

AFRICA

By

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FADE IN:

LEGEND:

Female genital mutilation involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and often irreparably harms girls and women.

The World Health Organization estimates that between 100 and 140 million girls and women worldwide have been subjected to female genital mutilation. There are an estimated 3 million girls in Africa at risk of undergoing female genital mutilation every year...

EXT. AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

The sun hovers in the sky like the tip of a hot cigar. BAREFOOT CHILDREN chase braying goats with sticks in their hands. BABIES crawl about in the dust as WOMEN weave baskets or cook meals over fire pits.

Two dozen *bomas* (huts made of grass, twigs and cow dung) make up the village, which is surrounded by a stretch of wheat fields and the nearby jungle.

Two girls are playing tick-tack-toe with sticks on the hard ground. ASHANTI and NAFISA are both 12, on the verge of womanhood with ebony faces that hint at a flowering beauty.

NAFISA

Mother told me the gypsy woman will
come soon.

ASHANTI

It's your turn.

NAFISA

I've heard things about her. Bad
things.

ASHANTI

Take your turn -- or you lose!

Ashanti's mind is somewhere else. She makes an X on the ground without any strategy.

Nafisa traces a circle in a corner of the grid. Three in a row.

(CONTINUED)

ASHANTI

I won!

Ashanti jumps up in joy, still fond of the games of youth. But her joy is cut short when the VILLAGE MEN return from the fields.

KAMBO (Ashanti's father) and KWAME (Nafisa's father) are tall, lanky and weather-beaten. Their clothing hang loose on narrow, bony shoulders. They've returned from a day at the fields. It's grueling work. They look much older than their thirty five years.

KAMBO

Ashanti!

Ashanti pivots at her father's voice.

Kambo and Kwame stride up to the girls. They see the tic-tac-toe grid on the ground and frown.

Kambo turns to Ashanti.

KAMBO

You are on the verge of womanhood
and still you play games?

Ashanti is intimidated by her father. Nafisa's her best friend and tries to take the blame.

NAFISA

It was my idea.

Kambo glances at the two cows laying languidly nearby, exhausted by the heat. They are his most prized possessions.

KAMBO

Ashanti, have you watered the cows?

ASHANTI

No.

Kwame glances at the meandering goats and then to his daughter.

KWAME

Nafisa, you have not watered the
goats.

NAFISA

No.

(CONTINUED)

Nearby KALIFA (Ashanti's mother) and MAKENA (Nafisa's mother) are peeling vegetables for dinner. Like their husbands, a hard life has withered them before their time; but the high cheek bones (which their daughter's have inherited) hint at past beauty.

KALIFA

(snickers)

Kambo, I told our daughter many times. But she does not listen to me.

MAKENA

My daughter must change her ways or her husband will beat her when she is married.

(to Kalifa)

It is hard to separate our daughters. Maybe we should marry them off to the same man!

The women share a laugh. The fathers are not so amused.

KAMBO

Lazy girls!

KWAME

Go quickly before the sun goes down!

EXT. WATERING HOLE - LATER

Ashanti and Nafisa wait as the cows and goats slurp water out of a watering hole that looks close to drying up. A few other animals have crept out of the bush and share the hole as well.

NAFISA

My father has received a proposal for me.

ASHANTI

I know. Did he say how old he was? My cousin was given to a fifty year old man for three cows. Can you believe that? Only three! I'm sure you're worth at least ten!

Ashanti smiles, but Nafisa is not in a jovial mood.

(CONTINUED)

NAFISA

He is thirty and has fifteen cows
and many goats. He will give my
father ten cows and several goats.

Ashanti notices the pensive expression on her friend's face.

ASHANTI

What's wrong? At least he's not
fifty years old.

NAFISA

I'm not a woman yet. The gypsy
woman is coming. I'm scared of
her, Ashanti.

ASHANTI

Don't you want to be a woman? My
mother said she will do the
procedure on me soon when my father
has saved enough for the
payment. We can't be married
without it.

Nafisa protectively places a hand over her groin, shivers
involuntarily.

NAFISA

She will cut me. I'm -- I'm
scared.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

The Land Rover stops, raising a dust cloud. It's marked
with the UNICEF logo. An AFRICAN MAN and a WHITE WOMAN step
out. The man (HAMA) is in his mid-thirties with jet black
skin. He's dressed in khakis and well-built with a bald
head that glistens with sweat.

Hama serves as a bodyguard, guide and driver for the woman,
ANNE MARTIN. She's 30, American, a classic beauty, who's
exchanged the finer trappings of life for a nobler calling
in Africa.

VILLAGERS pour out of their *bomas* and start to gather around
the duo. The children appear excited to see strangers
(including Ashanti and Nafisa), but some of the adults
openly frown, including Kambo and Kwame.

An OLDER MAN sporting a small, white skull cap and forked
gray beard, steps out of the crowd and spits at Anne's feet.

Anne steps back.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

So much for a warm reception.
(turns to Hama)
They did agree to hear me, right?

Hama's not surprised by the reception. He smiles, flashing perfect white teeth.

HAMA

They want to see the gifts first.

ANNE

Of course. I should be used to this by now.

Hama goes to the back of the Land Rover and pulls out a large sack of goods and drops it in front of the villagers. He releases a clasp. The cloth spreads out displaying a variety of goods, including bowls, bolts of cloth, combs and hygiene kits.

Hama closes the sack.

HAMA

These will be distributed to you after you listen to what the white doctor has to say.

AZAR, the man who spat at Anne steps forward. He's shriveled up like a prune and stands barely five feet tall; but as the holy man for the village, he has an air of authority.

AZAR

(pointing to the sack)
Take these and the *mugunzu* witch out of here! I've been warned about her. She will corrupt our ways!

Hama is not fazed. He retrieves a transistor radio from the Rover, turns it on and dials it to music. He holds this out to JAFAR, the village chief, a wiry man of 70.

HAMA

The white doctor is here to help you. I have brought this especially for you.

Jafar plucks the radio from Hama's hand. He listens to the music and starts to sway to the tune. But he wants more and points a bony finger at the mobile phone attached to Hama's waist.

(CONTINUED)

Hama's not willing to part with it and shakes his head.

ANNE

Hama, give it to him. I'll get you
a new one.

Hama grumbles under his breath and hands the phone over to Jafar. The chief nods, displaying a gaped-tooth grin.

EXT. VILLAGE - OPEN SPACE - LATER

Anne is the center of attention. The villagers have gathered around her to hear her speak. Many sit on the ground.

Anne turns to a group of YOUNG GIRLS.

ANNE

I need a volunteer. Who would like
to help me?

The girls are too shy; but then Ashanti slowly raises her hand.

ANNE

OK. Great. You're the brave
one. Please come stand beside me.

Ashanti stands up and goes to Anne. Her father Kambo and Azar frown at her openly, but her mother Kalifa gives her a reassuring smile.

ANNE

What's your name?

ASHANTI

My name is Ashanti. I am the
daughter of Kambo and Kalifa.

Anne holds out her hand.

ANNE

My name is Anne Martin. Pleased to
meet you, Ashanti.

Ashanti shakes Anne's hand.

ANNE

Ashanti, have you been circumcised
yet?

Ashanti blushes. Her father speaks up.

(CONTINUED)

KAMBO

She will be very soon.

ANNE

I want everyone who has been
circumcised to raise their hands.

Slowly, every single woman raises her hand, including half
of the young girls. All of the men (except Azar, who will
not participate) and most of the boys do so as well.

ANNE

I meant only the girls.

Everybody chuckles at that.

ANNE

Ashanti, what would you like to be
when you grow up?

ASHANTI

My father and mother have told me
that I should be a good wife and
mother.

ANNE

And I'm sure you will be. But
wouldn't you like to learn other
things too?

AZAR

She will be a wife and mother. Do
not plant seeds into her head!

ASHANTI

Why cannot I be a wife and have a
career too? Once, in the city, I
saw on television --

AZAR

This technology is corrupting us!

ASHANTI

But the chief has a radio and a
mobile phone!

KAMBO

Ashanti!

Anne protectively places an arm around Ashanti's shoulders.

ANNE

You want your daughters to be good wives and good mothers. Yet, you risk their lives and their chances of having children because of FGM. Female genital mutilation --

AZAR

You offend us by the term mutilation! It is female circumcision. *Sunna* circumcision. It is a purification. Our sons get circumcised, why shouldn't our daughters?

ANNE

Because your sons only lose a foreskin and your daughters get castrated. Your sons don't lose an important part of their flesh which can kill them!

AZAR

It is part of our religion.

ANNE

Nowhere in Islam does it say that you must circumcise a female.

AZAR

We do not need a non-believer to lecture us on our religion!

Anne turns away from the holy man back to the villagers. She doesn't want Azar to be the focus of attention.

ANNE

I'm sure all of you value your daughters very much. But how many of you know how female circumcision is actually performed?

Nobody answers.

ANNE (CONT.)

Circumcision can be very, very painful for a girl. Many times anesthetic is not even used. Girls are often cut with glass and razor blades. Wounds can become infected and girls die. Or she can be so

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNE (CONT.) (cont'd)
damaged that she will never be able
to have children or be able to be a
dutiful wife to her husband. Even
if she gets through her procedure
without lasting harm, she may be
emotionally scarred for life.

Anne turns to Kalifa.

ANNE (CONT.)
Have you been circumcised?

Kalifa glances warily at her husband.

KALIFA
Yes.

ANNE
Did it hurt? Will you ever forget
the pain?

Tears bead at the corners of Kalifa's eyes. The memory is
painful.

ANNE (CONT.)
Do you want your daughter to
experience the same pain?

Kalifa looks down and remains silent.

ANNE (CONT.)
Will you risk her life for
something that is not necessary for
her well being?

Kalifa says nothing.

ANNE (CONT.)
What if she dies from this
procedure?

Finally, Kalifa is about to reply, but Kambo erupts.

KAMBO
Nobody will marry my daughter if
this is not done! What will happen
to her then? She will become a
spinster, and I would lose many
cows.

Anne addresses the whole crowd.

ANNE

Are cows worth more than the lives
of your daughters? Are your
daughters worth less than cattle?

AZAR

You do not understand our ways! Go
back to where you came from!

Azar takes a threatening step towards Anne, even though his
bald head barely tops her chin.

Hama steps between them. Azar retreats.

Anne is not intimidated; but she has her work cut out for
her.

LATER

While most of the men seem unmoved. Some of the women's
faces have softened. Anne is slowly winning them over with
her passion.

ANNE

What will it take for you to stop
doing this to your daughters? Do
you want this senseless suffering
to continue? Do you want your
daughters to die unnecessarily?

Some of the women mutter "no" under their breaths.

Suddenly Nafisa jumps to her feet.

NAFISA

I don't want to die!

Nafisa pivots and runs from the gathering.

KWAME

Nafisa!

Her father and mother rise to their feet and go after her.

There is a moment of stunned silence.

ANNE

Why does a young girl have to run
in fear like that?

Nobody answers.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE (CONT.)

There must be a better way for your daughters.

Anne motions to Hama, who hands her a sheaf of papers. She holds it up.

ANNE (CONT.)

I want a pledge from this village to abandon female genital cutting. One by one, we will convince each village to stop this practice. Will each of you sign this pledge for me?

AZAR

Begone! They will not sign anything!

Azar's vitriol has intimidated anyone who would have had the courage to sign. Not a single person steps forward.

AZAR (CONT.)

They have listened to you. You have not convinced anyone. Not a single one. Go away!

Jafar steps forward.

JAFAR

We have listened to you.
(points to the sack of goodies next to Hama)
Give us what you have promised.

Anne sighs.

ANNE

I will come back in a few weeks. Please think about what I have said. Think about your daughters.

Hama opens the sack of goodies and spreads them on the ground. The villagers rush towards them, ignoring Anne.

All except Ashanti, who turns to Anne.

ASHANTI

I will try to convince my parents to not circumcise me. I will talk to all of my friends and they will talk to their parents. OK?

Anne smiles, gratified. She has convinced one person at least. It's a start.

EXT. PLAINS - LATER

The Land Rover travels over a dirt road that cuts through a landscape dotted with broad acacia trees, scattered wildebeests and Thompson gazelles. A snow-capped mountain punches out into the clear blue sky in the distance. The beauty of the African plains is quite breathtaking.

ANNE (O.S.)

Another tough crowd. We'll have to come back in a few weeks to see if my lecture had an impact. At least I have Ashanti in my corner. She's a brave girl.

INT. ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Hama's behind the wheel. Anne sits in the passenger seat.

HAMA

Maybe you'll have to bribe them with iPods next time.

ANNE

The holy man would have conniptions.

HAMA

He's a *madaraka ndogo*, a little man with a little power, but he thinks he's a king.

ANNE

I've met a few people like that before.

HAMA

Why did you have to make me give chief Jafar my Blackberry? I had all my contacts in there!

ANNE

I'll make sure Roger buys you another one. As for your contacts -- we all have to make small sacrifices for a greater cause.

(CONTINUED)

HAMA

What sacrifice have you made?

ANNE

Believe me, I've made sacrifices. But I can't hold a candle to the suffering I've seen in these villages.

HAMA

Life is hard in this country, Anne, and we have become hard with it.

EXT. CITY - LATER

Paint is chipping on most of the buildings, while dark, black stains scar the crumbling concrete exteriors. Many open surfaces are plastered with election posters in a bright riot of colors like a Warhol painting, featuring the current president and touting: "VOTE ZOMA!"

The streets are a mad traffic jam of cars, vans, motorbikes and people. The UNICEF Land Rover weaves in and out of the traffic blaring its horn non-stop.

It dodges an African bush taxi - an open bed truck crowded with people, household goods and several goats - which is going against traffic -- but then comes to an abrupt stop at an intersection which has just been closed.

HAMA (O.S.)

Almost made it!

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Anne sits stiff in her seat, belt strapped tight. She looks eager to get out of the vehicle and flee.

ANNE

You drive too fast.

HAMA

This is Africa. You must get used to it.

ANNE

What's going on?

HAMA

Bloody election.

POV THROUGH CAR WINDSHIELD

(CONTINUED)

A parade of people surge by. It's a riotous affair with hundreds dancing and shouting "ZOMA! ZOMA! ZOMA!". A flatbed truck with loudspeakers blares: "RE-ELECT ZOMA. HE IS YOUR ONLY HOPE!". Large banner's proclaim: "ZOMA FOREVER!"

Then a CONVOY OF MILITARY VEHICLES PACKED WITH SOLDIERS TOTING AK-47s also starts to pass.

When some men and women on the streets start to shout: "ISOKE! ISOKE! ISOKE!" in support of the opposition leader, scuffles break out with Zoma supporters.

BATON-WIELDING POLICE surge ahead and try to break up the fights. However, some are knocked down in the melee.

SOLDIERS on the truck step in and rattle off a few shots. Some of the ISOKE SUPPORTERS are struck down. People scream and start to scatter.

BACK TO SCENE

Anne's first instinct is to get out of the car and help those who have been hurt. Hama reaches out and stops her.

HAMA

No.

ANNE

People are hurt.

HAMA

Elections here are always bloody.

A gap opens as the crowds start to disperse. Hama quickly shifts into gear and slips through.

EXT. UNICEF HQ - LATER

The building's in a little better shape than the others near it. There are various NGO's housed there, including UNICEF.

The Land Rover pull into a reserved parking slot out front. Hama and Anne get out.

INT. UNICEF HQ - MOMENTS LATER

ROGER BLAKELEY sits behind his desk, in a room scattered with half a dozen other desks, most of them unoccupied. He's the local UNICEF director and sports a paunch, a bald head, ruddy complexion and cockney

(CONTINUED)

accent. He's 50, but looks much older. He's spent too much time in Africa, and expended too much energy.

ROGER

I was about to close up but then I decided to wait. Thought you may have been waylaid by the election festivities that are going on.

Anne's at her desk checking her email. Hama lounges casually on a chair.

ANNE

We got stuck at an intersection. We're lucky to get here alive.

ROGER

What the bloody hell happened?

ANNE

There was a scuffle. Soldiers shot into the crowd. I think they may have killed a couple of people.

HAMA

Anne wanted to get out and help.

ROGER

(to Hama)

I hope you stopped her?

Hama nods.

ANNE

There's no way I can ignore such suffering.

ROGER

You've got enough on your plate with FGM, darling. You won't be any use to those girls if you get yourself killed. How did today go?

ANNE

The same as always. There was resistance -- but I'm not about to give up.

Anne pauses to read an email.

ANNE (CONT.)

Got the message from the CNN crew again. They say they'll be here only one more week. Tick. Tick. Tick.

ROGER

They still want to follow you around? Boy, they don't give up.

ANNE

I want them to follow me.

ROGER

Cannot be done. You have no government permission.

ANNE

What are they afraid of? That I'd really get the word out on what's happening to these poor, little girls? I should --

ROGER

Now, Annie, you've got to follow their rules if you want to work in this country. Don't let your passion get the best of you.

Anne frowns but does not say anything. She's responding to the email.

ROGER (CONT.)

By the way, Billy called. The Rovers need to be serviced. Hama, be a good chap and call him later to arrange a time, will you?

HAMA

I would if I could.

ROGER

What do you mean by that?

Anne pushes back her chair and gets up. She walks towards the door.

ANNE

Hama needs a new Blackberry.

ROGER

What the hell for? Those things are bloody expensive.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Let him explain it to you. I've got to go, gents, I'm tired.

(to Hama)

If he refuses to give you one, just let me know.

(back to Roger)

By the way, we many need some iPods.

ROGER

iPods! Why?

But Anne is already out the door.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Anne steps out to see that dusk has fallen. It's not so safe for a female to be outside alone at night. She crosses the street and starts to walk briskly down the sidewalk.

EXT. BUILDING - LATER

It's non-descript with a shop on the bottom and flats on top. It's not the typical place expatriates usually lived, walled away in their isolated enclaves.

Anne has chosen to live *among* the people. She walks down a narrow alley and enters the building through a side entrance.

INT. ANNE'S FLAT - MOMENTS LATER

Anne enters and locks the door behind her. It's a sparse one-bedroom flat with an eat-in-kitchen and bathroom. She keeps it neat.

There are no family photos about other than a poster of a group of young African girls with a caption about FGM. This is the place of a single woman who has severed family ties and is focused on a calling.

Anne disappears into the bathroom, leaving the door open. There are flashes of her naked body as she undresses and then steps into the shower.

LATER

Anne emerges from the bathroom wrapped in a towel. She looks quite ravishing with an hour glass figure and nutmeg tan.

The bed beckons to her. She lifts back the mosquito net and drops onto the mattress and falls sleep.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Villagers scatter, as a military truck packed with a DOZEN ARMED SOLDIERS and an all terrain Mercedes SUV enters the village.

Several men get out of the SUV. CAPTAIN KUSUNGU is dressed in military fatigues. He's 40, chiseled and intimidating to look at. He is followed by a BLACK MAN wearing shades and four CHINESE MEN.

The black man is JACOB ZOMA, son of President Zoma. He's around thirty, dressed in a thousand dollar suit, with lots of bling on his fingers. He looks out of place in the bush; a sparkling diamond among the rough-looking villagers.

Three of the Chinese men are scientist-types. They wear lab coats and carry laptops. The fourth Chinese man is GEORGE LIN, a businessman in his fifties. He has come to know the ins-and-outs of Africa well and has a confident air about him.

Villagers peek out of their *bomas*, but are too intimidated to come out.

Jacob is not pleased by the greeting. He turns to the soldiers.

JACOB
Get everybody out! Now!

EXT. VILLAGE - LATER

The villagers have been herded out of their *bomas*. Fathers and mothers stand protectively in front of their children, unsure about the soldiers' intentions. They fear the worst. It was not uncommon for young boys to be recruited as child soldiers and girls to be raped.

But there is no immediate violence. The soldiers flank Zoma, each holding AK-47s.

Lin and his colleagues wait patiently for the preliminaries to begin and to end quickly. Many of the villagers eye them with curiosity.

Chief Jafar has been made to stand apart.

Jacob steps forward and addresses the villagers.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Do you know who I am?

None of the villagers respond.

JACOB (CONT.)

I am Jacob Zoma, son of the beloved President who is leading this country towards a glorious future. My father is pleased to be the head of such a rich nation. Our country is rich in people -- and rich in resources.

(stamps his foot on the ground)

This village sits on government land. We have let you live here in peace out of the goodness of our hearts. But I think you may have forgotten who is the true chief of this village...

Jacob nods to one of the soldiers, who steps forward. Before Jafar can react, he squeezes off a single shot into the side of his head. The village chief crumples into a pitiful heap of skin and bones.

Villagers cry out in alarm and try to scatter, but the soldiers shoot into the air and quickly herd them back in line.

JACOB (CONT.)

There cannot be more than one chief. I am the chief of this village now!

Jacob points to the Chinese men.

JACOB (CONT.)

Do you see them? They are our friends and have come to help this great nation. They have work to do here. It will displease me greatly if you interfere with their work. Do you understand?

None of the villagers respond.

JACOB (CONT.)

Do -- you -- understand?

This time, many utter their acknowledgment quickly and out of fear.

(CONTINUED)

Jacob turns to Lin, flashing bright, white teeth.

JACOB (CONT.)
You may start your work.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Ashanti and Nafisa lead their animals back from the watering hole; but one of Nafisa's goats has strayed into the bush.

NAFISA
I have to get him or my father will
kill me. Come with me. I'm
frightened of the jungle.

ASHANTI
You're afraid of everything.

NAFISA
Come on, Ashanti!

Of course, Ashanti will go with her friend. The girls tie their animals to a tree and enter the jungle...

INT. JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

It's much darker here. Scattered rods of sunlight filter through the thick canopy above. Monkeys CACKLE in the treetops; birds HOOT and TWEET; there is the distant ROAR of a lion. Among the cacophony of noise is the BRAYING of a goat just ahead.

NAFISA
I can hear him!

The girls work their way through tangles of vines and brush.

ASHANTI
There he is!

Ashanti has spotted the goat in a clearing ahead.

The girls don't want to startle it and start to creep forward --

Then stop at the edge of the clearing, hiding behind large bushes.

(CONTINUED)

The goat has stopped in the clearing; but there are others about. A handful of government soldiers, including Captain Kusungu, the Chinese scientists from the other day and a dozen African laborers are there. Jacob and Lin are not present.

Some heavy equipment has been moved in, including an excavator and a hydraulic drill platform. As the soldiers idly chat among themselves, the laborers dig holes with the excavator and test holes with the drill. They sift through the dirt for mineral samples, which the Chinese test in a makeshift lab that they've set up on folding tables.

The girls are hesitant to enter the clearing.

Kusungu squeezes off a few shots near the goat's feet, sending the animal flying into the jungle.

A stray bullet whizzes by Ashanti's head, causing her to duck and fall backwards. She screams.

KUSUNGU

Who is that? Come out!

Nafisa helps Ashanti back up to her feet. Terrified, the girls quickly run back the way they have come.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

INTERCUT BETWEEN ASHANTI AND WHAT IS HAPPENING TO NAFISA

AZIZA, the GYPSY WOMAN is 50, fat and fleshy, in contrast to the emaciated villagers. She holds a razor blade and grins, exposing several gold teeth. She makes a tidy sum plying her services to various villages.

Today she will circumcise Nafisa.

The men are absent for the procedure. The women have gathered around. Ashanti watches at a distance; for the first time her pretty black face is anxious.

Aziza inspects the blade; it's caked with dried blood. She spits on it and wipes it with a dirty cloth.

AZIZA

Bring her.

Nafisa does not come quietly.

(CONTINUED)

NAFISA (O.S.)

No! Let me go! Let me go!

Nafisa is literally carried by three woman out of her *boma*, naked from the waist down. Her mother Makena trails behind with a concerned expression on her face. Nafisa's laid on a flat rock and held down.

Nafisa kicks and screams and tries to get away; but the women are too strong for her. They crowd around her. Ashanti can only see her flailing limbs.

AZIZA

Stop it, child! We will rid you of that unclean thing between your legs!

(holds out a root)

Put this in her mouth.

Makena takes the root and forcibly wedges it between her daughter's mouth. She then ties a blindfold around her eyes and tries to sooth her fears.

MAKENA

You will be all right. It will be over quickly. Today you will become a woman.

Nafisa calms down and starts to whimper.

Aziza approaches Nafisa with the blade, which has not even been sterilized by heat. There appears to be anticipation on her face, like a butcher ready to slaughter. She squats down between Nafisa's legs, which have been stretched apart and are being held down.

Aziza leans froward and starts to saw away at Nafisa's exposed genitals with the blade. Not a trickle of anesthesia or antiseptic is being used.

As the blade touches her exposed flesh, Nafisa spits out the root and HOWLS out in pain.

Ashanti cries out as well. She leans against the *boma* for support.

Aziza is unaffected by the screams, continues to saw away at more flesh.

Suddenly, Nafisa manages to free one leg. She raises her foot and kicks out hard against the gypsy woman's chest, knocking her over onto her fat rump.

(CONTINUED)

Nafisa somehow struggles free from the women holding her and leaps onto her feet and starts to run.

To her horror, Ashanti sees blood pouring down Nafisa's legs and onto the ground, leaving a trail as she runs. But then her knees buckles and Nafisa collapses.

The woman instantly grab Nafisa and carry her back onto the rock.

Nafisa bucks against the restraining hands and starts to moan. But her flailing becomes weaker. She's drifting into unconsciousness.

Aziza gets backs to her feet. Livid, she leers at Nafisa.

AZIZA

Wicked girl!

Aziza squats before Nafisa's legs again. This time she's quick and rough with the blade and cuts off the rest of Nafisa's genitals.

Nafisa bucks, screams out one more time and collapses, unconscious.

Ashanti wants to run away from this horror; but she's rooted to the spot. She watches as Aziza removes a needle made from an acacia thorn, threads it with gut and starts to sew up her genitals, leaving only a small opening for urine and her menstrual flow.

Finally the circumcision is done. Aziza stands up with the bloody needle in her hand. There's twisted satisfaction on her face. Then she appears to turn her attention to Ashanti.

AZIZA

Is there anybody else?

Ashanti is terrified. She thinks she's going to be next.

ASHANTI

No!

Ashanti bolts and runs away.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Ashanti enters the village quietly. There is no easy way for her to slip in under darkness. A full moon beams down like a spotlight.

But there is nobody about. She heads towards her family's *boma*, but then stops abruptly to stare at the stone where Nafisa's circumcision had been performed.

The rock is caked with dried blood as if an animal had been slaughtered there. On top of it lies shriveled, dead pieces of flesh which had once been Nafisa's genitals.

Ashanti vomits. She can't stop heaving. Her insides are coming out.

But then somebody is there with a cup of water. It's her mother, Kalifa. She makes her daughter drink and takes her into her hut.

EXT. BOMA - MORNING

Ashanti emerges. She has aged overnight. Her young face is creased with worry over her best friend.

She approaches a special little hut that had been prepared under a tree at the edge of the village. According to tradition, Nafisa would rest and recuperate there alone for the next few days.

Makena and JUI, another village woman, guard the entrance to the *boma*.

Ashanti approaches them.

ASHANTI

I want to see her.

Makena shakes her head. She too has had a sleepless night.

MAKENA

No, child, you can't see her.

ASHANTI

I have to! Is she all right?

As Ashanti steps forward, Jui blocks her path.

JUI

Shoo, child! She has to heal alone! Do you want to shame her?

Ashanti is on the verge of tears, ready to run this gauntlet; but then she hangs her head and turns around.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Clouds obscure the moon. It's dark out tonight. A SHADOW darts between huts and surreptitiously approaches the *boma* under the tree where Nafisa lies inside.

Makena slumbers on the ground outside. Jui is gone.

The shadow quietly tip toes around Makena towards the back of the small *boma*.

INT. NAFISA'S BOMA - CONTINUOUS

Twigs and straw are spread apart. Ashanti crawls in through the opening. It's dim inside. She produces a cheap Bic lighter and flicks it on.

Nafisa lays on a thin bed of straw in the center of the hut. She looks dreadful and pale. Her naked legs are caked with dried blood. They have been tied together with strips of cloth, binding her from her ankles to her hips so she can't move.

Ashanti instantly kneels down at the side of her friend. Nafisa's semi conscious and moaning in pain. Flies buzz around her face. Ashanti tries to swat them away.

ASHANTI
(whisper)
Nafisa!

Nafisa's doesn't seem to hear her, continues to moan.

ASHANTI
Nafisa, it's me. Ashanti!

Nafisa's eyes flicker open. She takes a moment to focus and appears to recognize Ashanti.

NAFISA
I'm scared to be here by myself...
especially in the dark.

Ashanti tries to hold back tears.

NAFISA (CONT.)
I can't pee. It hurts so much!

(CONTINUED)

Nafisa's clitoris has been sewn up tight. For two days she's lain on the floor without emptying her bladder.

NAFISA (CONT.)

Help me!

Ashanti starts to remove the bandages from Nafisa's legs. Each movement causes the girl searing pain. She cries out in agony, but Ashanti covers her mouth with her hand, for fear of alerting her mother.

Finally the bandages are off. Nafisa's naked and tries to sit up with Ashanti's help.

Ashanti sniffs the air... and smells gangrene. She sees that Nafisa's genitals have become infected. The gypsy woman, Aziza, has botched up the circumcision badly.

Ashanti tries not to gag and helps her friend into a squatting position, so she can pee.

Nafisa tries desperately; but there is just a trickle of fluid and lots of pain. She pushes harder. There is a sudden gush of blood and she collapses onto the floor.

Ashanti shakes her friend.

ASHANTI

Nafisa! Nafisa!

But Nafisa lays still and does not move.

EXT. NAFISA'S BOMA - CONTINUOUS

Ashanti crawls out through the hole in the back and makes a beeline for the largest hut in the village. It's the one that belonged to late chief Jafar.

Ashanti rushes in without preamble.

INT. JAFAR'S BOMA - CONTINUOUS

Jafar's widow and other members of his family lay asleep in the center of the large, circular space. They are snoring and oblivious.

A lighter flicks on, revealing Ashanti. Her eyes desperately search the confines of the hut. It comes to rest on a WOODEN BOX carved ornately by hand. She goes around the sleeping figures and opens it.

(CONTINUED)

One of the sleeping figures stirs in his sleep, but Ashanti doesn't care. She rummages through the box and pulls out a MOBILE PHONE. It's the Blackberry that Hama had gifted to Jafar.

Ashanti appears to know how to use it. She quickly searches through the contact list until Anne Martin's name is highlighted.

She presses the call button.

INT. ANNE'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

The mobile on the lamp table next to the bed starts to VIBRATE. Anne continues to sleep inside the confines of the mosquito net, oblivious.

The phone continues to vibrate, and as it does, it starts to edge towards the end of the table... and finally falls over with a loud THUD.

Anne instantly sits up in bed. She looks anxious, fearing an intruder, then notices the vibrating phone on the ground.

She picks it up and answers it.

ANNE

Hello?

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

The Land Rover's headlights are on, providing light for Anne, who is hunched over Nafisa's limp body, her medical bag open next to her. The girl's chest rises and falls slowly. She has been moved outside into fresh air from the decrepit *boma*.

Ashanti holds on to Nafisa's hand, trying to comfort her unconscious friend. Makena is sprawled on the ground nearby, crying.

Villagers have woken and have gathered to watch.

Azar, the village holy man, pushes through.

AZAR

Let her be, you blasphemer!

As he steps towards Anne, Hama blocks his way.

(CONTINUED)

HAMA

You will let the *muzungu* doctor work. Do you understand me?

Hama is much larger than the decrepit, old holy man. His words are tinged with steel. Azar retreats back a few steps and spits in Anne's direction.

AZAR

You will burn in hell!

He turns away and starts to chant.

AZAR (CONT.)

La illaha illah. La illaha illah...

A few other villagers join his chant, though most continue to watch Anne as she continues her treatment of Nafisa oblivious of the distractions. She directs Ashanti to hold up an IV drip, which she injects with a shot of antibiotics, then checks Nafisa's heartbeat.

She turns to Makena.

ANNE

She's lost a lot of blood. She's fighting a very bad infection. If she survives the night, she may make it. I don't know.

Anne stands up and addresses the villagers. She looks thoroughly exhausted... and angry.

ANNE

(shouting)

Why did you do this to her?

But nobody answers.

EXT. VILLAGE - MORNING

The sun starts to edge over the horizon, chasing away the morning mist. Most of the villagers have slept outside during the night, all gathered around Nafisa and Anne.

Anne has also dozed; but Hama is awake. He shakes her shoulder gently and she is up in an instant. She instantly looks at Nafisa, who looks ashen, chest totally still. She puts a stethoscope to her ear and listen for a heartbeat. There is none. Nafisa's dead.

(CONTINUED)

At that moment, Ashanti, who's been curled up next to Nafisa's body, snaps her eyes open. She looks up at Anne with a questioning look.

ANNE

I'm sorry.

Ashanti clutches her friend to her chest.

ASHANTI

Nafisa! Nafisa!

Her cries instantly wakes everybody, including Makena. When she realize that her daughter is dead, she starts to WAIL loudly. Soon others pick up the mournful CHANT.

Anne gets up abruptly and walks away. The misery is too much for her.

LATER

Anne leans against the Rover. She's taken the death personally.

HAMA (O.S.)

Anne, are you all right?

Hama approaches, his face etched with concern.

ANNE

(fighting back tears)

Why do so many little girls have to die for no good reason?

HAMA

You're doing good work. It will take time to change their ways.

ANNE

I couldn't save her. Dammit!

Hama leans in through the car window to fetch a bottle of water and holds it out to Anne.

But Anne's searching her pockets for something, can't find it. Turns back to Hama.

ANNE

Give me your phone.

Hama retrieves a new Blackberry from his pocket and gives it to her.

(CONTINUED)

HAMA

Who are you going to call?

Anne doesn't answer him. She's got a determined look on her face and starts to dial the phone.

LATER

Anne is being miked by a SOUND GUY while the CNN REPORTER, TED COLLIER (mid 40s and handsome) and the CAMERAMAN get ready for the interview.

Hama waits quietly to the side. He doesn't look pleased. Anne purposely ignores him and approaches the reporter.

The cameraman adjusts settings for an antenna on top of his camera, then turns to Collier.

CAMERAMAN

We've got the satellite feed,
Ted. Are you ready?

Collier turns to Anne.

COLLIER

Are you ready, Anne?

Anne nods.

COLLIER (CONT.)

We've been chasing this interview
for weeks. Glad you finally got
permission.

Anne shrugs.

COLLIER (CONT.)

There's been a lot of talk about
FGM in Africa. We really wanted to
do an expose on it. This is
perfect. A Western woman giving up
everything to help the natives.

ANNE

They're people -- not natives. A
little girl died because of
ignorance!

Collier sees that Anne is emotional. He tries to placate her.

(CONTINUED)

MALE REPORTER

Of course, of course. We'll do a classy piece. I promise you.

ANNE

Just get the word out about what's happening here. Do you understand me? Get it out.

COLLIER

I promised my producer this story last week, so it's going out on the satellite feed in *real time*. Believe me, you'll get the exposure you want. Pronto.

LATER

The villagers have gathered for Nafisa's burial. Her body has been wrapped up in a white shroud. Makena, Ashanti and the women of the village WAIL in mourning.

The cameraman films footage of the funeral, then turns to Anne and Collier who stand in the foreground.

COLLIER

This is Ted Collier, with CNN International. I am reporting from a village in Africa. What has happened here, has happened in thousands of other villages -- and cities. Last night a twelve year girl died as a result of a botched attempt at female genital mutilation. It is called FGM for short. Millions of young girls undergo this procedure every year -- often without anesthesia or proper medical supervision -- and thousands die every year.

He turns to Anne.

COLLIER (CONT.)

We have come to talk to Dr. Anne Martin. A year ago, she gave up a successful medical practice in the USA and came to Africa to dedicate herself to eradicating FGM. Despite many hardships, she has selflessly traveled through many villages trying to educate people about the dangers of female

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COLLIER (CONT.) (cont'd)
circumcision. Anne, what happened
here last night? How did this
little girl die?

ANNE
Her name was Nafisa. I was called
to this village in the middle of
last night by another little girl
-- her best friend -- to come and
save her. Nafisa was only --

At that moment, there is the loud GROWL of an engine at the
edge of the village. Heads turn.

Various types of heavy equipment on the back of several flat
bed trucks roll into the village, followed by a truck full
of soldiers, led by Captain Kusungu. The last vehicle is a
bus full of AFRICAN and CHINESE LABORERS wearing hardhats.

The crew has come to continue their work on the outskirts of
the village.

Anne is forgotten for the moment.

Collier turns to his cameraman, points to the new arrivals
with two fingers.

The cameraman gets the message and films in that
direction. He gets several minutes of footage -- all going
out live over a satellite feed -- before the soldiers
finally realize what is happening.

Captain Kusungu rushes forward, shouting.

CAPTAIN KUSUNGU
What is this? What is this? Put
that camera away!

Collier steps forward. The cameraman continues to film.

COLLIER
Sir, would you mind talking to --

Kusungu roughly shoves Collier aside and lunges at the
cameraman. He wrests the camera way and throws it onto the
ground, then stomps on it with his heavy boots until it's
completely destroyed.

Satisfied, he turns back to Collier, livid.

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN KUSUNGU

You did not have authority to film here. You must leave -- NOW!

Collier exchanges a glance with the cameraman who nods slightly. Collier smiles. The feed has gone out live. He has his story.

EXT. UNICEF HQ - LATER

The Land Rover approaches.

ANNE (O.S)

Drop me at home, will you, Hama?

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Hama turns to Anne, surprised.

HAMA

You don't want to report in to Roger?

ANNE

Exactly.

HAMA

Anne, we should not have brought the crew. You were not authorized to do so.

ANNE

I'll face the firing squad later. I've got a headache. Please drop me off at my place.

Hama drives past the UNICEF offices.

HAMA

Nothing turned out as expected.

ANNE

Last thing I expected was for the Chinese to show up. I wonder what they were doing over there?

HAMA

If you have not noticed, there are Chinese businessmen all over our nation. Our President is in bed

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HAMA (cont'd)
with them. There will be
consequences if any of that footage
makes it onto the air.

EXT. ANNE'S FLAT - LATER

Anne steps out of the Rover, waves goodbye to Hama and disappears down the side alley of the building.

Hama parks the car and walks across the street to purchase something from a confectionery shop.

Inside the rover, a DARK SHAPE pops its head up from the rear cargo area, goes over the rear seat and surreptitiously slips out of the car, closing the door behind her.

It's Ashanti.

She glances around. Hama is coming back. Before he sees her, she quickly slips into the alley after Anne.

Hama's sipping a soda and has not spotted Ashanti. He gets back into the Rover and drives off.

INT. ANNE'S FLAT - NIGHT

Anne has showered and changed. She sits on a couch in her small living room and turns on the TV, changing channels until she gets to CNN International.

She's looking for footage from earlier today at the village, but sees none. Suddenly --

There's a sound from the other side of her door.

Anne stiffens. She strains her ears... hears nothing... then there is a timid knock, followed by another.

Anne is still rooted to the couch. The knock comes again.

Anne gets up and grabs a solid stone figure that she keeps on the lamp table and cautiously approaches the door.

ANNE
Who is it?

There is no immediate response

(CONTINUED)

ANNE (CONT.)
Who's out there?

ASHANTI (O.S.)
Ashanti.

Anne opens the door and is stunned to see Ashanti.

LATER

Ashanti sits at a small table in the kitchen. She's devouring milk and cookies that Anne has given her.

Anne watches her quietly and notices that her sandals are tattered, exposing feet that are calloused and dirty. Her face softens with sympathy. She lets the girl finish before she says something.

ANNE
So you sneaked away in the back of
the Rover.

Ashanti looks chagrined and says nothing.

ANNE (CONT.)
That was foolish... and brave.

Anne smiles. She doesn't know whether to be angry or impressed by the girl's tenacity.

ANNE (CONT.)
Now, you must tell me why.

Ashanti is hesitant to answer... then it comes out in a gush.

ASHANTI
You must let me stay with you, Miss
Anne. I can't go back. I
can't. That gypsy woman is to cut
me soon. She will kill me like
Nafisa. Please, please let me
stay! I don't want to die!

Ashanti bursts into tears and prostrates herself at Anne's feet.

ASHANTI
I don't want to go back!

Anne lifts her up and wraps her arms around her. She is reluctant to crush the little girl's hope.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Nobody's going to hurt you. I
won't let them. I promise you.

INT. ANNE'S FLAT - MORNING

Anne has given her bed to Ashanti. The girl rises and notices the BRAND NEW SANDALS next to her bed.

ANNE (O.S.)

Try them on. They're for you.

Anne has walked into the room.

Ashanti tries the sandals on. They fit. She smiles gratefully at Anne.

INT. UNICEF HQ - LATER

When Anne enters, Roger is ready to pounce on her. He doesn't even notice Ashanti next to her.

ROGER

What have you done?

But Hama notices Ashanti. He does a double-take.

HAMA

What is she doing here?

Roger finally notices Ashanti too.

ROGER

Who's that?

ANNE

One question at a time. It's too early in the morning for all this shouting. Roger, this is Ashanti. Ashanti, this is Roger. He's about to chop my head off I'm sure. But first I'd like to have a cup of coffee!

MEETING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Anne, Hama and Ashanti are seated around a table. Roger stands next to a TV, remote in hand. Beyond the glass walls of the conference room, UNICEF STAFFERS do little to hide their curiosity as they look in on what's going on in the room.

(CONTINUED)

Roger turns to Anne.

ROGER
Watch this.

He pushes a button and a recorded news broadcast plays on the screen.

ON THE TV

The footage briefly shows Anne before cutting to soldiers, Chinese and African workers arriving at the village and Ted Collier, the CNN reporter, being pushed aside before the camera is roughly grabbed by Captain Kusungu and smashed; then the image goes to white noise.

A BRITISH ANCHORMAN appears on the screen.

BRITISH ANCHORMAN
That footage was shot earlier today in Africa when our news crew went out to shoot an expose featuring Dr. Anne Martin, a doctor from the United States. Although our reporter Mr. Ted Collier and his cameraman were assaulted, they bravely managed to get this footage out. As you can see, they were able to catch the unexpected arrival of government soldiers and work crews to that village. It was interesting to note the presence of the Chinese work crew. We can only speculate what their intentions were for coming to this village; but while the West has bogged itself down in various wars around the globe, the Chinese have been busy solidifying relationships with various dictatorships for a pipeline of natural resources -- particularly on the continent of Africa. When we contacted the government of President Zoma about the incident in the village, they refused to comment. However, we think we have a story here. Our investigative reporters will keep you informed.

BACK TO THE SCENE

Roger turns the TV off in disgust.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

Do you know how much hot water
you're going to get us into?

ANNE

They didn't even mention FGM!

ROGER

You're lucky they didn't arrest
you!

(turns to Hama)

You should have stopped her!

Anne opens her mouth to defend him; but Roger lifts his
hand.

ROGER (CONT.)

Save it.

Although Roger is florid with anger, Anne is not so easily
intimated.

ANNE

Roger, sit down and catch your
breath. It's not good for you to
get so worked up.

ROGER

Worked up? I have --

ANNE

Just sit!

Roger releases his anger and obeys. Anne takes a sip of
coffee and leans forward on the table.

ANNE

Look, I'm sure Hama told you
already; but a girl was dying and I
HAD to try and save her. We had no
idea that the soldiers and the
Chinese would show up.

ROGER

You shouldn't have invited that
news crew along.

ANNE

How are we going to get the word
out then? Thousand are dying!

(turns to Ashanti)

She's frightened to death to return
to her village because she thinks

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNE (cont'd)

she's going to get butchered like her friend. You tell me why were here then? Tell me. I don't know about you, but I came here to make a difference. Girls are being mutilated and I'm going to do everything I can to stop it!

ROGER

I don't need you to lecture me on why we're here. I've been in this godforsaken continent since you were in swaddling clothes. I think I've made some difference in the thirty years I've been working here.

(sighs, softer tone)

Annie, we won't be able to do a bit of good for any of these girls, if we cross the wrong people. Zoma's a nasty piece of work. You don't want to get his knickers in a bunch. He won't tolerate any bad publicity during the final days of this election.

ANNE

I'm sorry, Roger. Has anybody from the government contacted you?

ROGER

Not yet. But it'll happen. I've established some good contacts over the years. I'll do what I can to keep this thing from affecting our work here. In the meantime, YOU HAVE TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.

Anne nods.

Hama points to Ashanti.

HAMA

What about her?

ROGER

She'll have to go back.

EXT. PLAINS - LATER

The Land Rover travels through picturesque countryside, a large mountain rising in the distance.

ASHANTI (O.S.)
Miss Anne, please don't take me
back. Please. You promised.

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Anne is in the back seat with Ashanti. Hama is driving.

Anne looks distressed about Ashanti's return to the village; but tries to hold her feelings in check. She takes Ashanti's hand.

ANNE
Sweetheart, I'll talk to your
parents and make them
understand. I --

ASHANTI
My father won't listen to you. He
knows I can't get married without
being cut. He will get many cows
for me.

ANNE
I'll do the best that I can. I
promise --

ASHANTI
No, I don't believe in your
promises -- because I know you
can't keep them!

Ashanti breaks into tears. Anne takes her in her arms and holds her without saying anything. She can't find any more words to comfort her.

EXT. BUSH - LATER

The Rover is making its way through a dirt road near the village.

Suddenly, it comes to an abrupt stop. Just ahead is a jeep and THREE SOLDIERS. They block the road.

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Hama glances at Anne.

HAMA
We may have trouble.

Two of the soldiers approach the vehicle. Hama pulls down the window.

SOLDIER #1
You cannot pass.

HAMA
We are part of UNICEF. We --

SOLDIER #1
Turn around. Go back the way you came.

Anne points to Ashanti.

ANNE
This girl lives in the village at the end of this road. She's being taken back to her parents.

POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD

SOLDIER #2 beckons to the LAST SOLDIER sitting idly on the jeep. He curses and comes over to the rover.

It's Captain Kusungu, who had attacked the reporter and cameraman in the village a few days ago. He eyes the UNICEF logo on the side of the vehicle and peers inside.

BACK TO SCENE

Kusungu makes eye contact with Hama and then Anne. He laughs menacingly.

KUSUNGU
Get out of the vehicle.

ANNE
Captain, please let us pass. We only want to --

Kusungu reaches in and presses a gun against Hama's temple.

KUSUNGU
Get out. Now!

EXT. BUSH - MOMENTS LATER

Anne, Hama and Ashanti are lined up next to each other. They look frightened.

KUSUNGU

(wagging his gun at them)

You two are very tricky. I have seen those reports on the news. You make me look very, very bad. I should have not let any of you go.

Kusungu approaches Hama and spits in his face.

KUSUNGU

Muzungu-lover!

Hama's a powerful man. His fists are bunched; but he holds back with the greatest self-control.

Kusungu turns to Anne.

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

Mischief maker. You are to blame. You are in very, very big trouble, Ms. Anne Martin. Our President is not pleased with you.

(beat)

I can help you, but I will need payment first --

Kusungu reaches out and grabs Anne's breast. She recoils. He holds onto her shirt, tearing it and exposing her body.

Hama lunges at Kusungu and roughly tears him away from Anne. Kusungu loses his balance and goes down.

The other soldiers react instantly. Soldier #1 violently swings the butt of his AK across Hama's face, smashing his jaw and felling him to the ground. As he tries to rise, both soldiers start to beat him with their rifle butts.

Anne lunges to save Hama. Kusungu reaches out to grab her. She spins out of his clutches and tries to shield Hama with her body. She receives a body blow and cries out, then a blow to the head dazes her. Another, blow and she starts to collapse --

Out of the corner of her eye, she sees Ashanti running away, before darkness claims her.

INT. JAIL - DAY

The cell is dim, fetid and dirty. There is a single cot, small sink and hole in the corner for defecation. A flickering light bulb hangs from the ceiling.

Anne blinks her eyes open, trying to adjust to the dimness. A bandage has been placed around her temples. It's caked with blood.

She swings her legs over on the cot and tries to rise, but then falls back in a wave of dizziness. She tries again and manages to make it over to the sink and wash her face with the thin trickle of water that comes out. She notices a tray of food on the ground. Inspects it. Takes a whiff --

And promptly throws up.

She heaves several times before getting her stomach under control. She washes the rancid taste of bile from her mouth and collapses back onto the cot.

Suddenly, beyond the darkness of the bars in her cell, there's a HOWLING scream. A prisoner starts to beg for mercy, followed by more screams. Someone is being tortured.

Anne covers her ears to hide the sound, but she can't.

INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Anne sits in a sparsely-furnished room behind a small, metal table. The walls are streaked with dark stains. It's congealed blood.

There's a bowl of fruit and bottled water on the table. Anne hasn't touched the food. She looks gaunt, bedraggled and afraid. She starts, when the door suddenly opens and a man enters.

It's Jacob Zoma. He's dressed impeccably as always in a pressed suit.

Jacob takes off his dark shades and glances at the uneaten food.

JACOB

You have not eaten. Please, I made them go out and get you some fresh fruit. You must be hungry. Have some.

Anne doesn't touch the food; but she does uncap a bottle of water and nearly drains the whole thing.

(CONTINUED)

Jacob sits down across from Anne.

JACOB
Do you know who I am?

Anne stares at his handsome black face and shakes her head.

Jacob seems a little disappointed, but shrugs.

JACOB (CONT.)
I am Jacob Zoma, son of our great
president Lawrence Zoma.

Anne recognizes the name.

ANNE
I would like to get in touch with
the US embassy.

JACOB
And you would like to see a lawyer
as well?
(laughs)
This is not America.
(beat)
You should not have tried to go
back to the village. That was
foolish.

ANNE
Where is my driver Hama? And the
little girl?

Jacob ignores her questions.

JACOB
We have let you work in this
country without any disturbance to
you. You were not to violate any
of the rules we set for you. It
was a great mistake to bring that
troublesome news crew to that
village. A bad mistake. Your
actions have had consequences, Ms.
Martin. My father's rival, Mufe
Isoke, has seized upon this
issue. He is questioning his
motives and stirring up a hornet's
nest of troubles!

Jacob's eyes become larger, his demeanor menacing. He SLAPS
the metal table hard.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB (CONT.)

The people should not question President Zoma's integrity! Because he does not kowtow to former Colonial powers, he is not popular with the West. They are jealous of our great resources. We will not let them be stolen from us. My father is a strong leader. He has the ultimate vision. He will lead this nation to a glorious future!

Anne remains quiet. She realizes that there is something maniacal about this offspring of the President. He could go from friendly to fierce in an instant. It would not be wise to cross him.

Jacob sees the apprehension in Anne's eye and suddenly issues a disarming laugh.

JACOB (CONT.)

I do not wish to frighten you. I am very passionate when it comes to my family.

Anne musters up her courage and leans forward.

ANNE

I can understand passion, Mr. Zoma. Small little girls are dying in your country because of female genital mutilation. One died in my hands. I had no desire whatsoever to interfere with the politics of this nation, but I am passionate about the work I do. It got the best of me and for that I sincerely apologize.

Jacob appears to admire Anne's courage to speak up. He sits on the edge of metal table, uncomfortably close to her. His eyes travel over her body and settle on her cleavage.

JACOB

I am not heartless, Ms. Martin. I do care about little girls. My own sister has followed your deeds. But my father is very, very angry with you.

(suddenly rises and heads to the door)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JACOB (cont'd)
I will speak with him about
you. But he may not be so
forgiving as I am.

Jacob exits the room, leaving Anne alone.

NEXT DAY

A GUARD opens the door to Anne's cell. He's big,
intimidating and armed.

GUARD
Come with me.

Anne tries to hide her anxiety, as she steps out the cell
and follows him down a dim corridor.

INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Anne is led into the same room she met Jacob the previous
day. Her confiscated possessions lay on the table. She is
overjoyed to see Hama, who rushes to her and gives her a
warm hug.

HAMA
Anne, are you OK?

Anne notices the bruises on Hama's face and the swollen
eye. He's been tortured.

She tries to hold back tears.

ANNE
I'm so sorry. They've hurt you.

HAMA
I am OK. Don't worry.

ANNE
Do you know what happened to
Ashanti?

HAMA
I don't know.

ANNE
I saw her run away before... before
they hit me. I hope she got away.
(sits down, sighs)
How are we going to get out of
here?

(CONTINUED)

DONNER (O.S.)
That's already been taken care of.

JACK DONNER steps into the room. He's 40, quite handsome and tall; a square-chested man with short cropped hair that gives him an air of military authority. He looks ill at ease in a diplomat's suit.

Donner smiles broadly and extends his hand.

DONNER
Miss Martin, I'm Jack Donner, with the US embassy. I've arranged for you to be released.

Anne shakes his hand and glances at Hama.

DONNER (CONT.)
Both of you.

Donner heads to the door and opens it.

DONNER (CONT.)
Let's get you out of this awful place. You need to smell fresh air!

EXT. SHANTY TOWN - LATER

A Land Cruiser with diplomatic plates drives along a rutted, dirt road.

DONNER (O.S.)
I'm sorry you had to spend a few days in there. We tried to get you out as soon as it came to our attention. But things take time in this country, if you hadn't noticed.

INT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Donner is behind the wheel. Hama next to him. Anne is in the back.

ANNE
Did Roger contact you?

DONNER
Yup, Mr. Blakeley called a few dozen times, even though we got the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DONNER (cont'd)
message after the first call. You
have to be careful Ms. Martin --

ANNE
Anne.

DONNER
Call me Jack. Anne, like I was
saying, you have to tread carefully
in this country. You've angered
the people at the top.

HAMA
She will be targeted by the
government now.

DONNER
They'll keep an eye on her
certainly, but they'll think twice
before touching her. Anne's been
in the news. That report was
carried worldwide. She's a
celebrity in some circles.

ANNE
I'm not doing this for fame.

DONNER
Of course you're not; but a few
well-placed headlines, will help
your cause a lot more than toiling
away in obscurity. Ah -- here we
are.

EXT. SHANTY TOWN - CONTINUOUS

Donner drops off Hama in front of his house, which is modest
at best. It's a square brick structure with a tin roof.

Hama shakes hands with Donner and exchanges another hug with
Anne, before going to his FAMILY, who have already poured
out of the small house to greet him with hugs.

INT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Donner pats the empty seat next to him.

DONNER
Come on, you'll be lonely back
there.

(CONTINUED)

Anne starts to refuse, but then Donner flashes a warm smile.

DONNER

All right, I'll be lonely.

She can't refuse that smile.

EXT. TOWN - LATER

The Land Cruiser wends its way slowly through traffic.

INT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

ANNE

How long have you been with the embassy?

DONNER

Oh, I've bounced around different parts of Africa for the past ten years. You've been with UNICEF for only two years.

Anne nods.

DONNER (CONT.)

You had a successful medical practice in New York. What made you give all of that up for this godforsaken place?

ANNE

You've done your homework on me.

DONNER

Oh, I think I've barely scratched the surface. Don't tell me you came over here, because you wanted to make a difference. You were already doing that back home with your charity work.

Anne is reluctant to reveal anything to Donner. It's an uncomfortable subject for her. Donner notices.

DONNER (CONT.)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to pry.

ANNE

It's OK. Do you know anything about FGM?

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

Female Genital Mutilation. Just repeating the words scares me.

ANNE

Do you know that typically it's performed with sharp stones, broken glasses, or unsterilized razor blades without anesthesia? The genitals are sealed up like a brick wall so that no man will be able to penetrate the girl until her wedding night, when her husband will either cut her open with a knife or force his way in.

DONNER

Good lord.

ANNE

These girls are mutilated. They're sewn up so tight, that they urinate one drop at a time and their periods are an agony, because the blood takes days and days to come out.

Donner is silent. It's hard to find the proper words.

ANNE (CONT.)

I've traveled through dozens of villages and met families whose daughters I had lectured. But when I visited them again, the girls were missing. No one spoke the truth about their absence. They had died as a result of their mutilation -- many had bled to death or died from infections.

(beat)

It breaks my heart to think that girls have to go through this violence. This thoughtless violence that she didn't deserve or ask for!

Donner is affected by Anne's lecture. He reaches out and touches her arm.

DONNER

Hey, are you all right?

Anne instantly regains her composure. She's good at getting her emotions under control.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

I'm sorry.

DONNER

Nothing to be sorry about. It's incredibly refreshing to hear somebody with such pure intentions.

ANNE

Jack, there was a girl named Ashanti who we were returning to her village. She ran away when we... we were attacked. I don't know what happened to her. I'm worried about her.

DONNER

She may have run back to her village. There's no way of knowing for sure. Our folk haven't been able to get near that village. They must be trying to protect something very important.

ANNE

I hope she's all right. I need to find out.

DONNER

If she grew up in the bush. She's tough. She'll be all right. Don't worry.

But Anne's developed an emotional attachment to Ashanti. She can't help but worry.

EXT. ANNE'S FLAT - LATER

Donner goes around and opens the door for Anne. She steps out of the car.

ANNE

Thanks so much. I really appreciate it.

Donner takes out a card and gives it to her.

DONNER

You call me, anytime you need anything. OK? Anytime.

Anne nods.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

Watch yourself. OK? This isn't
Topeka, Kansas.

Donner grins. It's contagious and Anne smiles too. She squeezes his arm and walks away.

Donner watches her walk into her building. He's definitely interested in her.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A taxi cab pulls up in front of a brownstone. Anne steps out. A brisk wind scatters her long hair and lifts up the lab coat she's wearing. She's just come back from the hospital.

Anne scoots up the porch step and enters her home.

INT. BROWNSTONE - MOMENTS LATER

Anne is taking a shower. Steam fills up the bathroom and spills out the open door into --

THE BEDROOM

The door knob turns slowly and we see A DARK SHOE as someone quietly enters the room. Then we see his back, as he steps into the steam of --

THE BATHROOM

As Anne steps out of the shower, a hand reaches out and flings her towel away, revealing her naked body. Before she can react, the man is behind her, knife to her throat. He reaches out with his other hand and cups her exposed breast.

SMASH CUT TO:

Captain Kusungu reaches out and grabs Anne's breast.

SLAM CUT BACK TO:

Anne wakes up abruptly and sits up in bed.

ANNE

No!

She's drenched in sweat, out of breath, white with fear. The memories are too painful to bear. Anne covers her face with her hands and starts to cry.

EXT. ANNE'S FLAT - MORNING

A Land Cruiser approaches Anne as she steps out onto the streets. It keeps pace with her.

Anne is lost in thought and does not notice it at first.

The car HONKS, startling Anne. It's Donner.

He stops the car. Anne approaches the window. Donner's changed out of his suit and has fatigues on. He looks like a soldier.

DONNER

Hop in.

ANNE

I don't have very far to walk --

DONNER

You're worried about that girl
Ashanti. Let's go and try and find
her.

ANNE

Are you serious?

DONNER

As a heart attack.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

A BLACK MAN loitering across the street has been watching Anne. As Donner's car pulls away, he hurriedly makes a call on his mobile phone.

EXT. PLAINS - LATER

The Cruiser zips through tall grasses.

DONNER (O.S.)

The cities are an awful mess
though, but there's some real
gorgeous country out here. If you
haven't noticed, it's a land of
devastating beauty -- and
misery. I hope you had a chance to
see some of it.

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

ANNE

I've been to lots of villages, but I can't say that I've had the chance to be a tourist.

DONNER

The only way to see everything is from above. I'll take you up in a balloon sometime. It's simply breathtaking.

ANNE

If I ever get the time.

DONNER

If I help you find this girl, you're coming up with me. All right?

ANNE

Find her and I'll come.

LATER

From high above, the Land Cruiser can be seen on the dirt road that scars a vast, picturesque landscape, dotted with scattered animals.

A SILVER PIZARRO enters the frame; it's kicking up a dust storm and making a beeline for the Cruiser.

INT./EXT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Donner glances at the rear view mirror.

POV REAR REAR VIEW MIRROR

A Silver Pizarro is approaching fast.

BACK TO SCENE

DONNER

Somebody's following us.

ANNE

Who?

Anne glances back and sees the Pizarro. She jerks back as Donner suddenly picks up speed.

(CONTINUED)

The Pizarro keeps pace with him, then gains on him. Suddenly, there's the sound of automatic gunfire as the Cruiser is stitched with bullets. Tail lights shatter.

ANNE

They're shooting at us!

Donner reaches into the glove compartment and removes a Sig Sauer pistol.

DONNER

Can you shoot one of these?

Anne looks mortified by the sight of the weapon.

ANNE

I don't know...

While Anne looks anxious, Donner doesn't panic. His manner is brisk.

DONNER

Grab the steering wheel and switch with me.

Anne hesitates, unsure what to do.

More bullets shatter the rear windshield. Donner and Anne both reflexively duck.

That's enough for Anne. With some effort -- and a slow down of the Cruiser -- she quickly switches seats with Donner. It allows the Pizarro the chance to catch up and ram them from behind --

Anne loses control of the vehicle, veers off the dirt road --

But manages to recover.

The Pizarro comes at them again --

DONNER

Gun it towards the jungle!

Donner squeezes off a few shots with the Sig.

The Pizarro swerves hard to the right, then returns another volley of gunfire, raking the side of the Cruiser.

A thousand yards ahead is the jungle. Anne floors it and the Cruiser leaps forward.

EXT. JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

The Cruiser follows the dirt road that has been hacked out of the bush, with the Pizarro still on its tail. The road is rutted and narrow. One false move and the vehicles would careen into a tree.

INT./EXT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Another round of gunfire stitches the car. Bullets whiz through the rear and shatter the front windshield.

Anne sits hunched in her seat, screams involuntarily and nearly loses control of the vehicle.

Donner fires back at the pursuit vehicle; but it's no competition against automatic weapons fire.

DONNER
Get off the road.

Anne hesitates.

DONNER (CONT.)
Do it!

Anne makes a hard right and plunges into the jungle. She barely dodges a tree, but manages to keep the vehicle under control and pushes forward between the foliage.

The Pizarro follows after them; but it no longer has a direct line of sight with the Cruiser. They fire indiscriminately into the bush; startling animals but missing the Cruiser.

DONNER
You're doing good. Keep
going. Try to lose them.

Jagged branches whip past them, the chassis GROANS as tires pound over roots, but the car holds. It's a bone jarring ride, but Anne manages to find a pathway and keeps the vehicle moving forward.

MOMENTS LATER

The Pizarro has managed to gain on the Cruiser, despite the sinuous path Anne is following through the jungle.

Another fusillade of bullets lashes the Cruiser, ripping into it. It can't take much more.

(CONTINUED)

Ignoring the bullets whizzing past him, Donner holds his pistol steady, takes aim at the Pizarro and fires off a round, then... CLICK. The Sig's clip is empty.

But the first shot has struck true. The Pizarro's right front wheel has been shot out. The SUV veers hard to the right, disappearing into the bush, followed by a CRASHING sound.

Anne looks into the rear view mirror.

ANNE

I think they crashed.

DONNER

I hope so. Keep driving.

LATER

The gunfire has stopped, along with sounds of the pursuing vehicle.

ANNE

I think we lost them.

DONNER

Just keep going.

Anne nods. Directly ahead is an opening. She drives towards it. Suddenly, the darkness of the jungle is lifted and they emerge into sunshine.

MOMENTS LATER

They come upon a smoldering villages. Huts have been burned to the ground, including the wheat fields beyond which have also been razed. The earth is blackened with soot. There's no sign of any people.

Anne comes to sudden stop.

EXT. ASHANTI'S VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Anne steps out of the car and stares at the remains of the village in horror. Donner reloads the Sig with extra ammo and joins her.

ANNE

Oh, my god, what happened?

Donner walks around the smoldering *bomas*, inspecting them. He comes back to Anne and shows her a discarded torch.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

The village was deliberately set on fire.

ANNE

Who could have done it?

DONNER

I suspect the same people who have been shooting at us.

ANNE

Where are the villagers?

DONNER

Let's take a closer look.

MOMENTS LATER

They've walked through the entire village. They've found no one. But then Donner notices TRACKS FROM HEAVY EQUIPMENT at the edge of the village. The soil looks freshly-tilled.

Anne follows him and suddenly screams.

Sticking out of the ground is a BLACK FEMALE HAND.

Donner digs away some of the dirt with his hands, revealing the corpse of a woman covered with lime. But the body hasn't had a chance to decompose. Anne recognizes her. It's Kalifa, Ashanti's mother. There's a bullet wound in her temple.

ANNE

Oh, my god...

MOMENTS LATER

Donner has retrieved a shovel from the Cruiser. He grimaces as he digs up a few more bodies from the pit. Ashanti's dad Kambo, Makena, Aziza and other adults. They're all dead, with bullet wounds to various parts of their bodies. They also have uncovered the bodies of YOUNG BOYS and ADOLESCENT GIRLS and BABIES, but so far, no young female bodies (girls of Ashanti's age) have been uncovered.

Anne starts to weep quietly, hand over her mouth.

ANNE

They massacred them!

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I'd guess the bodies are not more than a day or two old. The whole village could be under here.

ANNE

Maybe somebody survived. We have to look.

Donner doesn't look hopeful, but nods.

DONNER

Let's go.

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Anne follows Donner who's got the pistol in his hands. He's self-assured and capable and moves swiftly. Anne has a hard time keeping up with him.

Donner suddenly comes to a halt.

DONNER

I think I heard something.

They cock their ears. Over the jungle noise, there's the sudden RUMBLE of heavy equipment trucks.

Donner starts to make his way in the direction of the sound, Anne trailing behind him.

MOMENTS LATER

Donner and Anne hide behind foliage at the edge of a man-made clearing in the jungle. They see heavy equipment trucks and military vehicles, as well as SOLDIERS and DOZENS OF AFRICAN AND CHINESE LABORERS.

CHINESE SUPERVISORS oversee the digging, as swaths of jungle are being cleared away, with the soil being excavated and sifted.

DONNER

(whisper)

Look at what we have here. I knew it...

Donner takes out a digital camera and takes some pictures, including video.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

They destroyed the village for this?

DONNER

They're clearing jungle in the direction of the village. I don't think they wanted any witnesses.

ANNE

I didn't see any young girls in the grave. What if -- what if Ashanti survived?

Donner doesn't reply; but he doesn't look hopeful.

Suddenly a MONKEY descends from above, sees Anne and Donner hiding behind the foliage and starts to make a ruckus.

Donner waves the gun at him.

DONNER

Get lost!

The simian SQUAWKS louder in response, alerting some of the government soldiers. Captain Kusungu is among them. He rattles off a burst of gunfire in the direction of sound --

Donner covers Anne with his body and pushes her to the side. Then he grabs her hand and lifts her back to her feet.

DONNER

Let's go!

EXT. ASHANTI'S VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Donner and Anne emerge out of the jungle out of breath. He starts to lead her towards the Land Cruiser. Anne wrests her hand away.

ANNE

Give me your camera.

DONNER

We've got to get out of here!

ANNE

Give it to me!

Donner quickly hands it to her and starts to run towards the car.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

Hurry up! I'll get the car!

Anne rushes over to the grave and starts to take pictures of the dead bodies. She also takes several snapshots of the burned-out village and the razed wheat fields.

Soldiers rush out of the jungle. They see Anne and start to run towards her.

Kusungu shoots into the air.

KUSUNGU

Stop!

Anne starts to run. Trips and falls and loses the camera. She recovers, snatches the camera and starts to run again. But the gap with the soldiers has closed. They'll be upon her --

Suddenly, Donner careens in front of Anne with the Cruiser and opens the passenger door.

DONNER

Duck!

Anne ducks as Donner releases a barrage of bullets above her, scattering the pursuing soldiers. Then in one last burst of speed, she jumps into the car. Donner guns the car and peels away.

EXT. US EMBASSY - NIGHT

The Land Cruiser approaches the front steel gates where TWO UNIFORMED MARINES guard the entrance. The soldiers see the decrepit state of the SUV and are instantly alert.

ANNE (O.S.)

Why are we here?

DONNER (O.S.)

I'm not taking you back to your flat. There could be a nasty surprise waiting for you there. You'll be safe behind these walls.

The Marines approach the car. They relax their guard when they recognize Donner, saluting him.

(CONTINUED)

MARINE #1
Sir, what happened?

DONNER
Rough safari in the bush.

INT./EXT. LAND CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Marine #1 peers into the vehicle and glances at Anne questioningly.

DONNER (CONT.)
She's an American. She's with me. Say hello, will you Annie, so they have some proof. Give them the your best Brooklyn accent.

ANNE
I'm Anne Martin. I'm from New York.

Marine #1 nods.

MARINE #1
Hello, ma'am.

Donner slaps the dashboard.

DONNER
Will you let me in before this thing conks out on me!

EXT. US EMBASSY - CONTINUOUS

Marine #2 talks into his radio and the gate slides back.

The Land Cruiser limps through.

INT. US EMBASSY - ANNE'S SUITE - LATER

Anne's been given a guest room which is tastefully furnished. Having showered, she emerges from the bathroom in a robe. There's a knock at the door.

DONNER (O.S.)
Anne, it's me, Jack. Can we talk?

Anne doesn't bother to change and opens the door.

When Donner sees Anne in the robe, he tries not to be too obvious about staring at her. She fills it out nicely.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

Good, you had a chance to shower.

Anne allows him inside. Donner hasn't changed out of his fatigues yet. He's unkempt from his harrowing experiences earlier in the day.

ANNE

You didn't clean up.

Donner sniffs his under arms.

DONNER

Do I stink that much? Here, I'll stand downwind from you.

Donner moves. His humor's intact despite all that's happened.

ANNE

I thought you'd be spending the night here?

DONNER

Is that an invitation?

ANNE

I meant at the embassy.

DONNER

Wish I could. There's a few things I still need to take care of.

ANNE

This late? What do you have to do?

DONNER

You know, embassy stuff.

ANNE

What sort of embassy stuff?

DONNER

It's nothing you need to worry about.

Anne doesn't press Donner on the issue. She sits down in a overstuffed chair and sighs.

ANNE

I'm so exhausted. I can't believe what happened today!

(CONTINUED)

Donner goes behind Anne and starts to knead her shoulders. She freezes up for a moment. Donner notices and removes his hands.

DONNER

I'm sorry.

ANNE

No, it's OK.

Donner comes around and sits across from Anne.

DONNER

That was good driving. You handled yourself well.

ANNE

I did a long stint in the ER before. You have to be steady during a crisis. But I can't hold a candle to you. You handled that gun like an expert. I didn't know diplomats had weapon's training?

DONNER

Oh, you know. I did a stint in the military.

ANNE

Really? How long?

Donner is not interested in divulging this information about his past. He changes the subject.

DONNER

Annie, we can chat about my career later. Right now, you're my main concern. I've talked with the ambassador. He wants to meet with you tomorrow morning about this situation you've gotten yourself into. You're safe behind these walls, but out there.... Nothing happens halfway here. Everything is wild, violent and savage.

ANNE

I'll keep that in mind. What about yourself?

DONNER

Oh Africa hasn't beaten me down yet. I know how to handle myself.

(CONTINUED)

(swings his hips back and forth)
I'm fully attuned to the rhythm of Africa.

Anne smiles despite herself.

ANNE
Jack, you took the camera back. I want those pictures I took in the village today.

DONNER
What do you intend to do with them?

Anne is reluctant to say, but Donner knows what's on her mind.

DONNER (CONT.)
I'll see what I can do. No promises.

ANNE
Thanks.

DONNER
I've got your back, but be careful. You're up against some nasty folks in the government. Don't think for a minute that power concedes without a fight.

INT. US EMBASSY - MORNING

Breakfast has been set in a small, private dining room. Donner has cleaned himself up from last night and munches on a danish. Anne is sipping tea when AMBASSADOR DALTON walks in. He's a suave career diplomat in his mid fifties, with a face lift that makes his smile look plastic.

Dalton exchanges a nod with Donner and shake Anne's hand before taking a seat.

AMBASSADOR DALTON
Sorry for the delay. I had to take a call from the Foreign Minister. He was not too happy.

Donner turns to Anne and grins mischievously.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I'd bet you dollars to donuts it was about us.

AMBASSADOR DALTON

And I'm sure she's smart enough not to take it. The minister's livid over your escapades from yesterday.

DONNER

They're up to no good in that jungle. I would be angry too if I was caught with my pants down.

AMBASSADOR DALTON

Jack, diplomats would be more tactful in their assessment of the situation --

DONNER

That's why I'm not ambassador.

Dalton frowns; but he's used to Donner's humor. There's a grudging respect between the two.

ANNE

Ambassador Dalton, there was a massacre in that village. Something has to be done --

AMBASSADOR DALTON

Yes, I've been appraised by Jack. The graves in the village are certainly troubling. I'm deeply troubled by the Chinese presence there.

ANNE

Why would they be there?

DONNER

They're not digging up the jungle in search of roots, that's for sure.

Anne looks confused.

Dalton clarifies.

(CONTINUED)

AMBASSADOR DALTON

China has an aggressive strategy in Africa to cement diplomatic alliances with the nation's political leadership. It's all geared towards controlling long-term access to critical mineral resources on this continent. This country in particular is rich in resources. The Chinese have been propping up the Zoma regime for years.

DONNER

We call it the great Chinese takeaway.

ANNE

Why did they kill the villagers?

AMBASSADOR DALTON

Allegedly.

(beat)

Ms. Martin, President Zoma's government was not pleased with your drawing attention to the village when you took the CNN crew there --

Anne sets her cup down abruptly, spilling tea. She's horrified by the suggestion.

ANNE

Are you implying that it's my fault they were killed?

AMBASSADOR DALTON

No, your intentions were noble, I'm sure. But in this part of the world, consequences are unpredictable -- but often aggressive.

ANNE

I was only trying to help that village.

DONNER

Those people were doomed from the moment Zoma realized there was something of value in the land beneath their feet. Don't blame

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DONNER (cont'd)
yourself, Annie. The Chinese probably know about it and don't give a damn.

AMBASSADOR DALTON
It's part of their broad push into Africa. They will turn a blind eye to famine, hunger and genocide all in the interest of securing resources and riches on this continent. Off the record, I'll tell you about our African policy -- it's nothing I'm proud of. When one African country goes to war against a neighbor, our government responds by evacuating our citizens and scaling back military aid. The Chinese see this as an opportunity to expand its influence and exploit with the reduced U.S. presence. It dispatches even more diplomats, engineers and executives.

ANNE
Ambassador, I'm not a politician. I don't give a damn about resources. I'm here on a different mission. The young girls of the village are missing. There was a girl named Ashanti. I need your help finding them. They may still be alive.

AMBASSADOR DALTON
But you have no proof from what Jack has told me.

ANNE
So many girls could not have just disappeared. They must be somewhere!

AMBASSADOR DALTON
I understand your concern, I really do, but this is a domestic matter. The proper authorities --

ANNE
Are to blame!

Donner leans forward and places a placating hand on Anne's arm.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I was serious about that balloon ride. I'll look into it. You have my word.

Dalton exchanges a glance with Donner but doesn't say anything.

ANNE

In the meantime --

AMBASSADOR DALTON

We can offer you sanctuary here for a few days. But we advise that you not return to your flat for obvious reasons.

DONNER

I can have somebody pick up your things for you.

AMBASSADOR DALTON

Maybe it would be wise for you to go back to New York for a while -- at least until the elections are over --

ANNE

I'm not leaving until the girls are found and my work is done. I'll accept your hospitality for a few days, while I find another place to stay.

DONNER

I'd offer you my place, but --

ANNE

I'll find a place. Jack, where are the photos and video of the massacre I asked for?

Donner exchanges a glance with Dalton.

AMBASSADOR DALTON

They are the property of the US government. We have determined that it's best to keep them under wraps for now.

ANNE

Under wraps?
(turns to Donner)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNE (cont'd)
I thought you said --

AMBASSADOR DALTON
It's not Jack's decision. I'm
sorry, but we're concerned about
the consequences of releasing those
photos right now. We advise you
not to speak to anybody about what
you saw there. Ms. Martin, I'm
sure you can appreciate our
position --

ANNE
Please don't patronize me,
Ambassador.
(gets up)
Nobody's putting a muzzle on me.

Anne walks away.

EXT. HAMA'S HOUSE - DAY

A Land Cruiser with diplomatic plates comes to a halt in
front of the tin-roofed home.

INT./EXT. ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Donner appears reluctant to see Anne go. The concern is
etched on his face.

DONNER
You sure you want to stay here,
Annie?

ANNE
I'm sure.

DONNER
You call me -- the first sign of
any trouble -- you call me.

Anne steps out of the vehicle.

ANNE
Just keep your promise, John. Help
me find them.
(reaches in and squeezes his
hand)
Thanks. I mean it.

She closes the door and walks into Hama's home.

INT. HAMA'S HOUSE - LATER

Anne shares a meal with Hama at a dining table at the corner of the living room. The home is modest at best, with a stone floor, exposed brick walls, tin roof and sparse furnishings. A kitchen and two bedrooms branch off. Hama shares the place with his two children, wife and parents.

The family is crowded around a small television; but they spare many curious glances towards Anne, who is talking quietly to Hama.

ANNE

Hama, I don't want to expose you to any danger. I just need a few days --

HAMA

You will stay with us as long as you like. I will try to make you comfortable -- and I will protect you with my life.

ANNE

I don't want to expose your family to any danger. I thought maybe --

HAMA

No, this is a good place to hide. They won't look here. Ted has been calling me. He is very concerned about you.

ANNE

Don't tell him I'm here. Call him for me and tell him I'm OK. But right now, I can't deal with him.

HAMA

OK. Tell me what you saw in the village.

LATER

Hama's face looks strained. He glances at his family. Tries to keep his emotions under check.

HAMA

They are animals! You should have taken me with you.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

What could you have done? Why would they kill everyone except the girls?

HAMA

Because they will be prizes.

Anne doesn't know what he means.

HAMA (CONT.)

They are young. Virgins. This is a cruel continent. Many village girls are often kidnapped and used as sexual slaves. The pretty ones are given as rewards to soldiers or payment to people on the payroll of the government. They are often raped repeatedly...

Anne's face blanches.

INT. HAMA'S HOUSE - CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne tosses restlessly on a small cot. Hama's daughter and son are asleep on another cot across from her.

The phone RINGS suddenly, startling Anne. It's her mobile. She retrieves it from a jacket pocket and answers it.

ANNE

Hello?

Anne listens. Then her eyes widen in surprise.

ANNE (CONT.)

Ashanti?

EXT. SHANTY TOWN - DAY

A UNICEF Land Rover departs Hama's house and follow a dirt road.

EXT. PAVED ROAD - LATER

The Land Rover drives past gated mansions. It's a stark contrast from the dusty, clogged streets of the city and the shanty town.

(CONTINUED)

HAMA (O.S.)

I don't think this is a very good idea.

ANNE (O.S.)

I don't have a choice. The instructions were clear. We have to go there alone.

HAMA (O.S.)

I'm worried.

ANNE (O.S.)

So am I.

EXT. GATED VILLA - LATER

A HEAVILY ARMED SOLDIER waves the Rover through, as huge gates slide back and then closes behind them.

A long, paved driveway leads to a grand Italian-style villa in the distance. The grounds are a lush tropical garden. Peacocks wander well-manicured lawns. Topiary abound.

The Rover drives around a gushing fountain and comes to a stop around a circular driveway dotted with luxury cars.

ARMED GUARDS rush to open the doors, as Hama and Anne step out of their vehicle.

INT. ZOMA'S VILLA - LATER

The guards lead Hama and Anne down a lush corridor, dotted with murals, frescoes and marble statues (often flanked by an armed soldier). The interior, while opulent, is at times garish.

Anne appears sickened by the wealth. Hama is angry. The leader of his country lives like a *raja*, while his people starve.

EXT. ZOMA'S VILLA - VERANDA - MOMENTS LATER

Anne and Hama emerge behind the property, near a *koi* pond where a table and comfortable chairs have been set on a grand veranda. A dozen gun-toting, red-bereted PRESIDENTIAL GUARDS are posted discretely around the area.

One chair is larger than the others. It's cushioned and resembles a high-backed throne. PRESIDENT LAWRENCE ZOMA

(CONTINUED)

sits there wearing an impeccable suit. He's a very dark and fleshy man of 60. His shiny cheeks are swollen with fat and his lips appear to pout. He glares at Anne and Hama as they are led to the veranda by the guards.

George Lin, the Chinese businessman, sits at the table with Zoma's son Jacob and Captain Kusungu. Jacob is the only one to rise. He tries to be hospitable to Anne and directs her to sit at the table. He pointedly ignores Hama.

JACOB

Ms. Martin, welcome! Come, sit here.

Anne has Hama sit down next to her.

Captain Kusungu exchanges tense stares with Anne and Hama but no words.

Jacob takes a seat next to Anne, uncomfortably close for her liking. He ogles her with a hungry look.

JACOB

We meet again, Ms. Martin. Please, have some refreshments.

The table has been set with a sumptuous breakfast. Neither Anne nor Hama touch any of it.

JACOB

You wish not to partake in our hospitality? No matter.

(points to Lin)

This is a friend of ours. Mr. George --

LIN

A friend who wishes to remain anonymous. I am pleased to meet both of you.

JACOB

OK. Let's get down to business pronto. Did you bring the photos?

ANNE

I would like to see Ashanti first.

JACOB

Give us the photos first -- and all of the video.

ANNE

I want to see Ashanti.

KUSUNGU

We can take them forcibly from you.

ANNE

Show me Ashanti. Release the girls, and I'll tell you where they are.

JACOB

That was not our direction to you on the phone. You were to bring the photos and video with you.

ANNE

If I had them on me -- then I would have no leverage at all.

ZOMA

(snorts)

This woman has courage!

Zoma glares at Anne. His eyes are red, almost bloodshot. He looks frightening.

ZOMA (CONT.)

You are a great advocate against FGM. We can perform this same procedure on you if you do not cooperate with us.

Anne goes visibly pale; but she holds firm.

ANNE

I want to see Ashanti.

Zoma sighs and turns to Kusungu.

ZOMA

Go bring your wife.

MOMENTS LATER

Kusungu returns with MUKANDA, a tall, black woman in tow. She's in her mid-twenties, dark, but statuesque with high cheekbones and a pretty face.

Ashanti is holding onto her hand, standing protectively close to her. But when she sees Anne, she detaches herself and embraces her.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Are you all right, darling?

ASHANTI

I was very, very frightened at first.

(points to Mukanda)

But now they are keeping me with her. She's a very nice lady.

Mukanda smiles at Ashanti. Her affection for the little girl appears genuine.

JACOB

This is my younger sister, Mukanda. We call her Mimi for short.

Mimi comes over and shakes Anne's hand, as well as Hama's.

MIMI

I've followed your efforts with great interest, Miss Martin. You are to be commended on sparing little girls from the horrors of FGM.

Mimi's comment appears to be genuine. At face value, she seems to be quite different from her family.

ANNE

Thank you. We're always looking for people to join our cause.

MIMI

If given the opportunity, I would gladly take you up on that offer.

Kusungu steps forward and places an arm on Mimi's shoulder.

KUSUNGU

Mimi is far too busy with her duties as my wife. Besides, I would frown upon her associating with you -- as you have proven yourself to be a trouble maker.

Wife? Kusungu and Mimi were married? He was the son-in-law of Zoma?

But Anne notices that the relationship between husband and wife are strained. Mimi stiffens at Kusungu's touch, steps out of reach and approaches her father.

(CONTINUED)

MIMI
 Father, I will trust you to be
 hospitable with Miss Martin.

Jacob points to the food on the table.

JACOB
 We have offered her our hospitality
 and she has refused.

MIMI
 I'm well aware what kind of
 hospitality you and my husband can
 offer people!

There appears to be no love lost between brother and sister.

KUSUNGU
 She has been most troublesome to
 our father, do you know that? Her
 actions have jeopardized his
 re-election!

MIMI
 I don't care about politics!

Mimi stands protectively next to Ashanti and turns on her
 husband.

MIMI (CONT.)
 She can't sleep. She has
 nightmares. Where are her
 parents? What have you done to
 them?

ZOMA
 Mimi, you must leave now with the
 girl. Your husband does not like
 you to be involved in these
 matters. I support him on
 this. Go now!

Mimi lacks the courage to stand up to her father. She takes
 Ashanti's hand to lead her away, but the girl is reluctant
 to leave Anne.

ASHANTI
 I don't want to go!

ANNE
 (to Zoma)
 Let her stay with me.

Zoma ignores Anne.

(CONTINUED)

ZOMA

Go, Mimi. Take her. All matters will be settled satisfactorily if Ms. Martin cooperates.

Mimi regards Anne.

MIMI

She'll be fine with me. Don't worry.

ANNE

Ashanti, go with her. I'll see you soon.

Mimi spares a sympathetic glance at Anne before she walks back into the villa with a reluctant Ashanti in tow.

Jacob sits back down.

JACOB

You have seen the girl, now you will tell us where the photos are.

ANNE

What happened to the people in the village?

KUSUNGU

That is not your concern. You will give us what we want.

Anne turns to Lin.

ANNE

Why are you here?

LIN

I am simply an observer, Ms. Martin.

ANNE

There were Chinese working at the dig site. Are they your people?

Lin smiles enigmatically, but doesn't answer.

ANNE (CONT.)

People were killed in that village near the site. Do you know that?

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Stop harassing our guest.

ANNE

(to Zoma)

What are you trying to protect there that you would kill so many people for?

KUSUNGU

Your accusations are most offensive! We're conducting our investigation about the deaths. It's not uncommon for different villages to have rivalries. This is Africa. There is a history of tribal warfare.

Hama speaks up for the first time.

HAMA

Tribal warfare? Do the lives of our people mean so little to you?

Kusungu snorts.

HAMA (CONT.)

You're a pawn of the corruption that festers in our homeland. Have you no shame about taking the lives of innocents?

(to Zoma)

You have led us on a path which threatens our survival. Those who sow the wind will harvest a typhoon!

KUSUNGU

Be quiet, *muzungu*-lover!

Hama turns on Lin with a sneer.

HAMA

Long ago the Brits came with their Indian *dillwallahs*. The Brits left and the Indian's bought up our businesses and buildings. Now your people arrive in droves to buy up our resources. When will African's learn to rely on themselves?

(CONTINUED)

LIN

That is incorrect. I have come to help your country, sir.

HAMA

You only want to rape our land!

KUSUNGU

Silence!

Anne can see that Kusungu's anger is ready to boil over. She places a hand on Hama's arm to calm him down.

ANNE

I want to know where the other girls are --

Zoma SLAMS his fist down on the table, rattling china and tipping over a drink.

ZOMA

Enough! I want the photos *and* the video. I want you to leave this country as soon as possible! The cockroaches in this country belong to me, and I will squash them whenever I feel it is necessary!

Zoma is frightening in his anger; but the "cockroaches" remark enrages Anne and she loses her cool.

ANNE

You think of your people as *cockroaches*? Maybe Isoke thinks differently. Maybe I'll give the pictures *and* the video to him!

KUSUNGU

Beware how you talk to our President! You are playing a dangerous game here. Do not threaten us. I don't think you know how serious we are.

Kusungu motions to a VERY LARGE GUARD and points to Hama. The guard forces Hama out of his seat at gun point. Anne tries to rise, but is pulled back down to her seat by Jacob.

Kusungu removes a blade from his hip and SLAPS it against the palm of his hand. The large guard grabs Hama from behind and pulls his head back, exposing his neck.

(CONTINUED)

There is terror in Hama's eyes now. He tries to twist out of the guard's grip, but can't. The man is too strong.

KUSUNGU

I like knives. Guns are too quick. I like things messy.

ANNE

Don't. I'll get --

In a single, swift gesture, Kusungu slits Hama's throat with the knife.

ANNE

No!

Blood pours in broad red sheets down Hama's shirt. His eyes are wide with horror and he shakes his head slowly in a kind of disbelief and falls to his knees.

Blood spray soils Kusungu's clothes and boots. He steps back with a curse.

As Hama falls to the ground, Anne rushes to him. She tries to hold back the gush of blood from his neck, but it's hopeless.

Hama tries to say something to Anne, but he can't with his throat slit. Only a GURGLE comes out. His eyes roll back and he goes limp in Anne's arms.

ANNE

Oh my god, no. No! No!

Lin has watched the murder unfazed as a sitting Buddha.

Jacob comes over and roughly lifts Anne back up to her feet.

JACOB

You do not cross my father without consequences. Now, tell us where the photos and video are -- or the girl Ashanti will suffer the same fate.

Anne twists out of his grasp, livid with rage.

ANNE

I don't have them, you bastard! The US embassy has them -- and they're going to be made public!

Anne realizes her mistake as soon as she utters the last word. The reaction from Zoma is quick and brusque.

(CONTINUED)

ZOMA

Take her away! She's of no use to us. You want her? She's yours, my son.

A huge grin splits Jacob's face. He comes towards Anne.

INT. VILLA - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne has been locked in a garish room, decked out like a harem. There is a bed shaped like a heart and mirrors on the ceiling. The furniture is a plush velvet. Scanty outfits lay on the bed.

Repulsed by the clothes, Anne turns away and tries the door. It's locked. She kicks it in frustration several times and screams.

ANNE

Let me out! Let me out!

But no one comes to her rescue. She strikes the locked door in frustration and sit on a cushioned chair, despondent.

LATER

Anne has fallen asleep on the chair. Suddenly she's startled awake. The lights have been dimmed. Jacob Zoma has quietly entered the room. He's dressed casually in a lose fitting shirt which exposes his chiseled chest.

Jacob closes the door behind him, locking it. He has a bottle of wine and two glasses with him. He ogles Anne and licks his lips lasciviously.

JACOB

I would hope to make this pleasant for you.

(sees the untouched outfits on the bed.)

You have a very beautiful body. You would have looked most sexy in any of these outfits. I've been wanting you very much since I first laid my eyes on you.

There's a hungry look in Jacob's eyes. He's already raping Anne with his eyes.

Anne edges towards the door.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Stay away from me!

Jacob blocks the door. Anne darts away to a corner, as Jacob sets the wine and glasses down and approaches her.

JACOB

I'm a very good lover, I assure you.

He tries to grab her --

Anne leaps, rolls across the bed and comes back to her feet.

Jacob jumps on the bed, leaps and tries to grab her again --

Anne tries to twist away --

Jacob manages to grab the back of her blouse and pulls her onto the bed with him. Instantly, he's on top of her.

Anne thrashes under Jacob and tries to throw him off. But he's too big. He grabs a breast and squeezes.

ANNE

No!

SMASH CUT TO:

Anne is being held down by a MASKED MAN on the floor of a bathroom, knife to her throat. She's just stepped out of the shower, the towel torn away from her. She's naked and squirming beneath him as he starts to rape her...

SLAM CUT BACK TO:

Jacob is trying to tear Anne's clothes away. She screams, fights desperately to get away from him, but can't.

Suddenly, there is a loud KNOCK. Jacob ignores it. It comes again and again.

JACOB

I'm not supposed to be disturbed!

Jacob tries to kiss Anne --

She violently twists away.

Jacob laughs.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

You want to make this difficult for me. Good, I like it rough!

He slaps Anne hard, splitting her lips with the a ring on his fingers and drawing blood. She cries out in pain.

The knocking at the door has become insistent. Jacob turns away from Anne angrily and leaps towards the door.

JACOB

I will have a head for this!

Jacob tears open the door angrily.

His sister Mimi stands there.

JACOB

Mimi, what in heavens are you doing here?

Jacob tries to block the door and hide Anne from view.

MIMI

Is Anne Martin in there?

JACOB

No. I'm busy --

ANNE (O.S.)

Help me!

Jacob turns angrily, giving Mimi the opportunity to rush inside. She sees Anne cowering half naked on the bed and turns on her brother.

MIMI

Jacob, let her go!

JACOB

Get out now. This is none of your concern. Father gave her to me!

MIMI

You're all the same!

Mimi suddenly lashes out at her brother and sticks a needle that she's kept hidden into his arm.

Jacob cries out and pushes his sister back, knocking her down. He pulls the needle out and suddenly his knees buckle.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

What have you done to me?

Jacob collapses onto the floor in a heap, unconscious.

Mimi quickly recovers and goes to Anne.

MIMI

Come with me. We must go quickly!

EXT. VILLA - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Mimi has an arm around Anne, supporting her as best as she can. Anne is totally disheveled. Her lips are swollen and tears streak her eyes.

ANNE

Where are you taking me?

MIMI

I must get you out of this place before my brother wakes up.

ANNE

I'm not leaving without Ashanti --

MIMI

She's already been taken from this place. We have to hurry.

They turn a bend in the corridor --

When a GUARD suddenly steps forward, startling them.

GUARD

Miss Mukanda, why are you out at this hour? Who is that with you?

MIMI

My brother has been too rough with one of my girlfriends tonight.

The guard nods in understanding. He's seen this before.

GUARD

I must ask you to return to your room. Here, let me escort --

MIMI

I know my way around. Go back to your post!

(CONTINUED)

Without waiting for a reply, Mimi walks past the guard, guiding Anne as quickly as she can.

MOMENTS LATER

Mimi spots a MAN in the corridor and quickly pulls Anne into an adjacent corridor behind a marble statue.

They wait with baited breath as a man passes by in the main corridor. It's Kusungu. He's dressed in his pajamas and searching for his wife.

KUSUNGU

Mimi? Where are you? Mimi?

Mimi waits until the tread of her husband's feet disappears, before stepping back out into the corridor again and then peering left and right at the junction of the two corridors.

The coast is clear. She leads Anne back the way they had been going.

Suddenly, Kusungu steps out from behind another statue, where he's been hiding.

KUSUNGU

I have found you!

He sees Anne. The whites of his eyes swell in anger.

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

This is why you leave our bed in the middle of the night? Where do you think you're taking her?

MIMI

Nelson, she needs help --

Kusungu slaps his wife in the face.

KUSUNGU

You're working against me!

Mimi recoils from the blow. But she doesn't back down. Her anger overflows and she lets go of Anne and charges her husband. Kusungu is thrown off balance and falls back, pulling down Mimi with him.

Mimi tries to get away, but is no match for Kusungu's strength. He's on top of her quickly and starts to squeeze her neck with both hands.

(CONTINUED)

KUSUNGU

You have never been loyal to
me. I'll kill --

Kusungu falls back as a vase strikes his head. Anne has snatched the nearest object she can find and has struck him. But he's not out, starts to rise, when Mimi gets back to her feet and kicks her husband in the temple. All her anger and might are behind it and he's knocked out cold.

Mimi grabs Anne's hand.

MIMI

Let's go!

EXT. VILLA - PORTICO - MOMENTS LATER

Mimi and Anne come out at the same place Anne had entered earlier in the day with Hama.

TWO ARMED SOLDIERS stand guard during the night. One steps forward and is surprised to see Mimi.

GUARD #1

Miss Mukanda --

MIMI

I have to go out.

The guard sees Anne. This one recognizes her.

GUARD #1

That is the American lady. Where
are you taking her?

MIMI

She's hurt. Can't you see
that? I'm taking her to hospital.

The guard looks confused.

GUARD #1

She's not allowed off these
premises.

MIMI

My husband has asked me to take
her.

GUARD #1

I will have to consult with him --

(CONTINUED)

MIMI

I am your president's
daughter. Stand in my way, and my
father will hear of this!

The guard appears unsure of what to do. He glances at guard #2.

GUARD #2

Call the Captain.

MIMI

I don't have time for this!

Mimi walks brusquely past the guards and helps Anne into a Mercedes SUV in the driveway, before getting behind the wheel. The guards start to approach her --

But she peels away.

EXT. VILLA - DRIVEWAY - MOMENT'S LATER

Mimi comes to a halt before the large front gates. An armed GATE GUARD gets out of the guardhouse and approaches her.

Mimi rolls down her window. She recognizes him.

MIMI

Hello, Oba, it's me. Please open
the gates.

He peers into the car and sees Anne.

OBA

It's quite late, Miss --

MIMI

My friend is hurt, open the gates
quickly!

OBA

I should verify --

MIMI

I don't have time. She's hurt!

Oba is cowed by her urgency. He motions to a second guard inside the guardhouse, who flips a switch. The gates start to open...

At that moment, a phone RINGS inside the guardhouse. The second guard answers it and listens.

(CONTINUED)

The gates suddenly stop opening then reverses direction. The second gate guard rushes out.

GATE GUARD #2

Stop them!

Suddenly, the Mercedes leaps forward--

Both guards barely get out of the way in time. The gate is almost closed --

Mimi guns the Mercedes ahead and crashes through, tearing the gates off their hinges.

INT. MERCEDES SUV - LATER

Mimi and Anne are driving in silence, trying to collect their breaths and regain their composure.

MIMI

Are you OK, Anne?

Anne takes a deep breath.

ANNE

Thank you for helping me.

MIMI

I'm very sorry about the death of your friend.

ANNE

(fighting back tears)

He was a good man. I don't know how his family will be able to deal with it. I -- I shouldn't have brought him with me!

Anne loses her composure and cries quietly for a moment. Mimi gives her the time to recover.

MIMI

You have been sucked into a whirlpool. My father is really nervous about this election -- and inadvertently you have made them very anxious. His grip on power is slipping. It's not only about votes in this country, Anne. It's about alliances and power. Many of our tribes no longer support my father, because he has not been

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MIMI (cont'd)
 able to deliver on his
 promises. And many don't approve
 of his alliance with the
 Chinese. Many villagers have been
 uprooted from their land because of
 them. Father is losing his grip on
 this country. Backed into a
 corner, he will fight viciously --
 and kill.

Anne says nothing. She's drained of emotion.

MIMI
 You must wonder why I would betray
 my family?
 (beat)
 They have betrayed me.
 (beat)
 When I was ten years old, my father
 had my genitals cut ...

Anne looks sharply at Mimi, sees the pain at the memory.

MIMI (CONT.)
 I can still remember how painful it
 was. Over time, the physical pain
 healed... but there were
 complications.
 (beat)
 I cannot have any children. Ever.
 (beat)
 I have no feelings down
 there. They maimed me.

Mimi grips the steering wheel tightly with both hands. She
 stares ahead into the distance.

There are tears in Mimi's eyes. Anne's heart goes out to
 her. She reaches out and squeezes her arm.

ANNE
 I'm so sorry.

MIMI
 I wish there had been somebody like
 you to help me back then.
 (beat)
 Because of what has happened to me,
 I cannot satisfy my husband
 sexually.
 (rubs her neck)
 Nelson has been a very abusive
 husband. My family turns a blind
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MIMI (cont'd)

eye to it, because both my father and brother are cut from the same cloth. I lost my mother because of my father's abuse. She -- she committed suicide after his repeated beatings. It mattered not to him. He had many women and other wives.

(beat)

I may live in a gilded cage, but it's a very unhappy existence... It's a cage I needed to escape from. I have reached my limit!

(beat)

I admire your courage. You've found a cause and are doing your utmost, despite the difficulties.

ANNE

I'm no hero. I've gotten caught up in this web, which I had no intentions to. All I wanted to do was help the girls.

Mimi reaches out and squeezes Anne's arm.

MIMI

You have my support. One hundred percent.

MOMENTS LATER

Anne notices that Mimi constantly glances back at the rear view mirror.

ANNE

Are they following us?

POV REAR VIEW MIRROR

The road is empty.

BACK TO SCENE

MIMI

I don't see anybody yet. But they will certainly try to follow us.

ANNE

Where are you going?

(CONTINUED)

MIMI

I have some options -- but I don't know if they will be totally safe. This whole escape plan may have been a bit impulsive.

Anne thinks for a moment.

ANNE

Do you have a mobile phone I can use?

Mimi withdraws one from a pocket and hands it over to Anne, who makes a call.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

The Mercedes sits parked along the side of a street, idle.

A WHITE VAN with no rear windows pulls up behind it and flashes its lights three times.

Mimi and Anne get out of the SUV and quickly get into the van. It pulls away.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Donner is behind the wheel of the vehicle. Anne and Mimi are squeezed into the front seat next to him.

Donner turns to Anne.

DONNER

Are you --

He stops short. Gently touches the cut on Anne's lips.

DONNER (CONT.)

Who did this to you?

ANNE

Zoma's son Jacob.

DONNER

I'm gonna kill that bastard.

EXT. BUILDING - LATER

It's non-descript among the many along the road. There are shops below and flats on top.

INT. FLAT - CONTINUOUS

The room is sparse. There are bars on the darkened windows, which are apparently shielded well. Traffic from below can barely be heard. Other than a wooden table and chairs, the only other piece of furniture is a locked metal cabinet.

Anne studies the place and turns to Donner as he comes from the adjacent room with some drinks, antiseptic ointment and gauze.

ANNE

This place reminds me of the interrogation room when I was locked up in prison.

Donner sets the drinks down on the table. Then he tries to administer to Anne's busted lip with the ointment and gauze.

ANNE

Ouch!

DONNER

Come on now, Dr. Martin, you're not going to give Dr. Donner trouble, are you?

Anne takes the gauze from Donner.

ANNE

I'll do it. You need to work on a gentle touch.

DONNER

Sorry, bought my medical degree on the internet.

(points to the drinks)

Good old fashioned whiskey will help you numb the pain. It's always worked for me.

Anne ignores her whiskey. So does Mimi.

ANNE

What is this place, Jack?

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I would have offered you the hospitality of my place, but some guys -- most likely working for Zoma -- have staked out my place and been keeping tabs on my movements since I've become involved with you. See the hazards I have to face because of you?

ANNE

I haven't held a gun to your head.

DONNER

Not yet.

ANNE

So, what is this place? A torture chamber?

DONNER

Why? Did you spot the bloodstains I forgot to wipe away?

ANNE

Jack.

DONNER

This place was a quick alternative on short notice. It's a place the embassy keeps for meetings away from the embassy. It's a place that's sometimes used to debrief folks.

ANNE

About what?

DONNER

Oh, things I can't talk about.

Donner takes a seat at the table, facing Mimi and Anne.

DONNER (CONT.)

I'd like to debrief both of you. So tell me about everything that happened tonight...

LATER

Anne and Mimi have done a lot of talking. They finally succumb to the lure of the whiskey and take sips.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I'm sorry about Hama.

ANNE

You should have given me the photos and video.

DONNER

They were not mine to give. That was the Ambassador's decision. If you had them, they would have already been released and any leverage over Zoma would have already been lost.

Anne slams her whiskey down, spilling some of it.

ANNE

My leverage or the US government's? I've said it before, I don't give a damn about politics. People are what matter to me. Hama died, because I didn't have the photos! He was my friend. He had a family!

Donner reaches out to Anne, but she stiffens and rises out of her seat.

DONNER

Anne, I'm sorry. I know it's still painful.

Anne turns back around. She looks resolute.

ANNE

My only concern right now is for Ashanti and the girls. We have to find them.

(turns to Mimi)

Do you know where they took them?

MIMI

I believe they are being kept near their original village.

DONNER

Are you sure?

MIMI

I overheard my husband mention it to my brother.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

So that's what our sat saw!

ANNE

Sat?

DONNER

We've had one of our defense satellites keep an eye on the area to monitor the activities for the last couple of days. There's a hastily constructed building a click from the original village and the dig site. We weren't exactly sure about its purpose. They must be keeping the girls there.

ANNE

Jack, the girls have to be rescued.

DONNER

The ambassador is not keen on my participation --

ANNE

You promised --

DONNER

But a promise is a promise and I keep mine.

ANNE

You'll help me, then?

Donner nods.

MIMI

I will help too.

DONNER

Without making too fine a point, Mrs. --

MIMI

Mimi.

DONNER

OK. Mimi, as I was saying, there's a clear conflict of interest here. You are Zoma's daughter and --

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

I trust her, Jack. You can trust her too.

DONNER

Yes, I know she helped you, but --

ANNE

No, she *risked* her life for me. I trust her. One hundred percent.

MIMI

Mr. Donner --

DONNER

Jack.

MIMI

Jack, there's no doubt you should have reservations about my participation. But I assure you, I am very much concerned about Ashanti and the little girls. They are innocent victims in this game my father, brother and husband are playing. I've left them. I will not be going back to them. Ever. It will be my mission in life to stop their abuses of our people. I can no longer stand on the sidelines.

Donner gives Mimi a long, hard look and then finally nods.

DONNER

You said you can help us. How?

MIMI

Isoke.

DONNER

Mufe Isoke? That's a tall order. How?

MIMI

Mufe Isoke is my uncle. He is my late mother's elder brother. Family and politics are often difficult to separate in this country.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

You would betray your father?

MIMI

My father caused my mother's death. My uncle has never forgiven him for that. Moreover, my father is responsible for my genital mutilation as a young child. That is something I can never forgive him for.

Donner can see the pain in Mimi's eyes. Yes, this woman was totally serious.

MIMI (CONT.)

My uncle has resources and strong contacts in the government. And my husband is harsh. There are many in the military who have smarted against his heavy hand. I will see if I can get you help.

DONNER

Relative or not, he'll want something in return for your help. I'm quite familiar with how things work around here.

MIMI

There are these photos and video --

DONNER

Which the ambassador wants to hold on to for right now.

ANNE

Jack, please...

DONNER

Oh, Annie... please don't give me that look.

ANNE

Please.

DONNER

(sighs)

I'm becoming way too soft. I did keep a copy for myself. No promises... I'll see what I can do.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Thank you.

MIMI

Jack, the area you want to go to is very well protected, I assure you.

DONNER

I believe you. The satellite confirmed that the entire perimeter a few miles out is sealed off by checkpoints and patrols. We'll never get through without heavy firepower -- and that's something I don't have access to in this country.

MIMI

They will move the girls soon. I have heard my husband speak of it.

ANNE

We need to act fast.

DONNER

These things take time to plan --

ANNE

We don't have the time.

DONNER

We have to get through the perimeter guard -- or over them somehow.

ANNE

There has to be a way.

Donner thinks for a few seconds, then smiles.

DONNER

Sure there is. I'm gonna take a balloon ride.

ANNE

We're going up in a balloon?

DONNER

We?

ANNE

I'm going with you.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

I don't think that's a good idea.
You --

ANNE

I'm going.

Donner sees the resolute expression on Anne's face. There's no use arguing with her on this point.

DONNER

Fine.

ANNE

Are you sure about a
balloon? They're going to see us
and try to shoot us down.

DONNER

Exactly. It might be a wacky idea
-- but, who knows, it may just
work.

EXT. PLAINS - NIGHT

Clouds obscure the moon. The dark night is pierced by the
burner flames as Donner pulls a chord and fills up the
panels of the HOT AIR BALLOON.

The wicker basket strains at its line, trying to rise.

DONNER

Annie, come on, let's go! The
wind's blowing in the right
direction.

Anne looks nervous, but she takes a deep breath and with the
aid of a NATIVE HELPER, gets into the basket with Donner.

Donner signals to the helper.

DONNER

Let her go!

The helper releases the rope securing the balloon. It rises
quickly into the air.

INT./EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - MOMENTS LATER

The balloon has risen several thousand feet, up above the clouds. Here, the moon is visible and bright. In the distance, the peak of a high mountain punches through.

Anne looks at the sky.

ANNE

It's so bright up here. Anyone can see us.

DONNER

Not after we dip below the clouds. Let's just hope they hold.

Anne is wearing olive green military fatigues and boots, similar to Donner. Her hair is tied back into a pony tail. She shivers in the fierce wind.

ANNE

How high up are we?

Donner glances at an altimeter.

DONNER

Eight thousand feet. Higher than normal, until we get near where we need to land.

ANNE

But you can't tell where we're going.

Donner produces a hand held GPS from his pocket and smiles.

DONNER

Yes, I can.

Jack reaches out and adjusts the body armor Anne is wearing, similar to his own.

DONNER(CONT.)

You shouldn't have come. This thing is no guarantee against death. You should leave this type of work to professionals.

ANNE

We've been over this before.

Jack retrieves a gun from a pocket and hands it over to Anne. He has a Uzi strapped to his back.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

Don't get trigger happy.

Anne takes the gun. Checks the safety and then shoves it between her belt.

ANNE

I hope I don't have to use it.

Donner grabs his Uzi and releases the safety.

DONNER

You keep your head down. I'll do all the shooting.

LATER

Anne looks out at the vast blanket of clouds below them, which glow in the moonlight.

ANNE

It's so beautiful.

DONNER

You should see the vistas in the daylight. I owe you another ride -- under different circumstances, of course.

Anne turns around. It's cramped in the wicker basket, especially with the two propane tanks taking up a lot of the space.

ANNE

How much propane do we have?

DONNER

Enough to get where we want to go -- so long as the winds push us in the right direction.

ANNE

Won't perimeter security see us below the clouds?

DONNER

The idea is to fly real high -- way, way up -- until we get close to our landing point. Then will come down quickly, before they see us or have a chance to react.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

What if they shoot at us and hit one of these tanks?

DONNER

I had the tanks shielded. But, if we're unlucky, we'll make a heck of a loud bang. Don't worry, we won't feel too much pain.

Anne turns back to the clouds. A strong gust of wind shakes them. She clutches the basket rail for support and shivers, anxious and impatient.

Donner goes behind Anne and wraps his arms around her. Anne stiffens momentarily, but then relaxes.

DONNER

Body heat, the purest form of warmth.

Anne slowly starts to relax as the warmth seeps into her. She doesn't turn around.

ANNE

Do you think Mimi will come through?

DONNER

I hope so.
(retrieves a CD hidden beneath his flack jacket)
This should be a good enticement for Isoke -- if help shows up.
(puts the CD back)
I won't get any backing from the US government. This is off the books. Dalton would have a heart attack if he knew what I was up to.

ANNE

Thanks for helping out, I really mean it.

DONNER

You can thank me once we have the girls out.

Beat.

ANNE

Who do you work for, Jack?

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

The embassy --

ANNE

Who do you *really* work for?

Beat.

DONNER

I'd rather not say.

ANNE

I want the truth. I know you're not a simple diplomat.

Beat.

DONNER

My employer has a three name acronym. If I tell you more, I'd have to kill you.

ANNE

No wonder why you're so good with a gun.

DONNER

And a few other things.

ANNE

How long have you been with the CIA?

DONNER

I never said I worked for them. DEA, PTA, AAA. They've got three letter acronyms too.

ANNE

Stop it. Why did you join the CIA?

Beat.

DONNER

Because I love my country. Plain and simple. I joined to promote Uncle Sam's interests overseas. That's my cause, Annie. My passion. I'm sure you can understand passion.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

(nods)

Have you ever had to do something
you don't like?

DONNER

Plenty. But tonight I'm doing
something that I really want to do,
for someone I really, really like a
whole lot.

Donner turns Anne around and kisses her directly on the
lips. Anne returns the kiss for a moment, but then abruptly
detaches herself and rushes over to the other side of the
basket, shaking it abruptly.

Donner waits for the basket to stabilize before going over
to Anne, but he doesn't touch her. He's surprised by her
reaction.

DONNER

Annie, I'm so sorry. I -- I read
the signs wrong. I didn't mean to
hurt you.

Anne regains her composure.

ANNE

You didn't hurt me.

DONNER

I won't do that again --

ANNE

It's not your fault. I didn't tell
you everything.

(beat)

Jacob... Jacob Zoma tried to rape
me.

(beat)

He didn't succeed.

(beat)

Somebody else did.

(beat)

I was raped before I came to
Africa. Maybe... maybe that's why
I ran away and came here... I hated
the idea of women being
victims. In some small way by
saving these girls from FGM, I
thought I could make a
difference... and save myself...

(CONTINUED)

Donner wants to reach out and comfort Anne, but he's afraid to.

DONNER
I'm so sorry --

Suddenly the RAT-TAT-TAT of machine gunfire stitches the balloon.

Donner pivots and looks over the edge of the basket.

DONNER
Oh, shit!

While they were talking, the balloon has dipped below the clouds.

DONNER
We've been spotted. Get down. So much for my great ideas!

Anne ducks down. Donner crouches next to her and quickly removes a pair of Night Vision Goggles (NVG) from his backpack. He puts it on and peers over the side of the balloon.

POV OF NVG IN GREEN

Soldiers sitting atop a jeep are giving chase and shooting at the balloon --

BACK TO SCENE

Donner ducks again as more bullets rip into the basket and panels.

One pierces the basket, inches from a propane tank and whizzes by Anne. She screams.

Donner must get the balloon down fast. He stands up, grabs the valve cord to release air. The balloon starts to descend quickly.

Donner glances back down towards the ground:

POV OF NVG IN GREEN

A shoulder-fired missile is launched directly at the balloon.

BACK TO SCENE

Donner jumps on top of Anne to cover her --

(CONTINUED)

As the missile strikes the balloon envelope and comes out through the other side.

The basket lurches violently and the envelope catches on fire with a loud WHOOSH.

The balloon starts to plunge towards the ground.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - NIGHT

Several armed soldiers stand guard outside a rectangular tin shack. Light seeps out of a single window protected by bars.

INT. TIN SHACK - CONTINUOUS

A single kerosene lamp hangs from the ceiling casting shadows on the half dozen metal-framed beds, each shared by at least two ADOLESCENT GIRLS. They are all thin, emaciated with various cuts and bruises to their faces, testimony of the abuses they have suffered.

Ashanti lays next to another girl on the bed, the only girl awake. She stares at the ceiling. Her eyes are red. She's been crying.

The sound of a vehicle outside draws her over to the window. Beyond the bars, she sees that a jeep has arrived, carrying several soldiers in fatigues. She recognizes two.

Kusungu and Jacob Zoma.

EXT. PLAINS - NIGHT

The basket strikes the ground hard, tossing Donner and Anne like rag dolls. The burning envelope strikes the grass nearby, setting it ablaze.

Donner and Anne lay motionless. They look dead. But then Donner groans and stirs. He rises with an effort to his feet and limps over to Anne.

She's breathing but unconscious. He tries to shake her awake. She moans and starts to stir.

Suddenly, the propane tanks explode --

Donner is thrown, hard --

(CONTINUED)

He rolls and manages to come back to his feet. Takes a moment to collect himself and rushes over to Anne. She's breathing but unconscious.

The RAT-TAT-TAT of gunfire is getting closer. In the distance, there is the THUD-THUD-THUD of helicopter blades. There's no time to wake Anne. He has to get going before Zoma's soldiers arrive.

Donner locates his NVG, backpack, and Uzi. He puts the NVG on and straps the other items to his back. Then with a GRUNT, he lifts Anne onto his shoulder and starts to run towards the nearby jungle.

INT. TIN SHACK - NIGHT

The door opens abruptly. Kusungu and Jacob walk in, dressed in fatigues. They're both armed.

KUSUNGU

Get up!

Girls start to stir awake, but some are slower than others.

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

I said, get up!

Kusungu walks over and nudges them roughly with his machine gun, waking every girl. Many start to weep and cower away from Kusungu.

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

Line up! Stand at attention!

The girls scramble to obey. They've been through this drill before.

Jacob approaches Ashanti, tips her chin up towards his face.

JACOB

You have become the cause of much
of our troubles. I will have you
for myself soon!

Jacob leans over to kiss Ashanti --

She twists away violently.

Jacob admires her spunk and laughs.

A SOLDIER walks in and approaches Kusungu.

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIER

The truck is ready, Captain.

Kusungu turns back to the girls.

KUSUNGU

Let's go. Now!

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

As Donner rushes into the jungle with Anne, the darkness swallows them up. He has his NVG goggle on to guide him and pushes his way through until he comes to an open space. He sets Anne down gently and tries to catch his breath.

Anne has no visible injuries, except for a bloody nose and soot on her face. She's still out.

Donner kneels down next to her and tries to shake her awake.

DONNER

Anne. Anne, get up!

Anne moans but she won't wake.

Donner retrieves smelling salt from his backpack and holds it under her nose.

Anne stirs suddenly and her eyes pop open. Donner helps her to sit up. He wipes her bloody nose and gives her water to drink.

DONNER

Are you all right? Can you move?

ANNE

It hurts all over.

Overhead, above the canopy of trees that obscures the sky, the THUD-THUD-THUD of a helicopter can be heard as it flies over the jungle. In the distance there is a CRASH of a vehicle making its way towards them.

DONNER

They're coming. We have to move. Let's get you on your feet.

Anne tries to rise with Donner's help. Her legs are unsteady at first, but then she manages to stand on her own.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, gunfire strafes the jungle from overhead. Soldiers are shooting from the helicopter blindly in hopes of striking them. Animals are startled. There is a cacophony of monkey SHRIEKS and the ROAR of distant elephants.

Bullets strike near Donner, missing him by only a few feet.

Donner glances at his GPS and points.

DONNER

We have to go that way.

Donner takes out another pair of NVG goggles and places them over Anne's eyes.

DONNER (CONT.)

Try to keep up with me.

Anne nods.

DONNER (CONT.)

Keep your gun out. Cover my back.

Anne takes her gun out and releases the safety.

Donner pushes the NVG back over his eyes. Without it, it would be very hard for them to make their way through the dark jungle. He also takes out a machete from the backpack and starts to hack his way through the jungle.

Anne follows him close behind, gripping her gun tightly.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - NIGHT

The truck rushes over a rutted road. Behind it, an open-topped jeep follows, with Jacob and Kusungu on board.

The truck hits a pothole --

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The girls scream as the vehicle lurches, shaking them like rag dolls. They have been made to sit on two rows of benches in the back of the truck. Nylon cords have been looped tightly around each of their hands.

TWO ARMED SOLDIERS crowd in among the girls, preventing escape out of the open back.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

POV NVG IN GREEN

Anne follows the green silhouette of Donner's back, breathing heavily. Vines and branches whip past her face and arms, some striking her and drawing blood. She ignores the pain and continues.

BACK TO SCENE

Suddenly, a root snags Anne's foot --

She tries to catch herself, but tumbles forward. Inadvertently, her gun goes off.

Donner whips around, and rushes back to Anne. He lifts her back to her feet, helping her to readjust her NVG.

DONNER

Are you all right?

ANNE

(nods)

Sorry.

DONNER

Just be careful. Let's go.

Donner moves again. Anne follows.

INT./EXT. JEEP - NIGHT

The sound of a gunshot ECHOES through the jungle, above the DIN of animal sounds.

JACOB

Did you hear that?

Kusungu turns from the radio he's been talking into.

KUSUNGU

I've got soldiers chasing them through the jungle. The whole area will be surrounded soon. They won't get away.

JACOB

The dig site?

(CONTINUED)

KUSUNGU

It's secure. The Chinese gave us extra arms and night vision goggles. They want production to continue. Jacob, why go through all of this trouble? We should kill the girls and have done with them.

JACOB

No, they could still prove useful to us.

(grins)

Besides, they are still virgins...

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Donner keeps hacking away, Anne on his tail.

Overhead, the helicopter ZIPS by again, indiscriminately shooting downwards. From behind them, a sudden fusillade of bullets whips past them, tearing up trees and foliage.

It's too close for comfort for Donner. He stops abruptly and pulls Anne behind a large tree with him.

He crouches down, takes aim in the direction they have come from --

And squeezes off a round as SOLDIERS appear.

Two go down. The rest shoot wildly and retreat momentarily.

Donner grabs Anne's hand. They start to run again.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - NIGHT

The truck hits another pothole, a deep one. The TRUCK DRIVER loses control of the vehicle and careens into a tree.

The driver of the jeep behind him slams his brakes, barely avoiding a collision.

Kusungu jumps out of the jeep with a curse. He rushes over to the truck and pulls out the driver roughly and slaps him hard.

KUSUNGU

Idiot!

(CONTINUED)

TRUCK DRIVER

I'm so sorry!

KUSUNGU

Check the vehicle. Find out if you
can still drive it.

Kusungu goes over to Jacob, who is checking the girls in the back.

They are shaken up, but not hurt.

The truck driver comes back to Kusungu. He looks frightened.

DRIVER

Captain, the front axle is
broken. I can't drive the
vehicle. We --

Jacob suddenly pulls a gun from his hip holster and shoots the driver in the chest. He crumples to the ground, dead.

JACOB

I cannot stand incompetence!
(turns to Kusungu)
Get me another truck. I want to
get out this jungle quickly!

Kusungu nods and speaks into his radio.

Jacob pokes his head into the back of the truck.

JACOB

Get out. All of you!

EXT. SKY - DAWN

Clouds are dispersing. Dawn breaks on the horizon. Light spreads out in bright streams and seeps into the jungle.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAWN

Donner and Anne stop to catch their breaths. Sunlight seeps down from overhead. It's easier to see now. They take off their NVGs and put them away in their backpacks.

Donner glances back. The sounds of pursuit can be heard in the distance. He starts to move again. Anne follows.

(CONTINUED)

They push forward for some distance, when Donner halts again. He cocks his ears. There is the sound of voices ahead.

He and Anne creep quietly forward and see:

A truck has crashed into a tree. A dozen girls have been forced to sit on the ground, each tethered by one hand to a long nylon chord. Soldiers stand about idly, Kusungu and Jacob among them.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Jacob paces impatiently. He's not happy. Turns to Kusungu.

JACOB

Why is the truck taking so long? We've got a dozen vehicles at the dig site.

KUSUNGU

They are not troop transporters. I'm having one sent from our garrison. It's coming, Jacob.

JACOB

Where is Anne Martin and the embassy spy? Have your men caught them yet?

KUSUNGU

I will check.

Kusungu starts to talk into his radio.

JUNGLE

Donner and Anne watch quietly from a hiding spot in the thick bush. Anne is about to speak, but Donner places his finger to her lips and shushes her.

She inadvertently takes a steps back and a twig SNAPS under her foot.

Jacob hears the sound and turns sharply in their direction.

Anne and Donner stand frozen, holding their breaths.

Jacob starts to walk in their direction --

His mobile RINGS. He answers it.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB
Hello... father. Yes, yes.
Everything is fine.

While Jacob is momentarily distracted, Donner takes the opportunity to quietly lead Anne away from the spot they've been hiding. They walk parallel to the road until the truck is out of view and quickly cross to the other side, into the jungle. They take a moment to regroup.

ANNE
They have the girls.

DONNER
You have a remarkable ability to
state the obvious.

ANNE
What are we going to do about it?

Donner puts his machete away as the helicopter ZIPS by overhead. Donner watches it fly away and unslings his Uzi.

DONNER
I wish that was your friend
Mimi. Maybe I can pick off some of
the guys with Kusungu, but we've
got soldiers on our back, and the
girls could get caught in the
crossfire. Let's see if Ms. Zoma
is in the neighborhood.

As Donner digs into his pocket for a mobile, a barrage of bullets assails them. He lunges to protect Anne, throwing her down and covering her with his body.

SOLDIER (O.S.)
They are over here!

Donner grabs Anne's hand and tries to run --

But it's too late.

Soldiers rush towards them. Jacob is among them.

JACOB
I knew it!

Donner raises his gun to fire --

Other soldiers emerge from behind him -- the group that had been given them chase. Before he can fire, he and Anne are tackled to the ground and disarmed.

(CONTINUED)

MOMENTS LATER

Hands tied behind their backs, Jack and Anne are led back to the accident site, where the girls and Kusungu await.

Jacob beams when he sees Kusungu.

JACOB

I told you I heard something. I
have very sharp ears!

KUSUNGU

Ha! The helicopter spotted them!

Ashanti -- who is sitting on the ground with her hand bound -- rises in surprise when she sees Anne. The brief flash of hope is extinguished when she sees that they've been captured.

A soldier tries to push Ashanti back down. Jacob turns to him.

JACOB

No, bring her over here!

Ashanti is untied from the nylon chord and led over to Jacob. He grasps her firmly by the shoulders and leans down to speak into her ear.

JACOB

I want you to watch closely and see
what is done to trouble makers.
(to soldiers behind Donner and
Anne)
Get them on their knees!

Anne and Donner are forced down onto their knees. Ashanti exchanges glances with Anne and starts to weep.

Jacob withdraws his gun from his holster and approaches Anne and Donner.

EXT. SKY

An UH-1N TWIN HUEY HELICOPTER punches through the sky. It's painted a drab gray, but has no identifying military markings. Rockets are mounted on stub-wings attached to the chopper's fuselage. Gatling gun pokes out from both sides of the open cabin doors.

INT. HUEY

Mimi sits next to the PILOT. Behind her, in the cabin, are TWO MERCENARIES. They've got military buzz cuts, but wear no identifying uniforms. They man electrically-operated multi-barrel gatling guns at booth doors.

Mimi turns to the pilot.

MIMI

Can we get mobile reception up here?

The pilot nods.

Mimi gets her phone out and dials a number.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD

Jacob presses the gun to the back of Donner's head, then to Anne's, then back to Donner's head. He's playing with them.

JACOB

Who should I kill first? I can't decide.

Suddenly, Jacob turns around and places the gun to the center of Anne's forehead.

JACOB (CONT.)

It will be you first. You started all the trouble.

Donner wants to help Anne, but the soldier behind him pushes him roughly down to the ground with his booted foot.

Anne closes her eyes, steeling herself... as Jacob starts to squeeze the trigger --

Suddenly a mobile RINGS.

Jacob stops and glances down. It's Donner's phone.

Jacob turns to Kusungu.

KUSUNGU

Answer it.

Kusungu retrieves it and answers it.

(CONTINUED)

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

Hello?

(listens, eyes suddenly become
wide)

Mimi?

INT. HUEY

Mimi snaps her phone shut. Turns to the pilot.

MIMI

How much further?

The pilot points out through the windshield.

PILOT

There it is.

POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Below them, a few miles away is the jungle.

PILOT (CONT.)

I will not land unless he has the
photos and video. Those are my
orders from Mr. Isoke.

BACK TO SCENE

MIMI

Hurry!

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD

Kusungu grabs Donner by his hair and lifts him up to his
feet.

KUSUNGU

Why is my wife calling you,
cockroach?

DONNER

She dumped you. Didn't you get the
message?

Kusungu punches Donner hard, busting his lips.

KUSUNGU

Tell me!

Donner grins, displaying bloody teeth.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

She said that you were a rotten lover.

KUSUNGU

Bastard!

DONNER

Your momma.

Kusungu loses his cool and starts to pummel Donner. Some of the blows are cushioned by Donner's flack jacket, but he scores a number of solid blows. Still, Donner remains on his feet. Defiant.

KUSUNGU (CONT.)

Where is Mimi?

Donner remains tight-lipped.

JACOB

He will need some persuasion to speak, Nelson. We can do nasty things to Miss Anne until he talks.

Just then, the REPLACEMENT TROOP CARRYING TRUCK arrives.

KUSUNGU

I want to take them back to dig site. We'll question them there.

INT. HUEY

POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

They are over the jungle. In the distance, they see a Soviet Hind gunship with military markings, zig zagging over the jungle.

BACK TO SCENE

PILOT

That is a military helicopter. They will give us resistance. I don't think they have spotted us yet.

MIMI

Then attack them quickly.

The pilot turns back towards the cargo bay.

(CONTINUED)

PILOT

Get ready!

He presses the joystick forward. The helicopter zooms ahead.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD

Kusungu and Jacob's jeep follows the troop truck as it makes its way towards the dig site.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Donner and Anne are squeezed into the rear with the girls and two soldiers. Anne sits across from him, next to Ashanti.

Anne looks at Donner.

ANNE

Are you OK?

Donner grins, displaying bloody teeth.

DONNER

At least he didn't knock out my dentures.

A soldier glances sharply at them.

SOLDIER

No talking!

Donner's hands are tied behind his back, like Anne. All the girls are bound now, except Ashanti. They had forgotten to tie her hands.

The truck lurches suddenly.

Ashanti comes into Donner's lap, giving her a view of his bonds. A length of nylon rope secures his wrist, but one pull and he'd be free.

DONNER

Ashanti, dear, the next time that happens, itch my wrists, will you?

The truck lurches again; but it's not a big one. However, Donner purposely shifts in his seat, exposing his wrists to her again.

(CONTINUED)

DONNER

See how red they are? Just
pull. OK?

SOLDIER

What are you talking about? I said
no talking!

The soldier kicks Donner in the shin. Donner gives him a
murderous look and shuts up.

But Ashanti has gotten the message. She nods imperceptibly
to Donner.

EXT. SKY

The Huey makes a beeline for the Hind gunship. While the
Hind has superior firepower, the Huey has the element of
surprise. It come up behind the Hind and fires two rockets
--

The Hind banks sharply right at the last moment --

The first rocket misses but the second nicks a landing
skid. The chopper spins in the sky, but the pilot regains
control. He tries to do a loop and comes around, firing
full throttle --

The door gunner from the Huey unloads his gatling gun and
strafes the Hind in mid-turn, nicking the rotor blades --

The Hind starts to gyrate wildly in the sky.

INT. TRUCK

The truck hits another rut in the road, lurches violently.

Donner turns his wrist to Ashanti as she lurches forward --

Ashanti quickly pulls the nylon cord tying Donner's wrists,
releasing him.

She and Donner fall back in their seats. The soldiers
haven't noticed a thing.

EXT. DIG SITE

A huge swath of the jungle is exposed like a gaping wound. Worker quarters, barracks, a mess hall and other support buildings have been built. Great heaps of earth have been torn up. Digging and processing equipment are being manned by BLACK and CHINESE LABORERS under the guidance of CHINESE SUPERVISORS. Watching over them all are ARMED SOLDIERS.

As a TROOP TRUCK enters the dig site --

A HIND GUNSHIP tumbles out of the sky. It strikes a tree and cartwheels --

The truck banks sharply trying to avoid it.

Behind it, a JEEP turns sharply.

The truck overturns --

The jeep slams into a bank of earth --

The chopper misses both vehicles, but slams into an ore processor and explodes into a huge fireball.

INT. HUEY

Mimi looks down at the dig site and sees the explosion.

As the smoke clears, she spots Donner crawling out of the back of the overturned truck, followed by a soldier who tries to grab him.

Donner kicks the man in the head, grabs his gun and shoots him. When another soldier emerges, he shoots him also.

Donner crawls back into the truck and starts to pull out girls, including Anne.

Mimi turns to the pilot.

MIMI
Land quickly. I see them!

EXT. DIG SITE

There is bedlam everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

While one gun operator in the Huey provides cover for Donner, Anne and the girls, the other mercenary specifically targets the machinery, clearly intent on destroying as much of the dig site as possible.

A fuel truck is hit and explodes in a huge ball of fire. Workers and supervisors scatter. Soldiers return fire.

NEAR THE OVERTURNED JEEP

Kusungu and Jacob have been thrown from their vehicle. They get back to their feet, shaken but unhurt. They spot Donner and Anne running with the girls towards the chopper and give chase --

They fire a few scattered shots at their fleeing backs, but have to dive and dodge the hail of bullets from the gatling gun. But then the gun overheats and stalls --

Giving them the opportunity to fire openly.

AT THE HELICOPTER

Mimi is out of the cockpit. She tries to help the girls into the cabin as soon as they arrive -- but the mercenary stops them.

MERCENARY

Mr. Isoke said you must get us the photos first.

Mimi looks ready to murder the man, but turns to Anne as soon as she arrives.

MIMI

Do you have the photos? They won't let you onto the copter unless you have them.

Anne turns to Donner, who is twenty yards away on his knees, providing cover, returning Jacob's and Kusungu's fire.

ANNE

Jack! The CD.

Donner glances back.

ANNE

They won't let us on without the pictures!

Donner seems to understand. He gets back on his feet, backpedaling towards the chopper, while returning fire --

(CONTINUED)

Jacob is hit in the arm and tumbles.

But Kusungu keeps coming, still firing --

Donner returns fire with one hand and removes the photo CD with the other from his flack jacket --

Ten yards for the chopper, he trips and falls. The CD flies out his hand. Anne runs... retrieves it... gives it to the mercenary and jumps on board with the girls.

Donner has lost his AK-47. Kusungu has a clear shot at Jack and shoots --

Donner rolls and avoids the burst of gunfire. Then lunges and misses next hail of bullets.

Suddenly, Kusungu is hit and falls onto his knees. He is shocked to see his wife with an AK in her hand.

Mimi has retrieved Donner's gun. She meets her husband's eyes and shoots him again. He falls back dead.

Donner is back on his feet, but limping. With Mimi's help, they pile into the chopper cabin.

MIMI
(to pilot)
Go!

A soldier runs towards the chopper, fires a shoulder-fired Stinger missile at it --

The chopper pilot jerks the stick back, lifting the chopper abruptly into the sky.

CHOPPER CABIN

Anne screams, lurches back and falls out of the cabin and onto ground.

The chopper keeps going, leaving her behind.

ON THE GROUND

Anne is shaken, but not seriously hurt. The fall was not very far. She tries to rise --

When a strong, black hand lifts her roughly to her feet.

JACOB
I have you!

CHOPPER CABIN

(CONTINUED)

Donner looks down and sees Anne being dragged away by Jacob. He shouts at the pilot.

DONNER

Land! Land! We have to get her!

But the pilot ignores him. He's got the CD and keen on getting away as fast as possible. He starts to lift the chopper higher.

Donner spots a coil of rope. He quickly ties it around the cabin door handle, grabs it tightly and leaps out --

ON THE GROUND

Jacob pushes Anne into the jungle at gun point.

CHOPPER

Jack swings wildly from the chopper, holding desperately onto the nylon rope. If he doesn't let go soon, it'll be too high to jump.

Jack spots a sizable pool of water - created out of a man-made pit. The helicopter is rising fast, but as it gets near, he jumps --

JUNGLE

Jacob's left arm is bleeding where the bullet hit him, but he can handle the pain. Anne tries to run --

He grabs her hair, pulling her head back and jabs his AK into her back. She YELPS out in pain.

JACOB

I swear, I'll shoot you!

He shoves Anne forward. She doesn't resist.

POOL

Donner lands with a huge splash and disappears...

Then breaks the surface again. He swims to the edge and gets out. He's unarmed and limping but that doesn't stop him from running towards the jungle at full tilt.

JUNGLE

Jacob swears vehemently as he presses Anne forward.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

I will make you pay!

He seems to have no particular direction in mind and wants to get away with Anne as fast as possible.

But he's tiring. The pain in his arm is finally getting to him. He's lost a lot of blood.

He pauses to catch his breath. He forces Anne down onto her stomach, steps on her back and withdraws his mobile phone --

When Donner suddenly bursts onto the scene and rushes him.

Jacob fires his AK instinctively --

A spray of bullets hits Donner across the chest and arm. He windmills and hits the ground.

Donner MOANS on the ground. The flack jacket stopped the bullets hitting his chest, but his left shoulder's been hit and bleeding pretty badly.

Jacob raises his AK to finish Donner off --

Anne suddenly bucks, throwing Jacob off balance. The bullets rip into the foliage.

When Anne tries to rise back onto her feet --

Jacob strikes her in the head with the butt of his AK and knocks back down.

Jacob turns back to Donner --

But he's not there.

Jacob starts to spin around and shoot indiscriminately --

Donner comes out of the brush and rushes him from behind. The AK goes flying, as they both go tumbling to the ground.

It becomes a wrestling match, two bears clawing away at each other. One man on top, the other below, then on top again. Although both of them have been injured, Donner's wound is much more serious and soon Jacob straddles him, both hands at his throat. He squeezes with all of his might --

CHOPPER

It zips over the jungle, picking up speed.

(CONTINUED)

Mimi turns to the pilot

MIMI
Turn the helicopter around!

The pilot shakes his head.

PILOT
No. It's too dangerous!

MIMI
I said turn around!

The pilot ignores her.

Mimi withdraws a handgun from her pocket and points it at the pilot.

PILOT
If you kill me, we will all die.

Mimi puts the muzzle to the man's groin.

MIMI
I don't have to kill you.

JUNGLE

Jacob keeps squeezing Donner's neck with all of his might. Donner can't get the grip loose. He's drained of blood, strength totally sapped. His face is turning blue.

Jacob grins. He's going to win --

Bullet's suddenly stitch Jacob. His head explodes in a mass of brain matter. He falls back dead.

Anne throws down the AK and rushes to Donner.

CHOPPER

It hovers high above the dig site, which has become a charred ruin. Many have scattered, but soldiers remain and fire indiscriminately up at the chopper

The pilot zigs and zags trying to avoid the bullets.

PILOT
We're going to be hit! I can't stay here!

Mimi searches the dig below for evidence of Donner and Anne. There is none.

(CONTINUED)

The pilot banks sharply, avoiding another Stinger.

Mimi withdraws the gun from the man's crotch.

MIMI

Go.

The pilot starts to push the stick forward.

MIMI

Stop! There they are!

BELOW

Two people emerge out of the jungle. Anne supports an injured Donner, who is bleeding badly.

The chopper swoops down and lands, a single gatling gun providing cover.

Mimi rushes out and helps Donner and Anne into the open cabin.

CHOPPER CABIN

Mimi shouts at the pilot.

MIMI

Go!

The chopper lurches into the sky.

EXT. ISOKE ELECTION HQ - NIGHT

LEGEND: SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

MONTAGE

PEOPLE dancing in the street.

Posters of former President Zoma being torn down, including a statue of him being toppled.

The newly-elected PRESIDENT ISOKE on stage behind a podium, waving to a CROWD OF THOUSANDS, ready to give a victory speech.

BACK TO

Ted Collier, the CNN reporter, reports live from Isoke's campaign HQ.

(CONTINUED)

COLLIER

Something rare has happened in a region often given to brutal autocracy. Power has been peacefully transferred to a civilian, just weeks after an army massacre of a village that recalled the worst of Africa's past. At the risk of facing an international tribunal for crimes against humanity, former-President Lawrence Zoma has fled the country, reportedly with billions. The swift and unexpected turn of events has surprised the population, who wonder warily if the new president can actually deliver democracy in a country that has never truly known it.

INSERT

Pictures the village massacre and the Chinese dig site in the jungle, followed by:

Video of the same two locations.

BACK TO COLLIER

COLLIER (CONT.)

The turning point in the race was the surprising release of photos and video of a village massacre near a Chinese-operated dig site. It was sponsored by former-president Zoma, who has often been accused of bleeding this resource-rich country dry as his cohorts enriched themselves. After the release of the photos and video, the Chinese have back-tracked on further investments in this country and taken many of their workers back home. The people have risen up to protect the nation's resources and elect a different leader. Mufe Isoke who is about to speak now...

ISOKE

Thank you! Thank you! My people, we have a historic mission to give our country, for the first time,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ISOKE (cont'd)
 democratic institutions and to let
 its native people benefit from the
 bountiful riches beneath its
 soil. I pledge to you today...

EXT. FGM CLINIC - DAY

LEGEND: SEVERAL MONTH LATER

The newly-built structure is not large, but it's
 solid. It's located at the edge of a shanty town.

A billboard outside has a picture of a grinning President
 Isoke. It proclaims:

OUR DAUGHTER'S ARE OUR FUTURE... WE SHOULD NEVER HURT
 THEM! HELP UNICEF TO STOP FGM!

INT. FGM CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

The room is set up like a classroom. There are rows of
 desks in front of a chalkboard.

YOUNG GIRLS sit behind the desks. Ashanti stands at the
 head of the class, speaking to the girls. Mimi, Anne and
 Roger stand to the side and watch.

ASHANTI

You all must remember how our
 friend Nafisa died and how horrible
 that death was. This clinic will
 educate us, and we will go out
 among our many villages and talk to
 other young girls about how hurtful
 FGM is to us. We have to do our
 level best to stop this practice,
 which has killed so many of our
 sisters. We will talk to mothers
 and fathers, and we will try to
 convince them that their daughters
 are precious and should not be
 mutilated. Will you do this with
 me?

YOUNG GIRLS

Yes!

ASHANTI

WILL YOU DO THIS WITH ME?

The girls rise to their feet.

(CONTINUED)

GIRLS

YES!!!

The girls CLAP as Ashanti walks away and is congratulated by Anne, Mimi and Roger.

Donner has quietly listened to Ashanti from the back of the room. He approaches them.

DONNER

Wow, that was great. You have a future leader here!

Ashanti flushes in embarrassment.

ANNE

Yeah, she's great isn't she?

DONNER

She knows how to capture an audience, that's for sure.

ROGER

I hope she runs for president someday. She can't do worse than the ones so far.

ANNE

Jack, we're training these girls to be our voice. They'll go out to villages to speak to other girls their age about the horrors of FGM. In fact, it was Ashanti who came up with the idea. She's full of bright ideas.

MIMI

We have a saying in Africa. If you teach a boy, you educate an individual. If you teach a girl, you educate a community.

(puts an arm around Ashanti)

Let me introduce you to my new daughter. I have adopted her. I will find parents for all of the girls -- and we will also educate them.

DONNER

That's great! I gather from the sign outside, Isoke is on board?

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

He's providing funding to UNICEF. Thank Christ for small mercies, eh?

ANNE

Mimi was able to extract some promises out of him -- and money. He's committed to erecting a number of clinics around the country to educate girls about FGM and provide basic health care. This place is the first of, I hope, many.

MIMI

It could not have been done without you and Anne. You have done a great service to our country. You should be lauded as heroes.

Ashanti grabs Anne's arm.

ASHANTI

She is my hero.

ROGER

(to Donner)

From what I understand, she's cut from the same cloth as you. She's no shirking violet, that's for sure. Have you asked her out yet?

ANNE

Stop it, Roger.

Donner winks at Roger.

DONNER

Come on, Annie, let's get away from our adoring fans for a bit.

EXT. FGM CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

Donner and Anne stand outside. She touches his shoulder.

ANNE

How's the arm?

DONNER

My dreams of being a big league pitcher are shattered. Luckily, I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DONNER (cont'd)
can still shoot a gun. It's a
requirement in Africa.

ANNE
You're still working for that three
letter acronym?

DONNER
Well... they've put me on
leave. It seems I leaked some
pictures and videos that they
wanted to keep under wraps. Maybe
I should try something else for a
while. Are you hiring?

ANNE
I'm sorry to hear that.

DONNER
I'm serious. I want to go out to
these villages and help you. I
know this country. I'll drive you
and I'll make sure nobody messes
with you.

ANNE
If you're still interested next
week, you're hired.

Donner tentatively touches Anne's arm.

DONNER
I do have an ulterior motive, you
know. It'll give me the chance to
spend more time with you.

ANNE
Then you should ask me out.

Donner smiles.

DONNER
I still owe you that balloon ride.
(beat)
Without the gunfire, of course.

EXT. SKY - DAY

A HOT AIR BALLOON hovers in a blue sky dotted with puffy, white clouds.

The plains below are teeming with ANIMALS.

INT./EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - CONTINUOUS

Anne stares at the distant mountain peak that fills up the horizon. It's breath taking.

Donner points below.

Thousands of PINK FLAMINGOS take flight along the banks of a lake.

Then on the plains beyond, they spot GIRAFFES, ZEBRAS, GAZELLES, ELEPHANTS and LIONS running ahead of a huge migration of --

WILDEBEEESTS.

Thousands and thousands of them.

Africa is glorious in its beauty.

Donner takes Anne in his arms and kisses her. She doesn't resist.

FADE OUT.