of soldiers storm inside. They look around the house. Finding nothing, they walk outside.

Yugandi

Walks into the house.

RYAN
(whispering)
He's here. Yugandi.

Yugandi walks over to the woman, and offers his hand to her.

YUGANDI
Hello.

Nala takes his hand, and kisses it.

NALA
Hello Mr Yugandi. My name is
Nala.

YUGANDI
Where is your husband?

NALA
He is sleeping in the city
tonight. He was working late.

YUGANDI
Do you know about the fugitives
we are searching for?

NALA
No.

YUGANDI
Two men. One black, one white.
Executed my brother in cold
blood. At least a dozen soldiers
they have killed. Tortured
countless others. They are
evading us. We are trying to
catch them before they hurt
someone else.

NALA

I haven't seen anyone else tonight. I heard some shooting outside, but nothing else.

YUGANDI

You wouldn't lie to me, would you Nala?

NALA

No, sir. I promise.

YUGANDI

Because we wouldn't your child to grow up with a mother with only one arm to hold her.

Nala puts her hands together in a praying motion.

NALA

Please sir, you must trust me.

Yugandi pulls his machete from it's sheath. He brings it up, and separates Nala's hands slowly. He looks at the watch on her wrist.

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE

Ryan pulls his camera, and puts it to the hole.

SOL

(whispering)

What are you doing?

Ryan starts quietly taking pictures.

INT. SMALL HOUSE

Yugandi stares at the watch.

YUGANDI

Where did you get this?

NALA

It was a gift. From my husband.

YUGANDI

What does your husband do?

NALA

He makes furniture.

Yugandi forces Nala closer to him with the machete. He looks at the watch face.

YUGANDI

The time has stopped. Did you know that?

NALA

Yes. We don't have the money to get it fixed.

YUGANDI

It looks like it has been damaged with water.

Nala says nothing.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

We know they were here. Where did they go?

Nala says nothing.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

If you don't answer, you're helping to fugitives. We don't appreciate that very much. Where did they go?

Nala says nothing. Yugandi looks at Nala's pregnant stomach.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

How far along are you?

NALA

Seven months.

YUGANDI

Is it a boy or a girl?

NALA

We don't know.

YUGANDI

I've got 20 Rands it's a boy. Any takers?

A few of the soldiers raise their hands.

YUGANDI (CONT'D)

Good. Who wants to help me find out?

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE

Ryan looks at Sol, confused. Sol points to his eye, then at the ground.

INT. SMALL HOUSE

Yugandi pulls a small knife from his pocket. Two of the soldiers grab Nala by the shoulders. She struggles, but it's useless. The soldiers drag her to a table, forcing her to lay down on it. Nala starts to kick her legs. Two more soldiers run forward and grab her legs. Yugandi steps forward.

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE

Ryan watches through the small hole.

Nala screams

The scream echoes through the house. Ryan watches in shock, then turns. He holds his hand over his mouth. He kneels down, and vomits in the corner. Nala continues to scream. Sol closes his eyes.

NALA
(O.S.)
No. Please.

Yugandi laughs.

YUGANDI
A boy! You should never doubt me.

INT. SMALL HOUSE

Yugandi holds his knife, covered in blood. He wipes it on Nala's clothes.

YUGANDI
You boys stay here and see if
they come back. Don't be afraid
to have some fun with her.

Yugandi turns and walks out. The soldiers look at each other, then at Nala. One steps forward, and unbuttons his pants.

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE

Ryan and Sol sit together, listening to the soldiers laugh, while Nala screams.

SOL
(whispering)
Try and get some sleep.

Sol lays down, and closes his eyes. Ryan watches Sol lay down. Ryan leans against the wall, closing his eyes and putting his head in his hands.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDER SMALL HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The small space is lit up with the first sign of the sun. Ryan sits in the corner, watching Sol sleep. Ryan crawls over to Sol, and shakes him lightly.

RYAN
Hey. Sol, wake up.

Sol awakes, grabbing his handgun and bringing it up to fire.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Hey, hey! It's me.

Sol looks at Ryan, then at the gun. Sol lowers his arm.

SOL
Are they gone?

RYAN
Yeah. About an hour ago.

SOL
Get any sleep?

RYAN
No.

SOL
What time is it?

Ryan looks at the ceiling.

RYAN
Don't know.

SOL
Does the phone have a clock on it?

RYAN
Yeah. But it hasn't worked after our swim this morning.

Sol looks at Ryan.

SOL
OK. Stay behind me.

Sol and Ryan stand. Sol grabs the two rifles, and hands one to Ryan. Ryan takes the rifle, and slings his satchel over his left shoulder. Sol holds the gun up, and approaches the hatch. He pushes it open slowly with one arm, bringing the rifle up with the other. He slowly climbs out, scanning the room.

Sol climbs out quickly, then holds the hatch open for Ryan. Ryan climbs up and out. The two stand together and look at the room. It's torn apart, and covered with splashes of blood. Nala's body lays on the table. Her stomach is cut open, and she has small cuts on her chest and her face.

RYAN

Jesus. What do we do?

SOL

We've got to go. We can't help her.

Sol walks to the front door and walks out, not looking back. Ryan walks to the door, turning to look at Nala. Ryan walks out of the house.

EXT. JUNGLE

Sol looks around the jungle, his eyes glancing quickly. Sol and Ryan turn and jog away from the house and towards the hill.

RYAN

How could they do something like that?

SOL

They think it's fun. Betting on the sex of the baby, then cutting it out while the woman is still alive. It's a game to them. They learned it from the rebels.

RYAN

How could they do that to someone?

SOL

Easily. These people don't give a fuck about their own. You learn that pretty quickly down here.

RYAN

It's fucking cruel.

SOL

Cruel. I'd call it cruel if they'd ever met her before. You want to know cruel?

(MORE)

SOL (CONT'D)

I was down in El Salvador during the last years of the civil war. We were taking people who'd been hurt to a local medical centre by chopper. This woman runs up to us, holding a baby. She starts talking, how she needs help, how she needs to get out. We tell her there's nothing we can do. She runs off. About fifteen minutes later, she comes back. She's holding the baby, but it's not all there and she's covered in blood. The baby's left arm was cut off. Just, gone. Severed above the elbow. She told us she'd been near an explosion or something and the baby had taken a piece of shrapnel. The cut was clean, straight. Too straight for shrapnel. She'd taken her baby behind a building, and cut the arm off. She didn't even bring it with her. This baby is bleeding and crying, and all she wants to do is get on the helicopter. I mean, what the fuck are we supposed to say to her? There's no child services down there. Nobody we can call. This woman mutilated her baby just because she couldn't afford a car ride out of town. That's what I'd call cruel.

Ryan stares at the ground as they jog up the hill.

SOL (CONT'D)

So what are you going to do when you get home? First thing.

RYAN

Get some decent food for starters.

SOL

Yeah. That's one thing I miss about the real world. You can't order a decent hamburger down here for shit.

RYAN

Shower, in clean water. None of this filtered shit.

SOL

What about long term?

RYAN

I don't know. Go back to work, I guess.

Ryan smiles. Sol looks at him.

SOL

What?

RYAN

Before I left, I was worried about missing the TV shows I like. So I had to set my TiVo to record them. But apparently the size wasn't big enough to hold them all. That was my big concern about this war. What TV shows I'm going to miss. We just listened to a woman get butchered and raped, and my big life problems are me missing TV.

SOL

Opens your eyes, doesn't it?

RYAN

Yeah. I understand what you mean now.

SOL

About what?

RYAN

This. All of this. Everything that's happened here. It took me being hunted by an entire army to realize the brutality of this place, know what I mean?

SOL

That sounds like a good headline for your story.

RYAN

I told you, I'm not a writer.

SOL

So you're telling me that after all this, you're not going to tell this story?

RYAN

Of course.

SOL

But you're not going to write it? Who is?

(MORE)

SOL (CONT'D)

Some preppy educated stiff who thinks every fucking word he writes is Oscar worthy material? Some overworked overweight over the hill writer who's just sticking with the job for six more months so he can retire? That's bullshit and you know it. You can't trust anybody else to tell this story. It's all yours to tell. And after what we've been through down here, it deserves to be told.

Sol and Ryan slow their jogging as they come to a clearing. It's the medical camp.

Some of the tents are on fire. Screaming is heard.

RYAN

Soldiers?

SOL

No. Rebels.

Sol points. A group of young boys, no older than fifteen, cradle automatic weapons as they guard a tent.

SOL (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go around.

RYAN

No.

SOL

What?

RYAN

We can't leave these people.

SOL

There's nothing to leave. This is a rebel raid. They've been at it all morning, I'm guessing.

A woman screams.

RYAN

Do what you want. But you're being paid to protect me, remember?

SOL

I'm being paid to baby-sit you. Take you to where you need to go.

RYAN

OK. So where I need to go is on the other side of the camp. Now you can help me, or leave me to do it myself.

Sol thinks about this for a second.

SOL

Alright. Be as quiet as you can. We don't have silencers, and there's a lot more of them than us. Got it?

RYAN

Yeah.

Sol gets down on his hands and knees, and Ryan does the same. They both crawl slowly towards two boys on the outside of the camp. Sol grabs his knife from his pocket. They crawl right behind them. Sol stands up, grabbing one of the boys around the mouth. Sol brings the knife up and quickly stabs the boy in the back three times.

Ryan stands as the second boy reacts. Ryan swings his rifle around, the butt hitting the boy in the side of the head. The boy falls to the ground. Sol pulls the knife out, and lets his boy drop too.

The two walk slowly towards the camp. There's nobody in it. Ryan looks around, and spots an array of body parts thrown together in a small pile. The head of the Boston doctor sits on top. Ryan looks away.

Sol stops walking, and listens. All that's heard are voices inside a tent. Sol and Ryan come up outside the tent. Sol looks at Ryan.

Sol nods, and the two run into the tent.

INT. TENT

The female doctor from earlier is laying on the table. Her clothes have been ripped from her, and her face is bloody. There are four men, all in their thirties standing around the woman. Sol shoots the first one twice in the chest. The second goes for his gun.

Ryan shoots his rifle, hitting the second rebel in the lower stomach. The third rebel raises his hands in the air and turns to Sol and Ryan.

THIRD REBEL

I give up. Don't shoot me.

Sol shoots the third rebel in the head. He falls to the ground.

The fourth rebel kneels behind the woman, holding a machete around her neck. The doctor looks dazed and exhausted. She blinks her eyes, looking at Sol and Ryan.

FEMALE DOCTOR

Thank you.

FOURTH REBEL

Don't try it! I'll fucking kill her.

Sol and Ryan point their rifles at the fourth rebel.

FEMALE DOCTOR

Do it.

Sol shoots the fourth rebel in the neck. The fourth rebel falls back, the blade of the machete slicing open the female doctor's throat. She begins to bleed.

Ryan runs up to her, putting his hand over the wound.

RYAN

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

The female doctor looks at Ryan. She spits up blood, then goes limp.

The second rebel is crawling along the floor. He reaches for a dropped handgun. Sol kicks the gun away, then kneels down.

SOL

How far to the city?

SECOND REBEL

Fifteen minutes.

SOL

Many soldiers?

SECOND REBEL

You haven't heard. That's why we're here. The soldiers arrived early this morning. It's all out war down there. Neither of you will survive.

Sol goes to shoot the second rebel, but his gun clicks empty. Sol drops it, and pulls his handgun from underneath his shirt. He fires three shots into the second rebel.

Sol walks towards the tent door.

RYAN

We can't just leave her here.

SOL
We don't have a choice.

Sol walks out, followed by Ryan.

EXT. MEDICAL CAMP

Sol and Ryan look around. Parked near the road is a jeep with a mounted machine gun. Standing alongside the jeep is one lone driver. Sol stops walking, and from where he's standing takes aim at the driver. Sol shoots once, the bullet hitting the driver in the side of the neck.

Sol and Ryan run to the jeep. Sol grabs the shotgun the driver is holding in his hands. Sol gets behind the drivers seat, and Ryan in the passengers seat. Sol starts the jeep, and they peel out, driving away from the camp.

INT. JEEP

Sol and Ryan sit in silence, watching the sun come up.

SOL
I've been thinking.

Ryan looks at Sol.

SOL (CONT'D)
I was thinking about coming back with you.

RYAN
Really?

SOL
Yeah. It'd be nice to be a part of civilization again.

RYAN
But what about all this talk of how you're done with America and all that shit?

SOL
Well I can't stay here anymore, can I?

RYAN
What inspired the change of heart?

SOL
Nothing in particular. Just been thinking about it for a while.
(MORE)

SOL (CONT'D)

There's nothing like getting shot
at for 12 straight hours to make
you miss home.

RYAN

Yeah, I know.

Silence.

RYAN (CONT'D)

So Sol, huh?

SOL

Yeah.

RYAN

What made you decide to start
calling yourself that?

SOL

Well, I'd stick out if people
started calling me Stuart. So I
went with Sol. Like sole.

RYAN

Soul. As in the food?

SOL

As in sole. Sole, alone, single.
Just how I like it. I don't have
to depend on anyone, and anyone
doesn't have to depend on me.

RYAN

So what made you decide to help
me?

Sol opens his mouth to answer, but doesn't say anything. He
turns his attention back to the road.

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Simon sits behind the desk, staring at the computer screen.
Ken walks into the room.

KEN

Any word from your man?

SIMON

No. I keep calling, but there's
no answer.

KEN

Heard the news?

SIMON

No. What?

KEN

It's a war zone down there. The rebels are fighting the soldiers. And neither side cares about collateral damage.

SIMON

So what about the embassy?

KEN

They're evacuating it now. Flying all American citizens out of the country. Ferrying them to the closest base we've got down there.

SIMON

How long do they have?

KEN

Half an hour, at best.

SIMON

What happens if they don't make it?

KEN

They're on their own.

Simon puts his face in his hands, and exhales loudly.

SIMON

What can we do?

KEN

Nothing. There's nothing we can do.

EXT. JUNGLE

Sol and Ryan are in the jeep. The jeep comes to the top of the hill. Sol stops the jeep and looks down at the city.

It's exactly how Ken described it. A war zone. There are buildings on fire, gunshots and explosions are heard all over the place. The streets are littered with empty cars, some now empty burning frames.

There's frantic motion all over the streets as soldiers fight rebels. There are rebels on rooftops of buildings firing down on the crowds. Screams of pain ring out, and are faintly heard by Sol and Ryan.

Sol points to a large building in the centre of the town.

SOL

That's where we're going.

Ryan nods.

SOL (CONT'D)
Ready for this?

RYAN
Yeah.

Sol looks ahead, and slams his foot down on the accelerator. The car runs down the hill, as fast as it can go.

Two rebels on a building on the outskirts of the city notice the jeep tearing down the road. They both turn, and with their rifles on automatic, shoot at the jeep.

The bullets tear chunks out of the ground around the jeep. Ryan ducks down, and Sol lowers his head so it's out of sight as far as it can go while still being able to see the road.

A car

Speeds from inside the city towards Sol and Ryan.

SOL
Brace yourself.

The two vehicles come close, just as

A tank

From inside the city, fires off a round. The round strikes the car, sending pieces of it all over the place.

Sol tries to turn the jeep to avoid hitting the wreckage, but is too late. Sol slams straight into the wrecked car, and their jeep is thrown onto an awkward angle from the collision. The jeep flips onto it's side, and starts to roll down the hill, tearing small trees out from the ground as it does.

The jeep slams into a big tree, jolting Sol and Ryan. The jeep rests upside down.

SOL (CONT'D)
You OK?

RYAN
Yeah. You?

SOL
Still one piece.

Sol braces himself with one hand, and unbuckles his seat belt with the other. He drops down, and quickly turns over. He grabs Ryan's shoulders, bracing him for the fall.

SOL (CONT'D)
Undo your seat belt.

Ryan does this, and Sol lowers him down.

Gunfire tears up the car as a pair of soldiers advance on the overturned jeep. Sol grabs the shotgun from where it came to rest, wedged between the seat and the floor. Sol hands Ryan the handgun.

SOL (CONT'D)
Same time.

Ryan climbs over to the back seat. He turns back to Sol. Sol nods his head, and they both push out of the car.

Sol aims and shoots one of the soldiers in the chest with the shotgun, the force of the blast knocking the soldier over. Ryan fires the handgun five times, hitting his soldier in the legs with four of the shots. The soldier falls to the ground. Sol wriggles out of the car and stands quickly.

He surveys the area where they came to rest, looking for more soldiers. Satisfied, he runs around the other side of the car. Sol grabs Ryan's outstretched hand, pulls him out of the car and helps him to his feet.

The soldier who Ryan shot in the leg cradles his gun. He fires wildly at Ryan and Sol. Sol swings around, and shoots the soldier in the stomach. The soldier drops his gun, and looks at his torn up stomach in shock. Sol runs up to him, dropping his shotgun and grabbing the soldier's rifle.

Sol and Ryan turn towards the city, the sounds of carnage getting louder and louder as they approach. They come clear of the jungle, and as soon as they do, gunfire riddles the trees behind them. Sol and Ryan run quickly towards the building, diving down behind a wall.

The two rebels on top of the building hold their arms out and fire wildly down below, the bullets tearing up the ground a few feet away from Sol and Ryan. Sol stands, and backs up slowly. He aims his gun at the rooftop.

One of the rebels sticks his head over to see what's happening. Sol fires a quick automatic burst from the rifle, and the rebel gets hit in the face. His body drops down from the building. The second rebel sticks his arms over and starts to fire again.

Ryan aims his gun, and shoots the entire clip at the arm. The last bullet hits the rebel in the upper arm. The rebel screams, and drops his gun. Sol runs backwards, firing another burst of automatic fire. The bullets tear up the chest of the second rebel. He falls backwards onto the roof.

Sol grabs the dropped rifle, and throws it to Ryan. Ryan fumbles it, drops it, then picks it back up again quickly. Sol runs to the edge of the building, looking down the street. Ryan runs up behind him.

SOL (CONT'D)
Fucking tank.

Sol ducks back behind the wall.

SOL (CONT'D)
We're gonna go around the corner.
Run as fast as you can to the
other side of the street.

A loud shot is heard. Sol pushes Ryan to the ground, and Sol dives down next to him. The wall explodes where they once stood.

SOL (CONT'D)
Don't stop for anything. Even me.

Ryan looks at Sol as he says this. Ryan nods. They both stand up and get ready to run. Sol nods, and they both run into the street. At the end is a tank. The tank slowly moves it's cannon to aim at Sol and Ryan. It fires, the shell passing them as they run. It strikes the ground a few feet away, the explosion rocking the ground.

Sol and Ryan reach the other side of the street. They come to an open doorway. Sol runs inside, and Ryan follows. The tank re-aligns it's cannon and fires again, blowing away the wall that the doorway belonged to.

INT. BAR

They run into a bar. Looks the same as the one at the start. Sol and Ryan run to the back, taking refuge behind the bar itself. They look through the hole in the wall as the tank realigns it's cannon.

Four rebels

Run from nowhere, storming the tank. They open the hatch and yell something down to the driver. Three of the rebels hold a home made molotov cocktail. One of the rebels drops his cocktail down the hatch, and the other two throw theirs into the side of the tank. They run back to their hiding spot.

The driver of the tank climbs out, on fire. He screams in pain, running wildly. He runs towards the bar, but falls to the ground before he makes it. Sol and Ryan stand slowly.

Sol and Ryan run to the back, and up the stairs. They come to a small row of doors, motel rooms.

Sol opens them all, looking inside. He comes to the last one. He opens it, and they run inside.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

They run into the small room. In the corner, the bed is flipped over. Behind it is a family. A husband, a wife and a little girl. The family jump as Sol and Ryan run into the room.

SOL
Calm down. Calm down. We don't
want to hurt you.

Sol runs to the window, and looks out. He opens the window. Ryan runs up to him. Sol climbs over the window ledge, and holds on

SOL (CONT'D)
We're gonna jump to the roof.

RYAN
What?

Sol jumps down onto the roof of the building next door. He lands, and rolls to break the fall. Ryan climbs over, and gets ready to jump.

A rebel

From the building next to the one Sol just jumped to, fires from an open window. The bullets tear up the ground around Sol's feet. Sol dives for cover behind a large pile of wood. The rebel aims his gun at Ryan. Ryan jumps to the next building as the rebel fires, spraying the wall and the room with bullets.

Sol leans out with his rifle, spraying bullets at the rebel in the window. The rebel is hit with bullets, and falls through the window. Ryan stands up, and runs to Sol. Sol runs with Ryan to the edge of the building. Sol takes a few steps back, lines up and runs towards the window which the rebel just fell from.

Sol jumps, and makes it through the small window frame. He stumbles on the landing. Ryan lines up and jumps as well. He doesn't make it quite all the way though. He falls short, barely managing to grab the frame. He scrambles his feet, pushing them against the side of the building, like he's trying to run up the wall.

Two soldiers on the street notice Ryan dangling from the window. They aim and fire. Sol grabs him by the collar of the shirt, and pulls him through just in time. The bullets come through the window, tearing up the roof above their heads. One soldier throws a grenade through the window.

SOL

Move!

Sol shoves Ryan and they run as fast as they can away from the grenade. They get to the door and on the other side of the wall when the grenade explodes. The force of the explosion throws them off balance, knocking them to the floor.

They crawl around, in a daze from the explosion. Sol holds his ears. He grimaces as they ring.

Three rebels

Run from the hallway. They run up to Sol and Ryan. Two of them start to hit Sol and Ryan with wild punches.

THIRD REBEL

Hey, hold on.

They stop. The third rebel takes a crumpled up picture from his pocket. It's the one the soldiers have of Ryan.

THIRD REBEL (CONT'D)

This is the man they're looking for.

FIRST REBEL

Are you sure?

THIRD REBEL

No. All these white boys look the same. Look at the forehead. The nose. It's him.

SECOND REBEL

What now?

THIRD REBEL

Take him. If the soldiers want him, it's for a reason.

FIRST REBEL

What about him?

First rebel gestures to Sol.

THIRD REBEL

We'll keep his head for a trophy.

First Rebel and Second Rebel smile. First Rebel and Third Rebel grab Ryan under his arms, and drag him down the hall. Second Rebel stands over Sol.

SECOND REBEL

Maybe now you people will leave us alone.

Second Rebel pulls a knife from it's sheath, resting on his belt. He holds it high. Sol spins around on the floor, kicking Second Rebels' legs from underneath him. Second Rebel falls to the ground.

Sol leans forward, and punches Second Rebel in the face. Second Rebel swings the knife in his hands wildly. He cuts Sol's left arm deep. Sol groans in pain. Sol crawls back away from Second Rebel. Second Rebel reaches and grabs his dropped handgun.

Sol launches himself onto Second Rebel, knocking the gun from his hands. Second Rebel grabs his knife, and tries to cut Sol across the face. Sol grabs his arm, and breaks it. Second Rebel screams in pain. Sol bends the broken arm holding the knife in an awkward direction, so the knife blade is pointing down at Second Rebels' chest.

Second Rebel grabs his wrist with his other hand, trying to stop Sol from stabbing him. Sol shuffles his weight, putting it all on the knife. Sol holds the arm with both hands, forcing them down as hard as he can.

The knife slowly stabs Second Rebel in the chest. Second Rebel opens his eyes wide in shock as he feels the knife enter his chest slowly. He tries to scream, but nothing comes out. He closes his eyes and lays his head back, dead. Sol looks at him for a second, then climbs to his feet. He examines the cut on his arm, then grabs the dropped handgun on the floor.

INT. BUILDING BASEMENT

The basement is empty, save for a few chairs and tables. There is a communication centre type set-up on one of the tables, with a radio and a cell phone. There are three other men standing around the room, all holding automatic rifles.

The two rebels enter, dragging Ryan. They drop him to the floor. Ryan starts to kick wildly into the air, trying to fight off the rebels. The three other men run over, and grab his flailing legs. They subdue him as best they can, holding him and punching him hard in the chest and stomach.

WIKY KOBIUS

Stands from the communication table. He throws the men a big roll of duct tape.

KOBIUS

Tie him up for fuck sakes.

The rebels manage to tie his hands and feet. Ryan starts to spit and curse at them.

RYAN

You mother-fuckers! I'll kill all
of you!

Third Rebel grabs a piece of tape and wraps it around
Ryan's head, covering his mouth. They drag him to the back
of the room and tie him to a steel pole fixture.

KOBIUS

What the fuck is this?

Third Rebel pulls out the crumpled picture of Ryan.

THIRD REBEL

This is him.

Kobius looks at the picture, then looks at Ryan. He glances
back and forth between the two.

KOBIUS

Very nice work.

Kobius walks to the back and grabs the cell phone off the
table. He dials a number, and holds it to his ear.

INT. YUGANDIS OFFICE

Yugandi sits in his chair behind a big table, littered with
paper. He wears a shirt that's bearing pit stains.

ETHEIS

A small man with long black hair runs into the room,
holding a cell phone.

YUGANDI

What is it?

ETHEIS

There's a call from you. They say
he's got the white boy.

Yugandi stands up and snatches the phone from Etheis' hand.
He holds it to his ear.

YUGANDI

Who am I talking to?

KOBIUS

My name is Wiky Kobius. You know
who I am.

Yugandi grimaces at the sound of the name.

YUGANDI

Yes.

KOBIUS

And you know who I'm fighting for?

YUGANDI

Yes. You have what I'm looking for?

KOBIUS

Why else would I be calling?

YUGANDI

What do you want for him?

KOBIUS

You're men are swarming all over our village. We want them gone, for a start. Once they've left, we can talk some more.

YUGANDI

If you had any sense, you'd let me have the boy now and save yourself any trouble.

KOBIUS

This boy is my bargain. Without him, how else am I going to get what I want?

Yugandi hangs up the phone and throws it at the wall in rage. He turns to Etheis.

YUGANDI

Where's the closest AH?

ETHEIS

Close. About 5 minutes away.

YUGANDI

You listen to me very carefully. I want you to give the AH orders that it's to go to the village and kill anything that moves.

ETHEIS

But sir. There are civilians down there. Our own people. And the American Embassy.

YUGANDI

(yelling)

I don't care! Tell them to level the whole fucking town for all I care. Just make sure you bring me back the body. Understand?

Pause.

ETHEIS

Yes sir.

INT. BUILDING BASEMENT

Kobius sits the phone down on the table. He walks over to Ryan.

KOBIUS

Looks like you're a valuable
find, my friend.

Kobius turns to the group of rebels guarding the door.

KOBIUS (CONT'D)

Get outside and clear the street.
We're going to move him.

Two rebels open the door. Sol stands there, gun in hand. He quickly shoots both men. The others try to close the door. Sol grabs one of the dying rebels arms and holds it in the gap of the door. The steel door slams against the arm. The rebel screams.

One of them go to the gap and sticks his gun in the gap. He fires wildly. Sol grabs his arm and pulls it through so his face is hard against the door. Sol shoots him in the face, then pushes hard against the door.

The rebels holding the door loose their balance and fall backwards. Sol quickly dives into the room, shooting his gun into the group of rebels. He hits three and they fall to the ground, dead. The fourth shoots Sol, hitting him in the shoulder. Sol yells in pain, and shoots back, hitting him four times in the chest.

Sol turns his attention to Kobius, who's making his way slowly to the shotgun resting on the table. Kobius notices Sol watching him, and runs for it. Sol shoots the radio on the table, sparks shooting out of it. Kobius stops running and stands still, raising his hands above his head. He walks back over to Ryan, standing in front of him,

SOL

I don't want any trouble. Just
give him to me and we'll be on
our way.

KOBIUS

No chance.

One of the rebels from the group Sol shot stands up behind Sol, a bullet hole in his shoulder and a rifle slung around his arm. He towers over Sol. The Giant Rebel grabs Sol around the neck with both arms, getting him in a headlock. He lifts Sol off the ground.

Kobius goes to run for the shotgun, but Ryan kicks him in the back of the legs. Kobius falls over. Ryan stretches his legs apart, breaking the tape that held them together. Ryan wraps his legs around Kobius' chest, holding him in place.

Sol flails his arms trying to grab hold of something, but can't. He finally finds the slung rifle. He grabs it, and holds the trigger down. An automatic burst of bullets let loose from the gun, tearing up Giant Rebel's left leg. Giant Rebel screams, and lowers Sol so his feet are touching the ground, but still keeps his arms wrapped around his neck.

Kobius tries to punch Ryan, but can't reach him. Kobius pulls a small knife from his pocket. He stabs Ryan in the right leg. Ryan loosens his grip, and Kobius wriggles free. Kobius punches Ryan hard in the face twice, causing blood to spew from his nose.

Sol stamps his foot down hard on Giant Rebel's bullet riddled foot. Giant Rebel lets go of Sol and grabs his foot in pain. Sol swings around, hitting Giant Rebel in the face with his fist as he does. Sol wraps his arms around Giant Rebel's neck and starts to tighten his grip. Giant Rebel swings his arms. Sol flips him around so Giant Rebel is face down on the floor with Sol's arms around his neck. Sol pulls back, and breaks Giant Rebel's neck with a loud crack.

Kobius makes a run for the shotgun. Sol runs too, tackling Kobius into the table, sending them over it. The table flips as they hit it, and the radio falls to the floor. Sol grabs Kobius' head and slams it hard into the fallen radio. Kobius kicks Sol hard in the stomach. Kobius grabs the shotgun and starts to stand up, but Sol punches him hard in the groin.

Kobius grabs his groin. Sol kicks him hard in the knee, breaking his leg. Kobius falls to the ground. Sol grabs the radio and slams it down hard into Kobius' head. The radio digs deep into Kobius' head. Blood starts to spill across the floor. Sol climbs to his feet. He grabs the shotgun from the floor and hobbles over to Ryan. He kneels down and tears the tape off Ryan's mouth.

SOL

You OK?

RYAN

Yeah. You?

SOL

Seen better days, but I'm whole.

RYAN

Thought you said you wouldn't
come back for me.

Sol reaches behind Ryan and rips the tape that binds his hands. Sol helps Ryan to his feet.

SOL
It's a bad habit I picked up.

The two walk slowly towards the door. A soldier appears at the door, holding a rifle. He examines the room quickly, then notices Ryan and Sol. He raises his rifle quickly. Sol jumps in front of Ryan, and pushes him down to the floor. Sol dives on top of him.

The soldier fires a short automatic burst. Three bullets hit Sol in the back. Sol hits the ground, rolls over and fires the shotgun. The blast hits the soldier in the chest, the force blowing him into the wall. Sol lays back, bleeding from the bullet wounds. Ryan kneels over him.

RYAN
What the hell are you doing?

Sol spits up blood.

SOL
Saving your life, you dumb fuck.

RYAN
Come on, let's go.

Sol tries to stand, but grimaces in pain.

SOL
I can't get up.

RYAN
Here, let me help you.

Ryan reaches to help Sol.

SOL
No.

RYAN
I can carry you. It's not far.

SOL
You can't. You're not strong enough. I'm dead weight.

RYAN
We had a deal. We were flying out of here together.

Sol starts to look around the room at the dead bodies.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Sol. Sol.

Sol doesn't look at him.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Stuart?

Sol looks at him.

SOL

Are you still here?

Ryan smiles.

RYAN

Yeah.

SOL

Get the fuck out of here. Now!
They'll be coming fast.

Sol drops his head back, the life going from his eyes. Ryan looks at him, then starts to stand up. Sol shoots a hand up and grabs Ryan by the shoulder. Sol mouths something. Ryan leans down, holding his ear only inches away from Sol's mouth. Sol whispers something into Ryan's ear. Ryan listens intently.

RYAN

OK. I promise.

Sol loosens his grip, his arm falling to his side. Ryan stands slowly. He backs away from Sol, not breaking his gaze of him. Ryan backs into one of the bodies near the door, and falls over backwards. He lands hard on the ground. He sits up and looks around. He's all alone in the building.

Ryan holds back tears as he hears gunfire in the distance. He slowly climbs to his feet. He looks down at the dead soldier. He grabs the rifle from his hands, and notices a small grenade belt. He unlatches it from the soldier, and wraps it around his waist. He stands up straight and runs out.

EXT. TOWN

Ryan runs out of the building and onto the street. He looks around, and runs in the opposite direction of the tank wreckage. He runs as fast as he can while limping on his left leg. He comes to an intersection and looks around, aiming his gun at the empty space. From the distance, a rumbling sound can be heard.

Ryan turns to look at the source of the noise.

A helicopter

Soars over the town, flying over slowly. Some rebels on top of a building start to shoot their rifles at the helicopter.

The bullets ricochet off the bottom of the helicopter. The helicopter turns quickly and fires its machine guns at the roof, tearing it to shreds.

Ryan runs as fast as he can, away from where the helicopter hovers. The helicopter turns to point its guns at Ryan as he runs away. It waits for a few seconds, then fires at Ryan. The bullets chew up the ground behind Ryan. Ryan dives over a car and hides behind it. The bullets from the helicopter tear up the car and the building, but Ryan is safe.

The helicopter flies off, turns and comes back. From another rooftop, a rebel aims a rocket launcher at the helicopter. The rebel fires the rocket. The rocket misses the helicopter. The helicopter fires a rocket at the building. It hits the wall, and the building starts to collapse.

Ryan runs away from the carnage as the building collapses down on where he was just hiding. Ryan runs down a small alley to get away. The helicopter fires another rocket, and another building is engulfed in an explosion. Ryan comes out on another main street.

The helicopter flies over, firing its machine guns wildly. Ryan grabs his rifle and aims it, waiting for the helicopter to fly over him. As it flies over, Ryan fires full automatic on the helicopter. The bullets hit the bottom, and one even cracks the glass, but does no real damage. The helicopter fires its machine guns again, Ryan runs and hides in a door frame.

The helicopter stops shooting its machine guns and fires another rocket. The rocket whistles as it flies through the air. Ryan runs away from the door frame as the rocket hits the wall, obliterating it. Ryan is knocked over by the force, but quickly stands up and keeps running.

On another rooftop, another rebel holds a rocket launcher. The rebel fires, but the rocket narrowly misses the helicopters tail. The helicopter turns to the rooftop. The rebel quickly reloads the rocket launcher. The rebel fires off another rocket as the helicopter fires its machine guns at the rebel.

The rebel is hit with gunfire, and falls back onto the roof. The helicopter tries to move out of the way of the rocket, but is too slow. The rocket hits the helicopter on the tail. The helicopter starts to spin out of control. Ryan runs under it as smoke starts to pour out of the helicopter. The helicopter strikes the ground, rocking the ground as it explodes. Ryan stumbles as the helicopter explodes behind him.

Ryan turns to survey the crash. He looks for a second, then keeps running.

A soldier

Exits from a door. He sees Ryan, and reacts by bringing his rifle up to fire. Ryan ducks behind a building, the rebels gunfire tearing chunks out of the wall. Ryan leans out and tries to fire his rifle. It clicks empty.

RYAN

Fuck.

Ryan drops the rifle and cowers back behind the wall. The soldier fires a short burst, then his gun clicks empty too. Quickly, he drops the magazine out of the gun and starts to reload. Ryan rests his hands on a grenade on the belt. He takes one, pulls the pin and throws it wildly in the direction of the soldier. It ricochets off the wall, landing in the street.

The soldier runs to grab the grenade. He picks it up and curls his arm to throw it back. He launches it, but the grenade explodes just as it leaves his hand. The force of the explosion blows his body into the wall at a sharp rate. It hits the ground, and falls at an awkward angle.

Ryan glances out, then seeing no threat, keeps running. He comes to the corner of the street. He glances left and right. To the right, is the gates for the American Embassy. Ryan lets out a gasp of breath. He turns and runs towards the Embassy.

A truckload of soldiers turn down the street. Ryan gets the gates, where an American soldier is closing them.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You need to help me.

AMERICAN SOLDIER

Get out of here.

RYAN

I'm an American. I was told to come here.

The soldiers start firing at Ryan and the American Soldier. The American Soldier grabs Ryan and runs with him towards the building. They get to the building, and Ryan runs inside. The American Soldier starts firing at the truck of soldiers.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY

Ryan runs into the embassy, looking around. There are four soldiers in the giant room, all looking at him. The American Soldier who helped Ryan closes the door, and locks it. He walks to Ryan.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
What's your name?

RYAN
Ryan. Ryan Edwards.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
Papers?

Ryan fumbles with his bag as he pulls his passport in it's zip lock bag. He tears open the zip lock bag and hands his passport to the American Soldier. The American Soldier looks at it for a second, then hands it back to him.

AMERICAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
What took you so long?

RYAN
We took the long way round.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
There's more of you?

RYAN
No. Just me.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
You're lucky. We're the last
chopper out of here.

The American Soldier points to the staircase. The soldiers and Ryan run up the stairs. They come to a door. The American Soldier opens the door, and they all run outside.

EXT. EMBASSY ROOF

On the roof is a helipad, where a helicopter rests. The soldiers run to the helicopter and climb in. The American Soldier walks towards it with Ryan. He grabs a rifle from inside the helicopter and hands it to Ryan.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
They're gonna be shooting at us.
You know how to use one of these?

RYAN
Yeah.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
Good. This ride ain't free, you
know.

The American Soldier and Ryan climb into the helicopter. The pilot starts the helicopter and it takes off over the village. The soldiers in the truck on the street start firing at the helicopter. The American soldiers start firing back, hitting most of the enemy soldiers.

Ryan leans over and aims his gun down. He fires it, and the bullets hit the truck window. Blood spatters the window.

PILOT
RPG. Nine o'clock.

A soldier on a rooftop is holding a rocket launcher. He fires the rocket. The helicopter banks hard left, the rocket missing narrowly. The helicopter swings around, all the American Soldiers and Ryan firing at the soldier on the roof. Ryan's bullets hit him, striking him in the chest and neck. He falls over dead.

Ryan clutches his rifle hard as they fly over the wrecked city. The American Soldier leans over. He places his hands around the rifle Ryan holds and tries to take it back. Ryan won't let go. Ryan stares out at the city.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
Hey.

Ryan looks at the American Soldier.

AMERICAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
You don't need that anymore.

Ryan releases his grip, and the American Soldier takes back the rifle. Ryan looks out at the city for a few seconds, then grabs his camera from his back. He takes it out of the zip-lock bag, aims it and starts taking pictures of the city as the smoke from the fires fill the air. He takes about 6 pictures, then drops his arms. He leans back against the wall of the helicopter, and closes his eyes.

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT

An Army transport plane flies down onto the tarmac at an airport.

NEWSREADER
(V.O.)
Infamous South African dictator President Yugandi was assassinated early yesterday by what was believed to be rebel troops. Pictures were released three days ago by an American photographer, Ryan Edwards, who was being tracked and hunted by members of Yugandi's army. The reason for the manhunt is at this point unknown, but Edwards was helped by a former American soldier living in the area.
(MORE)

NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

The soldiers name is at this point unknown. The manhunt culminated at a massive fire fight between soldiers and rebels at the South African town of Durban. We'll have more for you in the next hour.

The plane comes to a stop, and the doors open. The stair car pulls up at the plane.

Ryan stands at the door, and he looks out at the landscape. He slowly walks down the steps, limping as he walks. He walks with the use of a crutch.

Simon

Walks towards him. Ryan smiles as Simon approaches. Ryan balances himself, and hugs Simon with his free arm. Simon hugs him with both. They release from their hug, and walk towards the terminal building.

FADE TO:

EXT. NURSING HOME

Ryan stands outside a building, smoking a cigarette. His hair is cut short, and he wears a nice suit. In his other hand, he holds a folded up newspaper. He finishes the cigarette, dropping the butt on the ground and stepping on it with his shoe. He turns and walks into the nursing home.

INT. NURSING HOME

Ryan walks down a long hallway, which is empty. He turns a corner and stops to talk to

RUTH DAVENPORT

A 25 year old woman with dark brown hair and brown eyes. She wears jeans and a black jacket.

RUTH

Hey. There you are.

RYAN

Hey. What'd they say?

RUTH

She's down there.

Ruth points to a room filled with elderly people.

RUTH (CONT'D)

They said she's the one in the brown leather chair.

RYAN

OK. Thanks.

Ryan smiles at her.

RUTH

Did you want me to come with you?

Ryan thinks for a second.

RYAN

No. No, I'll be fine.

Ryan leans in and kisses Ruth quickly.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming down here with me. I know you had other stuff to do today.

RUTH

Hey, don't stress. It's fine. It's what comes with being a couple. You've had to meet my father.

RYAN

Yeah. Wasn't that fun?

RUTH

I don't think I've ever been so embarrassed in my life.

RYAN

Yeah. I wouldn't want to have to hear my dad tell sex jokes either.

Ruth smiles at Ryan. Ryan smiles back.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I won't be long.

RUTH

OK.

Ryan turns and walks into the room.

In the back of the room, facing inwards is a brown chair. In the brown chair is

IRENE BRADLEY

A black woman in her mid seventies. She watches what's happening in the room with a blank look on her face. Ryan walks up to her, and stands still.

RYAN
Mrs Bradley?

Irene looks at him.

IRENE
Yes?

RYAN
Mrs Bradley, my name is Ryan
Edwards.

IRENE
What can I do for you, Mr
Edwards?

RYAN
I came to talk to you.

Pause. Ryan shifts his weight.

IRENE
Go on then. Talk.

RYAN
I actually knew your son, Stuart.

Irene's face lights up at the sound of his name.

IRENE
You knew my Stuart?

RYAN
Yes ma'am, I did.

IRENE
Did you two go to school
together?

RYAN
No. I actually met your son down
in South Africa.

IRENE
You must be mistaken. My son's
never been to South Africa.

Ryan clears his throat.

IRENE (CONT'D)
What do you do, Mr Edwards?

RYAN
I'm a photographer. For the
paper.

IRENE

Don't read the paper anymore.
It's all the same news to me.

RYAN

I don't blame you, honestly.

IRENE

So you were in South Africa?

RYAN

Yes, that's right.

IRENE

There's been something on TV the
last couple weeks about that. Did
you know that?

RYAN

Yes ma'am, I did. I was actually
in the country when it happened.

IRENE

Right.

RYAN

Your son helped me. Saved my
life. More times than I could
count. Actually gave his life to
save mine. So I thought I should
make it count. He helped a lot of
people down there. They won't
ever know his name, and the army
might not acknowledge he ever
helped. But trust me, he did. He
was, he saved me. Helped me when
nobody else would. And when I
asked him why he did it, he told
me because I needed help. His
reasons started off as money, but
that soon faded away. He was
helping me because I needed it.
And in this day and age, it's
hard to find somebody who isn't
out for self profit, out to fill
their own needs. He didn't need
to help me, but he did. I'm glad
to say I knew him. In such a
short amount of time, he proved
to me that not everybody was bad.
In such an ugly country, he was
the shining light. And without
him, I'd be dead. And South
Africa would be the same place it
was a month ago. And while
they'll forget about what
happened there soon, I'll never
forget.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

I'll always appreciate what he did for me. I'll never forget. I can't. Because he's the reason, the only reason, I'm alive today.

Irene has tears in her eyes.

IRENE

Did he talk about me?

RYAN

Yes. Yes, he did.

IRENE

What did he say?

RYAN

He said you were a beautiful woman. Inside and out. And whenever he needed help, you were the only person he'd talk to. Because you were the only person who would listen. And he made me promise to come see you. Your son started a revolution that inevitably saved thousands, millions of lives. And I'm a much better person having known him.

(Pause)

And I just thought you should know that.

Ryan unfolds the newspaper and places it on Irene's lap. On the front is a picture of Sol in uniform, with a big smile on his face. Irene looks at the picture. Ryan turns and takes a few steps.

IRENE

(without looking up)

Mr Edwards.

Ryan turns back around.

RYAN

Yes?

Irene looks up.

IRENE

Thank you.

RYAN

You're welcome.

Ryan turns and walks away.

FADE OUT.

