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CREATIVE PROJECT AND DISSERTATION FOR COMPLETION OF MASTERS
DEGREE IN MEDIA THEORY AND PRACTICE
FAM5012W

“Schedule 7”
A 12-part hour-long slot Television Series

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SCHEDULE 7

Series Bible
By Elsa Glenn

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1. In a Nutshell

Name: SCHEDULE 7
12 x 1 hour drama/comedy television series
English

COMMERCIAL TAGLINES

"They need something stronger."

"Faith like a pharmaceutical."

"Let go, let GOGO."

STORY TAGLINE

Four young South Africans from a psychiatric hospital nearly burn to death. GOGO, the god of goodness only, saves them - or at least in some of their heads.

DRAMATIC QUESTION

What happens when some chronically troubled young adults hitting glass rock bottom after glass rock bottom believe the 'God of Goodness Only' has saved them?

STORY QUESTION

Is GOGO leading them along the path to true recovery, or have they really lost their way?

2. Setting

SunValley Centre for Mental Health is located in an old bed and breakfast building in Muizenberg on the south peninsula of Cape Town. It's a non-government organisation to house and treat people with mental illness. It's near the sea, charming and undergoing de-dilapidation.

The centre has been created in response to the rapidly rising number of diagnoses of mental illness, which government hospitals and medical aids aren't able to treat. Rumours of violence and neglect in government hospitals abound, and even the best medical aids cover a limited period of time in the expensive private facilities.

Olivia Henshall, a clinical psychologist and researcher, has brought forward the model of SunValley, which she hypothesises, can get even the chronically disabled sufferers of mental illness sustainably functional again.

The SunValley concept works as a combination of psychiatric hospital and secondary care facility. Patients stay as long as they need and are slowly made to participate in some kind of community work or service. Olivia's further hope is that by building relationships between the centre and the community, the taboos around mental illness will start to diminish too. The centre's success will be in its focus on getting patients gradually but sustainably functioning in a professional capacity again, using community work as 'training' (as well as the usual therapies).

At least, that's the concept that was sold to the investors who've funded SunValley. In practice, the place is stuck in a bit of a groundhog day of psychological and logistic crisis management. Not only are patients not working in the community, but the neighbourhood is hostile to the centre's very presence.

Olivia and her colleagues have to work with volunteers who at times require more supervision than the patients themselves as well as appease 'The Board' who soon lowers the boom in terms of the unmet community work commitments and throws the patients and staff under huge pressure to begin the community service programme. Neither the staff nor the patients are pleased with this.

The patients are from all over Cape Town and potentially other parts of South Africa. The only criteria for admission are that their medical aid won't cover other treatment and that they are able to coexist peacefully with their fellow patients.

There is a small emergency facility for patients requiring intensive supervision in cases of psychotic, manic or self-harming episodes, but patients in these conditions are sent on to specialist facilities. Most of the patients receiving treatment at SunValley suffer from mood and personality disorders rather than psychosis.

The patients have mixed feelings about the clinic. On the one hand, it's a place of respite from whatever looms outside: Family politics, relationships, living arrangements, work, bills and the like are held at bay. Most patients are grateful for the sense of community, support and hope at a fresh chance. On the other hand, the endless rules, being 'treated like children' and the constant reminder of being a 'patient' are expressly resented at times. Misery may love company, but Misery prefers to wear the pants in the relationship.

SunValley's building and grounds are in a constant ebb and flow of low budget renovation and maintenance work. The surrounding community and neighbourhoods are a mix of retirees, hippies, families and fishermen.

3. Characters

MAIN PATIENTS

Hannah Osei-Mensah - The 'Zombie'

Age: 34

From: Originally Ghana but grew up mostly in the eastern cape

Hannah's main activity is sleeping, which she can do anytime, anywhere. Even standing. When awake, she fixates on her iPhone (which is disguised as an 'affirmations cards' box, as cell phone usage is strictly regulated in the clinic). She stalks the peers of her past on Facebook, torturing herself with whatever signs of fame, fortune, love, offspring, adventure, beauty or Noble Achievements may be posted. If not asleep, an occasional cynical observation may betray her listening to the conversation at hand. Sometimes she'll even have a strong opinion about something and wax lyrical a bit, perhaps letting what's left of the frustrated performer out. Mostly, she's given up on herself: her acute self-awareness and cynicism have gradually made her prisoner in a jungle of Paralysis of Analysis, which she's stopped trying to escape. With a string of half-finished undergraduate degrees, short-lived attempts at any coherent career, equally short-lived relationships, no financial assets or children, she feels a failure to her hard-working, older siblings and elderly academic parents, who've laboured to provide for a life they were not afforded.

Hannah is the only one of the original four who does not experience a revelation of the 'God of Goodness Only' (GOGO) in episode one. She watches the others suspiciously and with mixed feelings as they pursue GOGO over the course of the series. At times she plays devil's advocate, just for the hell of it.

She has been diagnosed with 'major depression' and 'generalised anxiety'

Her appearance, once an eclectic mixture of ghetto-fabulous, intellectual, Ghanaian (and occasional nods at other sub-cultures), has devolved into a slovenly and uncared for sight, though retaining some last dregs of self-awareness and irony (who knew you could rock a Pep store track suit ironically and without trying). We like her because she's funny, smart and insightful and will call it like she sees it

Her studies and career endeavours have ranged from English, Anthropology, Journalism, Interior Design, Politics, Film and

Fashion. Having to admit defeat in the pursuit of the meaningful, satisfying, socially impacting job, she now has to pick something and stick with it long enough to make an income to afford the middle-class lifestyle she's accustomed to. iPhone says no.

Hannah's Character Arc:

Hannah's greatest need is to escape escaping, break free from the paralysis of analysis and just do something - anything. Whilst accompanying Michaela, Paul and Jamilah over the course of the series, she starts to grow in the freedom to act, partly because they get so much wrong and yet seem to be getting 'better' nonetheless, and partly because they seem to be having more fun. At the end of the first season, it is her decisive action that prevents further disaster.

Michaela Randall

Age: 28

From: Belgravia

At heart, Michaela is a sharp-tongued, straight talking, streetwise pragmatist. But necessity being the mother of invention means she is also a social chameleon. Her work personalities include the dumb hired hand, the resourceful, motivated employee, the eloquent distinguished up-and-comer and the sexy not-completely unavailable vamp. Her family personas include the well-behaved, conservative young lady (to her grandparents), the 'cool' grown-up to her younger cousins and the maternal figure to her disabled younger sister.

She likes to relive versions of her life and self from more hopeful days, though over time we realise her version of events don't always add up. She often steps into any of these personas in the clinic, but mostly she's a sharp-tongued, to the point, somewhat bossy, compassionate pragmatist. In her depression, she watches an endless amount of American TV, which warps her sense of reality accordingly.

Her entrance into the clinic was prompted by a sex-video of her and a colleague being leaked to her office, clients and conservative family. She also has various real but atypical long-standing physical illnesses. She brought her disabled sister up from a young age and went through a lot of abuse as a child, which we never discover the details of. She is currently depressed and has been diagnosed with 'bipolar'. Towards the end of the season, we see a more manic side of her.

Michaela's Character Arc:

Michaela's encounter with GOGO and her closeness and sense of united purpose with Jamilah, Paul and Hannah help her to recover. Michaela's need to be in control is part of what destroys her friendship with the group. Separation from the others and the further distress of her disabled sister being removed from her care drive Michaela to a manic, delusional and destructive state towards the end of the first season.

Paul Louw**Age: 26****From: Meadowridge**

Paul is the charming, funny, disarming, androgynous rebel of questionable sexual orientation who has been through rehab for a range of drug abuses and since his last admission has been diagnosed with bipolar and ADHD. He makes his living working as a waiter or with odd jobs, occasionally working on various art projects. Never malicious, he struggles to say 'no' and to obey the rules. At best, a bright and fresh presence with zany sparkly and, at times, brilliant ideas and, at worst, a self-destructive force of nature.

Paul is the adopted child of a conservative Afrikaans family. He has a younger brother, who is his parents' biological child and the Isaac to his Ismael-dom.

Character Arc

Paul's perceived respect from GOGO leads him to respect himself and the other patients. His childish consistent tomfoolery begins to give way to a more solid, adult persona. Paul really seems to have grown up, when his break up with Alexandria and resultant insecurity lead to him relapsing and regressing into childish behaviour.

Jamilah Noordien**Age: 20****From: Lansdowne**

Jamilah is neat, quiet, shy, anxious, considerate, hard working and eager to please. On the down side, she can be extremely passive aggressive if she feels her kindnesses are not being reciprocated, usually by going into victim mode with some drama.

Jamilah is the youngest child and only daughter of a low-income family. She works in an administrative position for

Ackerworths. Her behaviour and performance at work have reached the point where she has been given the choice to go into a psychiatric facility or face dismissal. Her stressors include the financial strain on her family and her middle brother who is a drug addict and in serious trouble with the law. She is particularly attached to her controlling mother. Her oldest brother works for the police, and his contacts prove helpful in the series. She has been admitted to the clinic for panic attacks and a suspected overdose and is also borderline anorexic.

Jamilah's Character arc

Like the others, Jamilah has some aspects of "it gets worse before it gets better". She soon begins to think for herself and take responsibility for her own beliefs. (In Episode 3 'Cat People' she carries out her own plan for dealing with the crooks, which is a change from her usual servile attitude). However, Jamilah is not very good with middle ground. After this brief flirtation with independence, she goes back to largely following the others, especially Michaela, which leads to disastrous consequences at the end of the season.

OTHER PATIENTS

Lindy

Age: Forty something

From her successful recruitment business, to her expensive car, her teenage daughter's private schooling, her meticulously sustained figure, Lindy is an A-plus-chiever. She thinks in black and white, has a pretty limited sense of humour and likes to run the show. Her husband describes her as 'controlling' and 'uptight'. So does almost everyone else. The stress of her A-type personality lifestyle and the downward spiral of her business in the last 18 months were winding the already tense little fiddle tauter, but her husband leaving her snapped the strings. She's lost her business and medical aid, and has thus been transferred to this centre for down and out type psych patients. When Jamilah tells Lindy GOGO wants her to stop taking the newly prescribed medication, Lindy does her homework and finds out the medication is dangerous for pregnant women. A pregnancy test reveals she is pregnant (and the medication incompatible.) She leaves the clinic convinced of GOGO's existence and goodness shortly thereafter.

Kelly

Age: mid-twenties

She and Paul are archenemies so she functions as the main patient antagonist force. Kelly is petty and pedantic and doesn't like rules being broken (or anything not going her

way). She is always ready to 'tell on' our protagonists if she catches them breaking a rule. That said, she's not malicious and at times can be very generous.

Guy

Age: Early 20s

Psychosis. In intensive observation. Occasionally escapes and acts out strange delusions (or parallel realities). Provides humour, tragedy and dramatic warning.

Chad Ibrahim

Age: 30 something

Loving, faithful, responsible, devoted, funny, friendly, intelligent, hard working husband and father. Supports the maxim that the normal people are in mental health facilities and everyone outside is nuts.

Carol-Lee

Age: 40ish

Single mother of four, head of her division at work and moonlights as a dominatrix. She's booked into the clinic because she's utterly exhausted of having to manage everyone around hers life for them and make decisions on their behalf. She just wants someone to make the decisions for her for a while.

Sindiwe Hlophe

Age: Mid-40s

Unpredictable mood wise. Spend whole days crying and may be heard shrieking with joy or dancing. Loves those meaningful, uplifting picture slogan memes, which she shares with Hannah who uses them for her fake affirmation card collection.

Miles

Age: Late 50s

We don't really know what's wrong with him except that he's extremely slow and doesn't pick up on social cues. His complexion suggests alcohol abuse may have something to do with it. Makes hugely inappropriate statements at times (racist, sexist etc.), which he doesn't seem to realise are off sides.

STAFF

Olivia Henshall
Clinical Psychologist
Age: 38-45

Olivia is the extremely intuitive and insightful founder of SunValley. SunValley is her 'baby'. She's not very business or investor-minded, but there is more to her than meets the eye. She is capable of some pretty crazy Jedi-mind tricks on patients and staff alike.

The arrival of Sandile is unpleasant for her on many fronts: firstly because he threatens her status and role at SunValley, secondly because despite their wide age gap there's a lot of chemistry.

Sandile Ntshinga
Executive manager
Age: 28-35

"The Board" brings in Sandile in a desperate last bid for SunValley to meet their contractual requirements. Sandile is smart, handsome, business-minded and a good judge of character, and he knows it. At the same time, he is aware of the lofty ground on which he stands and is afraid of 'peaking too soon'. Despite being relatively young and inexperienced in the NGO mental health field, his variety of skills help SunValley stay open.

Alexandria Browne
General Volunteer
Age: Mid 20s

Hannah refers to Alexandria as "the NGO Ho". Resident white do-gooder, cause junkie and tertiary education addict. Counselling/psychology qualification makes her useful for facilitating groups, but she also runs numerous other activities (including feminine spirituality workshop, art therapy classes and patient/community rock-climbing initiative). Olivia eventually coaxes her into being a patient. Alexandria thinks this is to help her ethnographic study of mental illness patients, but that's not entirely the case. She becomes close to Paul through rock-climbing and they become romantically involved with some disastrous consequences.

Luella Malan
Occupational Therapist (OT)
Age: 30-40

In practice, she runs most of the show. She can be outright aggressive and confrontational. She keeps advising Hubrecht (see below): "Never show fear, never show surprise." She's an antagonist figure, as she's generally highly disliked by all the patients. She particularly has it in for Hannah, who gets embarrassing video footage of her at a club. Luella is intent on stealing this back. When she does so at the end of Season One, she finds other video footage to dismiss Hannah and the others from the clinic.

'Mavis' Asanda Bhongela
Maid and general 'help'
Age: 60

Ubiquitous gogo: travels far daily, through gangster terrain, train strikes and rabid taxi drivers to get to work and provide for her endless extended family on her small salary. Respected pillar of her larger community. Comes across as sullen and unfriendly to the patients, who generally dislike her. Becomes significant character towards the end of the series when Michaela believes she is recruiting children for child prostitution.

'Peter' Ndlovu
Gardener/Maintenance man
Age: 60ish

He takes over from Moon and soon develops into a low-key mentor figure to the group. He keeps a dog for Jamilah in exchange for her helping his grandson, Zandile, with his schoolwork. Despite his far more traditional and 'rural' upbringing than his grandson, he has far less patriarchal ideas surrounding gender.

Zandile
Gardener's son
Age: 20

The clinic has allowed him to come and stay with his maternal grandfather in the clinic's 'granny flat' (or, 'servant quarters') due to problems at his mother's home in Philippi. He's doing matric, which he's struggling with. His major obstacle is that he doesn't respond well to female authority figures. Alexandria has given up trying to tutor him. Peter senses that Jamilah has the tact (or cunning. Or advanced manipulation skills) it will take to help him. Zandile and

Jamilah become quite close as she manages to help him with his schoolwork.

Nolusindiso Msindwana

Head Nurse

Age: Beauty has no age

She is rarely seen and plays second fiddle to 'Nurse' (Vanessa). She's beautiful, grumpy and treats all patients like they're children or mad idiots.

Vanessa Hendriks

Nurse

Age: Late 50s

She's kind and loving and may absent-mindedly mother one to death.

Thembaletu Mzimba

Male Nurse

Age: 28-35

He appears towards the end of the first season. He works in Intensive Observation. Word has it that *Top Billing* tried to recruit him to be the new black Michael Mol, but his passion for nursing was too important to him (plus he thinks television, especially *Top Billing*, is shallow). Gentle yet strong, intelligent yet humble, beautiful yet straight. Let all women near and far, young and old, bow our heads for a moment and give thanks.

Moon Matthews

Landscape Architect Student Like, totally from Cape Town

Age: early 20s

Moon volunteers at SunValley during the first few episodes.

Hubrecht Tunneson

Dutch OT Student/Trainee

Age: early 20s

Hubrecht arrives when Alexandria leaves the staff. He's one of those spectacular failures of teacher authority figures that just can't control a class or group. A total walkover; he is constantly terrified. In one of the episodes, the rest of the staff role-plays leading a group in the staff room to help him.

4. Stories

The series works with stories spanning the whole series, stories spanning multiple episodes and stories contained within single episodes.

Series Arc: The GOGO group

The main story arc is about whether the group can stick together and find redemption through their GOGO experience. The arc looks something like this:

Setup

Jamilah is brought by her parents to be admitted into the "SunValley Centre for Mental Health". Despite being thrust into a non-governmental psychiatric hospital, the atmosphere is lively and hopeful. As Jamilah meets Hannah, Paul and Michaela, we learn that the stakes for them remaining in the clinic and receiving treatment are high: they have all reached a desperate low and the centre is their hope for a way out. (Michaela faces going to live on the street, a drug relapse on Paul's part will lose him a chance at a dreamed about photographic internship and Hannah will be shipped back to live with her parents in Ghana with the triple disgrace of being without husband, child or successful education. Jamilah's employer has told her if she doesn't complete a psychiatric program she will be dismissed.)

The Centre itself is in the midst of a funding crisis and is given an ultimatum: execute the patient volunteer programme, or close. Overnight patients are sent off on various volunteer projects aimed at reintegrating them into working life, despite a concerning (if not illegal) lack of supervision.

Inciting Incident

Jamilah, Michaela, Paul and Hannah are adverse to community work and their chances of getting 'terminated' grow. Alexandria helps them out and arranges a dog walking activity through the local animal shelter. When one of the dogs bites Jamilah and escapes, Jamilah, Michaela and Paul disobey all instruction and chase after it. Hannah is sent to fetch them.

Jamilah, Paul and Michaela follow the dog into a cave on the mountainside. Hannah avoids the drama in the cave and waits outside. Jamilah becomes upset about the dog, Paul finds a stash of dagga and Michaela loses her temper with both of them. When Michaela physically tries to stop Paul from smoking

the dagga, she kicks over a paraffin lamp that Paul's cigarette sets alight.

The cave is set ablaze with fierce flames and thick smoke, heavily infused with the large stash of cannabis. They are unable to escape. Hannah, who is outside, runs to get help. Meanwhile in the cave, the three experience similar separate manifestations of a divine presence, which summons them each through the fire. They emerge (the now placid dog included) unscathed on the other side.

Debate/Refusal of Call

The three have to decide whether to file the experience away under some kind of potentially cannabis-infused group delusion or whether to re-orientate their life on this experience. Hannah, who didn't experience or witness God's intervention, is the least convinced. However she is the one who consolidates their experience as being of GOGO - the god of goodness only, which is how Jamilah described the experience.

Progressive Complications

When Jamilah believes that something has warned her to stop a new patient taking the medicine prescribed to her and the medication turns out to be dangerous, the group fully embraces that GOGO is real and guiding them and embarks on serving Her with all strength. Listening eagerly for signs and messages from GOGO, they begin their role of being agents of 'good', with Hannah accompanying to various degrees depending on the situation.

Their relationships with the other patients improve and the staff all note improvement in behaviour, mood and attitude. Fuelled on a mixture of divinely (or at least mysteriously) inspired promptings and a strong sense of mandate, they fight social injustices each episode, including securing a home for the neighbouring informal settlement's outcasts, capturing a dog-fighting syndicate, busting up a child-prostitution ring, exposing corporate corruption, transforming the face of the neighbourhood with protest street art and helping the gardener's son with his homework.

On the other hand, more ominous signs accompanying the group's trajectory bring into question the role or nature of GOGO in all of this: Michaela's psychogenic seizures and other characters' symptoms flare up warningly, a self-righteousness seems to be growing, perspectives on reality and truth narrow, tensions within the group rise and signs of (self-) deception grow. Extreme actions follow with less and less questioning of the divine messages and the group, the centre and the surrounding community become a whole new kind of 'at risk'.

Nadir

The group splits up over various issues. Paul relapses with heroin and loses his apprenticeship. Michaela's seizures are

treated by hypnotherapy revealing hidden trauma and triggering more extremism in her behaviour. When Michaela and Jamilah's follow GOGO's guidance to apprehend the centre's cleaning lady for child trafficking, things reach a new glass rock bottom: the lady is innocent and they accidentally kill her. Michaela tries to kill herself and SunValley is ordered to close.

Climax

Luella discovers Hannah's proud stash of iPhone videos using popular culture to poke fun at the therapeutic techniques taught at the clinic. In a fury, she barges in to show them to Olivia who is in the midst of a Skype video call with the CEO of a large American pharmaceutical company. He sees Hannah's videos and missing the cynicism, sees an opportunity to save tax and score social brownie points. He agrees to fund SunValley to stay open if they include a project where patients create videos teaching emotional coping skills based on parodies of famous movies and popular culture. (The reasoning is that humour and entertainment will excite depressive patients' brains enough to absorb and remember the message.)

Resolution

Hannah is put in charge of creative content and Paul of cinematography. Luella will oversee the skills content of the videos. Michaela eventually comes out of the coma. The group calls a truce to work on the program. Whilst Michaela, Paul and Jamilah are mum on GOGO's place in all of this, Hannah announces that the funny training videos are the fulfilment of a vision from God she had as a teenager: where she would be the creator of a series of films that would bring salvation to many. This is GOGO's will...

Series Arc: Open and Shut

The second tangential series arc to the first is the issue of SunValley closing. Tension and conflict between Olivia, Luella and Sandile rises as they persevere in keeping SunValley going, despite opposition from investors and the community.

Multi-Episode Arcs

1. Michaela's madness

Setup

Michaela has been the provider and carer for her younger sister Tammy (who has epilepsy and various developmental delays) since she was born. Michaela's mother is 'evil', abusive and negligent and her father has been mostly absent. Michaela has had a mostly good relationship with her extended family and religious/conservative paternal grandparents, until they receive the 'sex tape' of Michaela that Michaela's

boyfriend secretly took and emailed to all of her colleagues, clients and family. Michaela unsuccessfully tried to commit suicide by driving a company car off a roof. She was fired, lost her medical aid and is now at this clinic.

Inciting Incident

The care of Michaela's younger sister, Michaela's *raison d'être*, is being transferred from Michaela's grandparents (where she has been since Michaela's hospitalisation) to a special needs centre some distance away. Michaela's mother sends her a string of accusatory smses about this.

Conflict

Michaela's various existing physical problems worsen. She has seizures, but no epilepsy. She has a range of other illnesses that are unusual for her age and slightly atypical. Her psychiatrist eventually decides she is repressing some major event and prescribes hypnotherapy.

The audience is not fully exposed to the facts surrounding her trauma, but gather it involves her younger brother's death. Only the reactions of Olivia and the other clinicians suggest just how horrific it was.

Post hypnotherapy, Michaela's condition continues to worsen. Despite being put on a whole lot of new medication, her moods and behaviours are increasingly erratic and she has a violent outburst. When the group splits, Michaela leads Jamilah on a mission from GOGO to take down the centre of child prostitution in Muizenberg once and for all.

Climax

Michaela and Jamilah eventually apprehend Mavis, who Michaela believes is running a child prostitution scheme. Michaela goes into a blind rage and violently pushes Mavis, accidentally killing her. At the clinic, Michaela is severely medicated and put into intensive observation. She later overdoses on Jamilah's secret suicide stash.

Resolution

After some days in a coma, Michaela awakens. There has been no blinding light or near death experience, only extreme physical discomfort, slight cognitive impairment and the destruction of her only nice bra (which the medics cut off). Her moods are more normal. Depending on whether the series wants to be left open for a second season, this can be adjusted or left as a cliffhanger.

2. Paul, Alexandria and Protest Art

Setup

Paul is the black sheep of his family. His only comfort is that he is at least creative and perceptive, which his rather rigid family isn't. Paul has been put into a clinic after another drug relapse, with suspected mental health problems contributing to his addictions.

Inciting Incident

Paul's parents miss his 'family session' because they are flying up to Prague where Paul's younger brother is receiving an award. Turns out, whilst younger brother has been volunteering in Sierra Leone, he has taken a ground-breaking series of photographs of child patients for which he has won a major award and scholarship to a prolific arts college. Paul is angrier, more depressed and more rebellious than ever.

Conflict

Paul has made 'pals' with Alexandria as they oversee the rock-climbing wall together. Their relationship intensifies when Alexandria ceases to be staff and formally becomes a patient. Emotional, sexual and romantic tensions grow and Alexandria introduces Paul to her street art interest. They embark on exciting nighttime street art adventures. They plan and execute one major piece that defaces a large billboard. Though they are not formally caught, Olivia lets on to Alexandria that she is aware of their culpability.

Climax

Alexandria breaks up with Paul and has him transferred off the rock-climbing work duty. She tells him that they were never 'together', just having fun, and in any case he's obviously gay and has too many issues to ever get over, probably caused by his mother taking drugs or something while she was pregnant with him.

Paul relapses and is caught and loses his internship.

Resolution

Paul is kept in clinic under stricter observation. He's come full circle to where he was when he came into the clinic.

3. Jamilah and Zandile

Setup

Jamilah forms a strong bond with the dog during the cave incident.

Inciting incident

The shelter wants to euthanize the dog as it is considered dangerous. Peter (the gardener) offers to adopt the dog on Jamilah's behalf, provided she helps his grandson Zandile with his schoolwork.

Conflict

Zandile is stubborn and won't take direction from women. Peter's instinct about Jamilah turns out to be correct as she finds ways to make Zandile think he is helping her, and by so doing learns himself. Jamilah and Zandile grow close. Zandile and Paul make friends and Jamilah feels excluded. Paul and Zandile are admitted to rehab together and Jamilah feels alone and rejected. She obsesses over her suicide stash. Michaela finds her, confiscates suicide stash and convinces her to help her catch Mavis and her heinous child-prostitution syndicate. The botched apprehension occurs.

Climax

Jamilah's brother's police colleagues take vengeance on him by framing Jamilah for being the primary instigator of the Mavis crime.

Resolution:

This would depend on commissioning of a second season.

Episodic Stories.

Story arcs spanning one episode include the following:

- **Just say no to drugs**

Lindy is admitted to the clinic. Jamilah believes that Lindy mustn't take the medication that has been prescribed to her. Despite the others attempts to dissuade her, Jamilah warns Lindy. Lindy is troubled and checks with her doctor who runs tests on her. It turns out Lindy is pregnant and the medication would indeed cause foetal damage. Jamilah, Paul, Michaela and even Hannah are encouraged that GOGO is indeed leading them.

- **Minor offences**

The group tracks down one of the patient's visiting family members as prostituting their child for drug money. (This combined with similar stories and other stories of drug usage linked to abuse of children overheard by rehab patients, is linked to the triggering of Michaela's conspiracy theory that there is a syndicate of child-trafficking. It is important to note that the audience is never sure if she is crazy or not. At times, she seems so, but there are other uncanny occurrences that point to Mavis being at the centre of such a syndicate).

- **The girl who cried "Rape"**
A woman who has been sexually assaulted is admitted to SunValley. When she shares her story, Alexandria goes into a tirade on how women must stop letting experiences of sexual abuse define them. Olivia puts down the boom and takes Alexandria off staff, but not without first Jedi mind tricking Alexandria into admitting herself as a patient.
- **But is it art?**
Alexandria and Paul deface a billboard of a major company accused of mistreating labourers in China.
- **White trash**
The group draws on Jamilah's cop brother to trace the number plate of a silver BMW some (white) guys who attacked a group of Zimbabwean vendors were seen driving.
- **Cat People**
The group rescues animals stolen to use for bait in a dog-fighting syndicate.
- **Robin Hood**
Zandile has no access to a computer and his final submissions are on the line. Michaela steals a tablet from a Rich Corporate Man to help him. The tablet gives software/hardware/viral problems and Zandile and Paul believe it is possessed by a demon.

5. Look and Feel

Schedule 7 is at heart a character-driven drama. It's supposed to be about 'real' people, however improbable and outlandish much of it sounds. Truth is stranger than fiction, after all. In short, the pictures should look real too.

Cinematography:

The style could be described as "considered documentary." By documentary, we're not talking about gratuitous camera movement, characters talking straight into camera or non-regulated aperture and shutter speed. The series does not pretend to be a documentary. Rather we use a documentary-like 'neutral' approach in treating the action and drama with a certain level of detachment and consistency, so that the actors can be the primary conveyers of mood and meaning. There is no need for extremely elaborate camera work (nor do we want a shaky, hand-held feel.)

Editing

The editing should be consistent. If the director wants to cross the line of continuity as is the fashion, she can go ahead. What is important is that the 'handwriting' of the editor is consistent and unnoticeable, so that the viewer reads what's being said.

Visual Effects

Visual effects should be kept to a minimum. They should be used to create what is specified in the script but cannot be readily filmed (like a pink boat on a hill, or someone walking through a fire). We don't want gratuitous visual effects to show how 'disturbed' a character is. Dreams and visions are to be treated with the same style as the rest of the series. We don't want to romanticise them nor do we want them covered in cheese.

Sound Effects

These follow the same principle as visual effects. Audio effects for 'disturbances' in a character's internal world should only be to advance plot and story.

However, "Form follows function" and the approach will bend if called for (for example, in "Cat People" the girls dress up as characters from the animated TV show CATSEYES to go on a mission. If the camerawork, sound effects and editing refused to mirror some of the features of the original animation, the effect may be diminished.)

ii: SCHEDULE 7

PILOT

Written by

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1 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - DAY

1

A beat up old car pulls up in the bohemian seaside street in Muizenberg. A Cape Malay man, MR NOORDIEN, gets out and fetches a bag from the boot. MRS NOORDIEN opens the back door of the car to help out JAMILAH, a very thin girl, unsteady on her feet. Jamilah is groggy, disorientated and squints into the daylight, although it's not a very bright day.

She stumbles out and looks up to see a morose CHIEF SECURITY GUARD (LIONEL) smoking a cigarette. He stands outside the security kiosk next to a large sign reading: "SUNVALLEY CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH". He watches the family, ignoring the YOUNGER SECURITY GUARD (BEN), who chatters on at him.

The family walk along the fence towards guards. Jamilah tries to look through the fence but the shrubbery is too thick.

Her attention is slowly drawn skywards towards a loud rustling. After the initial blinding glare of the sun, a haloed SCARECROW-LIKE PROFILE - ghoulish yet angelic - appears amidst the silhouetted branches and leaves of a tree extending past the fence. Jamilah stares and he seems to stare back, as much as a profile can stare. She blinks. It's just someone whose floppy sun hat is obscuring his face. He waves his garden shears in greeting.

SCARECROW-LIKE PROFILE
(somewhat woodenly)
Molweni.

MRS NOORDIEN
You see, even the gardening staff
is friendly.

As her father signs in at the gate, Jamilah looks into the garden, a mix of balding ground and unruly foliage. The sting from 'Top Billing', audible through the open window, catches her attention. The window belongs to a prefab adjoining the main building via a stone path and a rather untrustworthy looking rain covering of sorts. Inside, she sees people sitting around the TV, drinking coffee and smoking.

2 INT. SMOKING DEN - DAY

2

As we look around the room, MICHAELA keeps a running commentary over what we can recognise by sound (if not, for copyright reasons, by screen) as one of 'Top Billing's' luxury housing inserts. A Jeanie D-esque voice and bust barbie around the screen.

A few people sit on weathered looking couches, smoking and half-watching the TV. NURSE 1 sits on an old armchair, keeping an eye on the patients. A TEENAGE GIRL listens to Michaela's running commentary.

MICHAELA

That's very much like the house I lived in... Also an infinity pool. And I can tell you, I'd throw the most fabulous pool parties. ..And cocktail parties. ...I actually had the exact same dress as that. In midnight blue though. And with a halter...

HANNAH lies on a couch, fiddling with her iPhone.

HANNAH

Really? Are you sure it wasn't white? With long sleeves? That made you hug yourself?

NURSE 1

(to Hannah)

Is that a phone? You know you're not allowed your phones now.

Hannah holds up her phone. The back is disguised to look like a box of cards, with writing reading: "Daily Affirmations".

HANNAH

It's my affirmations.

Nurse 1 is not convinced.

NURSE 1

Let's see.

HANNAH

It's private.

Hannah looks down to 'read' (though we can see the screen is clearly on another app.)

HANNAH (CONT'D)

As this affirmation reads: 'I know my inner self will guide me to the right decision.'... As I've learned in group, I have to assert my boundary and say no...

Nurse 1 turns away and scans the room.

NURSE 1

Paul! Blood pressure!

Paul, wearing slippers shaped as enormous black sheep, gets up. He downs his coffee and puts out his cigarette in the 'industrial' ashtray next to Hannah.

PAUL

(to Hannah)

My inner self usually guides me to the highest grade hydroponic supercheese and cheapest drinks.

HANNAH

Pity we just did that workshop on codependency, or we could swap for the weekend.

3 EXT. CLINIC PARKING LOT - DAY 3

Mr Noordien has finished signing the form. Mrs Noordien takes Jamilah's arm and the three walk through the gate to the main entrance.

4 INT. CLINIC RECEPTION - DAY 4

Jamilah sees MOON, the volunteer landscape architect student in his mid twenties, a weed-eater in hand, talking to RECEPTIONIST.

MOON

(pointing to the corner of the reception area and passage)

But I left them here. Right here.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, Moon, but I haven't seen anything. And as I've asked you before, please don't leave your tools unattended.

Paul's energetic stride through the door catches Jamilah's attention. She watches him bound up the stairs. We follow him as the conversation fades out in the background.

MOON

Well where am I supposed to put them?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, Moon...

5 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE NURSE STATION - DAY 5

There is a counter with a sign reading "NURSES' STATION"

KELLY exits the consulting room next door to the Nurses' Station as Paul arrives on the landing. She calls through the window over the counter.

KELLY

Here's the script my psychiatrist left.

HEAD NURSE

(off-screen)

Leave it on the counter.

Kelly turns around and looks at Paul's muddied slippers.

KELLY

You know we're not allowed pyjamas downstairs. And your dirty feet are making extra work for others. Your flagrant disregard for anyone else is really sad.

She leaves. Paul looks at her script on the counter. There are a list of drugs. He checks to make sure no one is watching and then deftly adds a zero to the last item on the script. The script now ends with "PAX 50 mg night".

A loud shout from outside interrupts him.

He runs over to the window and looks out. He sees a commotion at a large tree bordering the property.

6

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - DAY

6

The SCARECROW-LIKE PROFILE/floppy hat/presumed gardener man in the tree (GUY) has cut a hole in the fence and jumped down onto the street. Lionel's shout from the previous scene has summoned Ben and the two race after him.

The Receptionist and Moon stick their heads around the gate. Moon sees Guy clutching the floppy hat to his head and holding the shears with the other hand as he runs.

MOON

Hey, that my stuff!

Moon runs out to join the pursuit.

Receptionist dials on the portable phone in her hand.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi. Yes, it is me again. Yes it's urgent.

TITLE SEQUENCE

7

INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

7

Jamilah sits half comatose on one of the chairs. The door is open. Mrs Noordien is talking to OLIVIA (the current Head of SunValley).

MRS NOORDIEN
(off screen)
But they told me this centre is
open to everyone.

8 INT. CLINIC - ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 8

Olivia calmly replies to Mrs Noordien who eyes her
venomously.

OLIVIA
Not for people who still have
medical aid available. We're a non-
governmental organisation.

9 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 9

SANDILE (an attractive black man in his late twenties or
early thirties) and AMELIA (the director of the board of
SunValley) walk past.

AMELIA
So are you feeling ready for day
one?

SANDILE
I believe so.

MRS NOORDIEN
(off-screen)
I want to speak to the manager!

Amelia looks at Sandile.

AMELIA
Well, off you go then, Manager. I'm
just the Chairperson of the Board.
You're here for the hands on.

Sandile walks in, shutting the door behind him.

Amelia looks at the paper and plastic sign on the door
reading 'Director: Dr Olivia Henshall' and removes it.

Amelia leaves as Michaela approaches.

MICHAELA
Hello. Sorry, but are you also
waiting for Olivia?

Jamilah nods but avoids eye contact.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
And there's definitely someone in
there?

Michaela sneaks a peak through the window and takes a seat.

Energetic Paul and lethargic Hannah pass the intersecting corridor and spot Michaela. Jamilah watches them approach.

PAUL

You got a smoke?

Michaela looks in her pocket as Paul yanks back and forth on her chair's back rest, exaggerating withdrawal desperation.

MICHAELA

If the wind changes your brain is going to stay like that.

PAUL

My brain is like that.

Hannah flops onto the last chair and starts fiddling on her phone.

MICHAELA

Sorry man, they're upstairs.

Mrs Noordien's shouting increases in volume and can be heard despite the closed door. The three patients listen curiously and no one notices Jamilah silently holding up a cigarette for Paul.

MRS NOORDIEN

(off screen)

This is discrimination!

10

INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

10

The three are now seated, Olivia behind her desk and Mrs Noordien and Sandile in front.

SANDILE

Ma'am, Jamilah will be much better off in a private hospital.

Olivia shoots Sandile an 'oh really?' look. Sandile metaphorically extracts his foot from his mouth.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

... There are some major funding obstacles at present.

OLIVIA

The restructuring may be unsettling for patients.

11 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE OLIVIA'S OFFICE (ADMIN OFFICE) 11-
DAY

MICHAELA
Restructuring?

MRS NOORDIEN
(off screen)
You hypocrites!

12 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 12

Mrs Noordien launches into full attack.

MRS NOORDIEN
Strutting around like you're noble
and helping the poor! With your
BMWs and expensive hair!

13 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 13

MRS NOORDIEN
(off screen)
No wonder there's no funds.

HANNAH
(Over Mrs Noordien)
...And we have lift off into full
cray cray.

PAUL
Shit, I hope she's not sleeping in
your room.

MICHAELA
With Hannah's snoring, nobody
sleeps in our room.

14 INT. CLINIC OLIVIA'S OFFICE - DAY 14

MRS NOORDIEN
Now my daughter sits outside, so
mad she tried to kill herself and
your mafia won't help!

15 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 15

Silence as Michaela, Paul and Hannah grasp the situation.

PAUL
(To Jamilah)
Hectic - that's your mom?

MICHAELA

Ag shit man, sorry. We're idiots.
Really, no disrespect meant.

16 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

16

Olivia jots some information onto a piece of paper.

OLIVIA

This number is for the Chacha group
of hospitals -

MRS NOORDIEN

When people see her in one of those
places and we lose our business and
my family starves -

17 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

17

Michaela reassuringly puts her arm around miserable Jamilah.

MICHAELA

A much louder voice, with a KAK
loud of cursing and shit breaking
in the background, and that's my
mom.

MRS NOORDIEN

(off screen)

No! She'll have to go to the
government one. When she's raped
or loses an eye or hangs herself,
it's on your conscience.

Paul notices the offered cigarette still frozen in the air.

PAUL

Thanks!

Nurse 1 calls from the top of the stairs.

NURSE 1

Paul! Hannah! Medication.

Paul and Hannah get up.

MICHAELA

Vasbyt, you're going to be fine.

NURSE 1

Michaela!

Michaela leaves.

18 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

18

OLIVIA
I'm going to ask you to leave now.

Mrs Noordien pauses ominously.

SANDILE
Mrs Noordien, I can see how upset
and worried you feel. I saw that we
do have a bed opening tonight so
we'll make an exception.

OLIVIA
We absolutely cannot -

SANDILE
- Promise anything but we commit to
assist your family as best we can.

Olivia glares at Sandile.

19 INT. CLINIC DINING ROOM - DAY

19

The patients are at the tail end of breakfast. Nurse 1
accompanies Jamilah to the counter where KITCHEN LADY is
serving food.

NURSE
You just relax and have some
breakfast, nê?

Jamilah looks at the remnants of congealed breakfast.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Net 'n ietsie. Vir my, my lovey.

Jamilah takes a very small helping of fruit salad. Nurse
watches Jamilah walk towards the tables and she leaves.

Michaela, Paul and Hannah are leaving the table.

PAUL
Woohoo! You cracked the nod.

He high fives Jamilah.

JAMILAH
Thank you.

MICHAELA
Come sit. We can wait.

JAMILAH
It's fine. I ate before.

PAUL
Cool, let's *waai*.

He grabs Jamilah's bowl and dumps it with their dishes on the clearing table on the way out.

Jamilah follows the three out, observing a bunch of pretty normal-looking other patients.

20 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY 20

Michaela, Paul, Hannah and Jamilah walk towards the prefab.

Jamilah looks up at the sun flashing through the branches of the large tree (the tree the patient tried to escape from at the beginning of the episode.)

JAMILAH
What happened to that man?

MICHAELA
Who tried to escape this morning?
He's from Intensive Obs. We're the troubled patients.

She points to a gate to another section of the property.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
They're the properly on another planet patients.

PAUL
(to Jamilah)
Shame man, it sucks you arrived as that happened.

MICHAELA
They only keep a few emergency cases.

HANNAH
They're under lock and key, but Moon the loon probably forgot to close the gate. Moron.

21 INT. SMOKING DEN - DAY 21

Paul and Michaela quickly light up whilst Hannah gets into nap and headphone mode. Jamilah doesn't sit. She looks afraid and uncomfortable.

MICHAELA
Don't worry, everyone arrives feeling freaked out. I was a wreck.

PAUL

I thought your car was a wreck?

MICHAELA

(to Jamilah)

It was. I tried to drive it off a roof, but the railing didn't break. So I reversed and drove and reversed and drove until it was properly fucked.

Jamilah is not sure how she's supposed to react.

JAMILAH

Were you OK though?

MICHAELA

Not a scratch on me. The only way to move on is laugh, I think.

JAMILAH

I didn't try to kill myself. My work just thinks that. They said I have to have treatment or I'll lose my job.

HANNAH

What do you do?

JAMILAH

I work at the Ackerworths Head Office.

MICHAELA

That's a good company to be in.

They watch the TV in silence for a moment.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

I think this place is a heaven-sent ladder up out from rock bottom.

HANNAH

Life's always got another glass rock bottom waiting for you.

MICHAELA

Oh I've seen pictures of your recent rock bottom and I can tell you you've bounced back somewhat.

Hannah doesn't respond. Paul flips to some photos on his phone.

PAUL

Hannah's moment of truth.

The photos are of a squalid looking apartment. It's dark and scattered with dirty dishes, clothes and takeaway containers. Close ups show a stack of unopened bills with 'Final Notice' stamped and a mouse on all but abandoned shelf.

MICHAELA

You could have rented it out as a set for the post-break-up movie scene.

PAUL

Her brother took them. As legal evidence to force her into treatment.

He looks at Hannah.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And as your friend I keep them, to remind you from the depths from which you come.

Paul's phone rings. He jumps up and answers it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hello?

22 EXT. ARIEL AND CITY MONTAGE - DAY

22

MONTAGE:

1. Ariel views of Cape Town, Table Mountain and the harbour.
2. Ariel views of Cape Flats/less typical tourist ariel perspectives.
3. CBD Street. Business people walk around and drive.
4. Vendors on the side of the road.
5. A homeless man talks to someone who isn't there.
6. School children play sport
7. A nurse smokes a cigarette at a government hospital.
8. Fishermen cast their nets at sea or pull them up at the harbour.

Over this, we hear sounds from Support Group.

MICHAELA

My name is Michaela and I like Grey's Anatomy.

PAUL

Paul. I like making art.

END MONTAGE

23 INT. CLINIC GROUP ROOM - DAY

23

Michaela, Jamilah, Paul and Hannah are seated in a circle with other patients, including Kelly, LAUREN and CHAD. Olivia and LUELLA (the Head of Occupational therapy) are also in the circle.

JAMILAH

My name is Jamilah and I like exercising.

LUELLA

Welcome to group. Would someone like to explain to Jamilah how group works?

KELLY

Group works by people sharing and risking so that individuals and the group can grow.

LUELLA

OK, good. And for that to happen, the group needs to be a safe place. That is each and everyone of our responsibility. How do we keep it safe?

MICHAELA

Confidentiality.

LUELLA

Good. Nothing is shared with other people. *En geen skinder tussen julle.* What else?

CHAD

Listen, but don't judge.

LUELLA

Group is open.

Beat.

LAUREN

I'm going home this afternoon!

Jamilah turns to focus on the person speaking, to whom everyone is listening respectfully, apart from Hannah who is rubbing her eyes.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I was so scared when I came to be in a 'mental hospital' with a bunch of crazy people! And now I feel sad to leave.

CHAD

Are you scared?

LAUREN

I'm a bit nervous. But I've got a few things that help and I'm going to do one each day.

LUELLA

Good! Self care.

Hannah's hair and clothing is dishevelled and she dozes.

OLIVIA

Hannah, are there ways you've worked on to actively care for yourself?

Hannah answers surprisingly quickly.

HANNAH

I think everyone cares about themselves all the time. Some of our egos just need others to be 'OK' to feel OK about ourselves.

OLIVIA

What do you need to feel OK about yourself?

HANNAH

My psychiatrist says a change in meds.

LUELLA

Are there any skills you've learned here that might help?

Hannah takes a deep breath.

HANNAH

The breathing thing. It does help when I get tense around annoying people.

Luella and Olivia exchange grim looks. Jamilah notices and attempts to distract them and fill the uncomfortable silence.

JAMILAH

My colleague sent me this breathing app once. I think it helped.

LUELLA

Good, maybe you can share it with Hannah this evening.

Paul pulls aggressively at the finger nail he's been fiddling with and scowls.

OLIVIA

Paul, where are you at today?

PAUL

Just thinking about this weekend.

OLIVIA

Your parents are coming down, I believe?

PAUL

They just cancelled. My brother's hospital is throwing him a surprise 'thank you' party for the extra projects he did in the kids ward. Junky Adopted Son versus. Doctor Artist Humanitarian Real Son. Beep beep beep - I lose.

Paul sits in misery for a while. Olivia turns to Sindiwe.

OLIVIA

Sindiwe, I can see you're nodding. Is there something you can relate to there?

24

INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE BOARDROOM - DAY

24

The signage reads 'Boardroom'. There is a note stuck up reading 'Meeting in progress - DND'. The door opens. Olivia and Luella walk out. Amelia closes the door behind them. Olivia and Luella march angrily down the passage towards the dining hall.

LUELLA

Hoe kan hulle dit fokkin' op ons nou drop?

OLIVIA

A more realistic event to arrange in 24 hours would have been good. Robin Williams doing live stand-up would be easier.

LUELLA

Isn't Robin Williams dead?

OLIVIA

He is. Let's just get this done.

Olivia opens the door to the dining room.

25 INT. CLINIC DINING ROOM - DAY

25

The patients chat as they line up for mid-morning tea. Hannah stands in front of Michaela, her head phones inconspicuously plugged in.

LUELLA

Could we have everyone's full attention for a few moments?

The patients quieten.

OLIVIA

As you all know, part of SunValley's mandate is to include a community work module.

PAUL

Winter is coming...

OLIVIA

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we have to begin this Wednesday. We will be going on a brief, non-threatening outing. It is compulsory. If you feel you are unable to attend, you need to speak to one of us immediately...

Michaela hisses in Hannah's ear over the end of Olivia's announcement.

MICHAELA

Take your headphones, off man. Listen!

HANNAH

I know the sound of smashing through glass rock bottom.

COMMERCIAL BREAK 1

26 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY

26

Jamilah follows Hannah, Michaela and Paul. They carry their coffee to a sunny spot. Chad and Kelly walk past looking upset, but Jamilah can't really hear them as the crackling sound in her ears is getting louder.

The group stops under the tree and Michaela lights a cigarette.

MICHAELA

Community work. You know what comes to mind? Prisoners. Offenders.

PAUL

People who owe society something.

Paul lights up too while Hannah lies on the grass with her hoodie pulled over her eyes.

MICHAELA

Or rich foreigners with too much spare time.

PAUL

Or school kids who haven't discovered partying yet.

HANNAH

Or religious fanatics.

ALEXANDRIA is waiting in a queue to sign in at security. Paul looks up and catches her watching him. He winks.

27

INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY

27

Olivia, Alexandria and Luella are present. There is a group of half a dozen COMMUNITY PROJECT LEADERS. They wear name tags with their organisations like 'Fun Funda' and 'Remagine Recycling'. KOBUS'S badge reads 'Restore and Protect our Mountain'. There are the remains of drinks and snacks on the table. A yellow folder with "Why Partner with SunValley?" is sitting with every guest.

Sandile finishes his speech. He is smooth, smart, charismatic and confident.

SANDILE

So I really hope that you will consider including some of our patients as volunteers in your ventures.

None of the guests respond. Kobus speaks up.

KOBUS

I'm sorry, but I have to consider my relationships with the whole community. With all due respect, your place here is not popular.

OLIVIA

One of the things we are trying to do is to break down the stigma, the mistrust people have, of mental illness.

KOBUS

But then you can't have a guy
screaming down the road waving a
weapon. Like you had this morning.

OLIVIA

I assure you we would have a
stringent screening and evaluation
process before assigning patients.

KOBUS

I have to think about my business.

Sandile smiles. No one else in the room has anything else to
say.

SANDILE

Of course. Well, thank you again
for coming.

The guests all leave. Only the man wearing 'Remagine
Recycling' takes his folder.

28

INT. CLINIC BEDROOM - DAY

28

NURSE 1

Go to group!

Nurse 1 addresses the Teenage Girl sleeping in one of the six
beds. The room is homely, with home knit blankets, shell
decorations and a seaside feel.

Nurse 1 unpacks Jamilah's bags with her. She confiscates a
razor in her toiletries.

NURSE

No sharp things lovey, You must
come ask for it when you need.

Nurse 1 finds a box of pills and squints to read what it is.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Oh, it's artificial sweeteners. Are
you diabetic? I must tell the
kitchen.

Jamilah shakes her head. She looks out window and sees the
roof of the prefab is covered in a mural made of old bottles
and recyclable objects.

JAMILAH

What's that on the roof?

NURSE

That prefab was supposed to be for
sorting recycling.

(MORE)

NURSE (CONT'D)

To get you guys ready to be working again, and interacting with the community...

Jamilah's eyes wander over the mixed collage of recycled goods on the roof to Moon working in the garden.

29 INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY

29

The last of the guests leave the boardroom. Sandile, Olivia and Luella remain. Alexandria enters.

OLIVIA

Thanks, Alexandria. You can close the door behind you.

Olivia turns to Sandile to introduce Alexandria.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I've asked Alexandria to join us. Alexandria Browne is currently completing her Masters in Community Psychology and is volunteering on staff here.

Sandile holds out his hand.

SANDILE

Pleased to meet you. I'm Sandile.

Luella holds out her hand to Sandile.

LUELLA

Forgive me my manners. It was so pressured before these guests came. I'm Luella, head of Occupational Therapy.

SANDILE

Pleased to meet you.

Sandile looks to Olivia.

OLIVIA

We met earlier.

SANDILE

I'm not sure I introduced myself properly.

OLIVIA

I think you were clear.

Olivia turns to Alexandria and with utmost professionalism and civility explains the situation.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

The board has appointed Sandile Ntshinga as Executive Manager of SunValley for the next semester.

LUELLA

To help deal with the closure crisis.

ALEXANDRIA

Oh, wow. That's amazing. Because patients leaving is also a loss for us. I like that, closure for therapists.

LUELLA

Closure of SunValley.

OLIVIA

SunValley is in violation of some minor terms of our contract, so investors want to suspend funding.

SANDILE

Not to panic, the board has agreed to give us another trial semester of funding.

LUELLA

Only, all the patients have to start work programmes by the first. Which is the day after tomorrow.

OLIVIA

Obviously the patients are very upset.

30

INT. CLINIC HANDS ON ROOM - DAY

30

Moon watches over the class. Patients sit around peacefully drawing and filling out worksheets.

KELLY

(to Moon)

Are you allowed to oversee us by yourself? Aren't you, like, a gardener?

Paul hands his assignment to Moon.

PAUL

Ouch. Landscape architect, right? I'm sure he'll manage. It's not tree surgery.

Moon looks in the box of papers and hands him another page.

Paul looks at page and walks off grinning.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(to Hannah as he sits)
Seriously? Check this out.

They look at the worksheet. It's about managing self-harm urges. The exercise under scrutiny advocates drawing with red marker on your body instead.

PAUL (CONT'D)
We will have to quality control
this method.

Paul takes a red marker off the table and starts drawing red gashes on his wrists.

OLIVIA
(off screen)
I'm concerned this is likely to set
off further self-destructive
behaviours.

31 INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY

31

SANDILE
The good news is Remagine Recycling
has offered to take them.

LUELLA
Around broken glass and sharp
metal? The self-harm risk...

SANDILE
So we'll put at-risk patients on
paper and plastic. The agreement
with the board is all patients
begin on an external community work
offering by the 1st. Every patient.

OLIVIA
But that's madness! You can't force
vulnerable patients into an
external environment. How is
Michaela going to respond, for
crying out aloud?

32 INT. CLINIC HANDS ON ROOM - DAY

32

Paul and Hannah have now hit the art supplies and are painting thick red paint on Paul's wrist. They admire their handiwork.

Michaela walks past and catches sight of his 'bloody wrist'. She goes into a seizure on the ground. The red water used for the brush spills onto the floor.

Paul moves to hold Michaela as she shakes. The group turns towards the commotion. The red paint water running near Michaela's head gives the impression she has an injury. Paul's wrist also looks morbidly realistic as he tries to prevent Michaela from knocking her head.

Jamilah watches through the window at the door.

33 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE HANDS ON ROOM - DAY 33
Nurse 1 is giving her a tour. Jamilah watches with wide eyes.

NURSE
So here you do crafts and learn
skills... What are they up to now?

OLIVIA
(off screen)
What about Jamilah?

34 INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY 34
The rest of the staff look blankly at Olivia

OLIVIA
The patient admitted this morning.
(looking at Sandile)
Against policy and my advice, as
she has medical aid.

LUELLA
But we don't take patients with
medical aid.

SANDILE
We had a bed. Her medical aid is
useless because her mother won't
have her seen in a psychiatric
facility.

OLIVIA
Now we're going to put her in a
public space working with a group
of other psych patients.
Incidentally, in Lansdowne, near
her home. How does this help her?

SANDILE
Perhaps that was short-sighted on
my part. Look, I understand that
realistically not all patients can
cope with external outings. And I
understand how hard it is for you
to terminate them. But this really
is a case of letting some go for
the greater good.

ALEXANDRIA

But they're a really nice group,
they're all trying.

LUELLA

(darkly)
Some are more trying than others.

35

INT. SMOKERS DEN - DAY

35

Michaela sits on a couch looking exhausted. Jamilah brings her the blanket from her bed and puts it on her knees.

MICHAELA

Ag, thanks man.

Jamilah sits down.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

I'm glad you weren't there. Your first day would've been even worse.

JAMILAH

I saw through the window.

Michaela is quiet.

MICHAELA

I am sorry if you were freaked out.

JAMILAH

No, don't worry. I'm sorry you have epilepsy.

MICHAELA

It's not epilepsy. They think it's psychogenic seizures or conversion disorder or something. I've stopped following all the names.

Hannah and Paul tiptoe in the room. Michaela shoots them death looks.

PAUL

I brought you some smokes.

HANNAH

I made you coffee.

Michaela laughs.

MICHAELA

It's fine, guys. It's not your fault. It just happens sometimes. It's been ages. I used to get them all the time before I came in here.

Jamilah looks and listens respectfully to Michaela.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

I had no job, no money, no medical aid, no car... And none of my family would even speak to me. Completely alone. I was about to move into a shelter.

36 EXT. CLINIC PARKING LOT - DAY

36

Olivia catches up to Amelia before she gets into her car to leave.

AMELIA

Are we playing nicely?

OLIVIA

With someone who thinks red tape is for skipping over? That it's fine to send psychiatric patients blindly out without adequate assessment, preparation, supervision or protection....

AMELIA

He's young and doesn't know about failure. Isn't it beautiful?

OLIVIA

This is very, very dangerous. Accident newspaper headline dangerous, Legal ramifications dangerous, shut down dangerous.

AMELIA

We have been shut down. Everything from here is a hope to open.

OLIVIA

I could be shut down, me. I'm responsible.

AMELIA

No, you feel responsible. Sandile is now responsible. If the bottom falls out, it's on him. Now let him worry about how to skip with red tape and schmooze the neighbours. You let it all be 'because Sandile says so' to the group and you provide mummy containment, support, guidance, love-'

OLIVIA

I don't trust him. I can't work with him if I don't trust him.

AMELIA

What can I tell you? Take a leap of faith. Don't trust him, trust the process.

Amelia gives a sarcastic little air punch.

37 INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR OUTSIDE GROUP ROOM - DAY 37

The sign on the door reads: 'Community Group Meeting in Progress'

38 INT. CLINIC GROUP ROOM - DAY 38

The group sits in a circle. Everyone is tense with long faces. Patients Paul, Michaela, Jamilah, Hannah, Kelly, Chad, Teenage Girl and Sindiwe are present, amongst others. Luella and Olivia lead the session. Alexandria is also there.

Paul has a dotted red line drawn around his neck.

Kelly is mid-complaint.

KELLY

I don't know if I'm more traumatised or disgusted! Some of us actually have a history of cutting.

PAUL

Have you?

KELLY

No, but that doesn't mean...

PAUL

I'm sorry, I thought we spoke on behalf of our own feelings and experience.

Paul lifts his shorts up and exposes his thigh with some scarring on it to Kelly.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's like saying the 'N' word if you're black. It's OK.

CHAD

Dude, I'm not OK with anyone saying the 'N' word.

SINDIWE

I don't want to be somewhere seeing people around me suddenly bleeding. Even a joke.

KELLY
(addressing Paul)
You! You don't...

OLIVIA
'I'. Use 'I' statements.

KELLY
I, I feel you don't care about
anyone else. Everything is about
your self-expression and your art.

OLIVIA
Paul, what I'm hearing from the
group is that this cutting 'joke'
made the space feel threatening and
unstable.

PAUL
I'm sorry. People weren't supposed
to think it was real.

Chad addresses Paul in a 'I love you but I have to confront
you about this' kind of way.

CHAD
Can I ask you something?

PAUL
Shoot.

CHAD
Why then did you go and put that on
your neck?

Paul points to the red dots.

PAUL
This? But this is obviously not
real.

CHAD
But after everyone getting a
fright, it's kind of like saying
'Screw you, I don't care how it
made you guys feel'.

PAUL
That is so not what I was thinking!

KELLY
The fact that you weren't thinking
about anyone else after you freaked
us all out just proves how selfish
you are!

Luella stops Kelly.

LUELLA

You've made your point, Kelly.

SINDIWE

Please Paul, no more blood!

Alexandria turns to look intensely at Paul.

ALEXANDRIA

Paul, when I look at those markings, they look like they could be from a dog collar that's been digging into your neck. I wonder if you maybe feel like that, you're being dragged somewhere you don't want to go?

PAUL

I don't know.

ALEXANDRIA

That maybe -

OLIVIA

I think let's see if anyone else in the group has something to say to Paul about what happened.

No one says anything.

SINDIWE

I just have a question. What is happening with this community thingy?

The group look beady-eyed at Olivia.

OLIVIA

I'm sorry that it's been sprung on you like this. I acknowledge that it's not fair, on you or us.

SINDIWE

Ja, but what is it?

LUELLA

From Wednesday, every afternoon we'll be doing a couple of hours of work that benefits the larger community of Muizenberg.

SINDIWE

I don't want to go out there yet! What if I have one of my crying days? And where?

OLIVIA

The plan is ultimately to start a recycling depot here. People that aren't up to leaving the grounds can work here. Others can go out and collect recyclables -

LUELLA

So for the rest of this week, we will all be going out to Reragine Recycling for an - orientation.

CHAD

Where the mentally handicapped people work?

OLIVIA

They do employ people with intellectual disabilities, yes.

No one moves.

CHAD

My work just knows I'm off 'sick'. What's going to happen if my boss sees me when he drops off his recycling?

OLIVIA

You won't see anyone from the public.

MICHAELA

But have you been there? I have and I don't see how that is going to work. People bring their stuff right near to where all the sorting happens.

OLIVIA

You leave that for us to worry about.

MICHAELA

I'm sorry, I haven't felt this anxious since before I actually came in.

OLIVIA

We'll talk after group, OK?

HANNAH

I'm sorry, but I'm not going either.

OLIVIA

This is part of your treatment programme now.

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

If you don't go, you are refusing treatment and that means you will be asked to leave.

For once, Hannah holds eye contact, angry eye contact.

COMMERCIAL BREAK 2

39

INT. SMOKING DEN - DAY

39

It's a new morning. A freshly dishevelled Hannah slouches on the couch. The neatly dressed Jamilah sits near the doorway watching morning TV. She smokes a cigarette. When it gets to half, she nips it and puts it back in the box.

PAUL

Getting into a reuse recycle spirit for the day there Jamilah?

Jamilah blushes.

JAMILAH

Morning, Paul.

HANNAH

How the hell is sending us to learn from mentally disabled people how to sort rubbish supposed to make me think my brain is getting 'better'?

PAUL

You could meet someone 'special' there...

MICHAELA

That's so offensive. And stupid.

PAUL

I just meant someone with a special gift to see Hannah's redeeming qualities.

MICHAELA

(to Hannah)

Are you offended with being put on the same level as someone with an intellectual disability?

HANNAH

Yes. Yes, actually I am. Last time I checked depression isn't brain damage.

MICHAELA

My sister has an intellectual disability. I have no problem going.

Awkward.

PAUL

Sorry dude, I forgot. We were just talking shit.

MICHAELA

The emotional brain is actually a much larger, older part than the 'intellectual' zones. By that logic, us sitting here with emotional problems are actually more damaged than they are.

HANNAH

Good. I hope I'm so damaged my psychiatrist says I don't have to go.

40 INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY

40

Sandile is arranging cups next to the steaming urn. There is a range of pastries and sliced fruit set out on the small coffee table. Luella, Olivia and Alexandria enter.

SANDILE

Thank you ladies for bearing with this early meeting.

Luella looks at the pastries.

LUELLA

Oh, wow. That looks nice.

Olivia is annoyed at pastry bribes.

SANDILE

What can I offer you to drink?

LUELLA

A nice strong coffee, thank you!

Sandile looks at the others.

SANDILE

Coffee?

ALEXANDRIA

I prefer green tea. I can make it.

Sandile hands Luella the coffee who smells it appreciatively.

SANDILE

I've got it.

He prepares the green tea and asks without making eye contact.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

And for you?

OLIVIA

Any other hot beverage of the day,
I'd be most grateful. But I'm
really fussy about how I like my
morning tea. I like my cup.

Olivia leaves to fetch her cup.

SANDILE

I'll watch and learn this time.
(He attempts small talk
with the others so long)
How are we all faring after the
first day of battle?

Olivia returns with her cup and makes her own tea. Neither
Luella nor Alexandria can answer Sandile because their mouths
are full.

OLIVIA

I've got a patient to see in a
moment, so could we start?

SANDILE

Of course-

OLIVIA

The report back on recommendations
of patients for termination:

SANDILE

Well-

OLIVIA

The first patient I would suggest
is Paul Mendley.

Alexandria responds with emotion.

ALEXANDRIA

But he's done so well -

OLIVIA

He has. Which reminds me,
Alexandria could you get the
patient folder from my office -
from the Admin office?

Alexandria obeys. Once she has exited, Olivia continues.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

However, as demonstrated by the faux wrist slashing yesterday, Paul's lack of impulse control jeopardises the sense of safety for the group. On an outing, that's too dangerous.

LUELLA

And his attitude is sometimes outright rebellious.

OLIVIA

Much like Hannah, although she masks with passive-aggression. She also has consistently put in the minimum effort in exercises and risk-taking.

LUELLA

En daai fokkin' foon.

OLIVIA

So my second suggestion is Hannah. Thirdly: Michaela. She has made excellent efforts and progress. Her case is tragic, considering the repercussions she now faces leaving, but my opinion is that she is not stable enough for an outing.

LUELLA

Certainly not with the intellectually disabled kids.

OLIVIA

Her suicide attempt precipitating entry was aggravated by the stress of being the primary caregiver to her intellectually disabled sister. Any talk of her sister brings on extreme distress arousal. On no accounts would I allow her out to Remagine tomorrow.

Sandile is taking notes.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Lastly, Jamilah. Apart from the fact she has medical aid and I severely doubt will risk being seen as a patient in her own neighbourhood, I suspect she has an eating disorder.

LUELLA

Ja. We haven't got an eating disorder programme. She'd be better off at Chacha Clinic.

Alexandria stands at the door watching and listening.

41 INT. CLINIC DINING HALL - DAY

41

Hannah enters, joining Michaela, Jamilah and Paul.

PAUL

And then?

Hannah drops lethargically into the chair.

MICHAELA

I take it you didn't get your 'Get Out of Recycling Free' pass?

HANNAH

Not even after I told them my grandparents died from exposure at Agbogbloshie, and my memories of playing in the mounds.

Jamilah does not follow.

MICHAELA

It's in Ghana. The world's biggest dumping site for electronic waste.

HANNAH

People scavenge for stuff and then die of the toxins and shit. But have we learn anything from that? Apparently Not.

PAUL

You should have said cousins. Your grandparents would have been too old to die from e-waste.

HANNAH

Thank you. Because what I need now is to be reminded of how old I am.

42 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY

42

Alexandria walks through the gardens nonchalantly. She is following Hannah, Paul, Michaela and Jamilah who enter the prefab. Alexandria is about to enter when Chad approaches. Alexandria bends down and attends to her lace.

43 INT. SMOKERS DEN - DAY

43

CHAD

Can I buy a smoke off someone?

Paul hands him a smoke and lighter and refuses Chad's change.

MICHAELA

I haven't seen you smoke before.

CHAD

I try not to.

Chad exhales.

CHAD (CONT'D)

I smell bullshit. Excuse my french, but there's something very off going on.

Everyone looks at him.

CHAD (CONT'D)

This recycling thing. They don't know what they're doing.

HANNAH

I'm not going.

CHAD

But she says it's compulsory, man.

MICHAELA

It's almost definite I'll have a seizure. What the hell?

Jamilah's feet tap more and more frenetically.

PAUL

Well, at least you guys have a choice! I got told "You won't be attending". Presumably, over paint.

Michaela puts her hand on Jamilah's legs.

CHAD

You don't want to go either?

Jamilah shakes her head.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Well, I'm just going to phone my boss and tell him where I am. If I get fired, I get fired.

Chad puts out his half-smoked cigarette and leaves.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Thanks for the smoke.

44 EXT. SMOKING DEN - DAY 44

Chad walks out towards the house. Alexandria sneaks in.

45 INT. SMOKING DEN - DAY 45

HANNAH
Just chill out. They can't force you. They're not going to throw us out if we don't do recycling.

ALEXANDRIA
You will have to leave SunValley though.

No one has noticed her enter and the response is defensive.

MICHAELA
So if I go and have a seizure and can't go back, I have to leave? Even though I have no job and not TWO RAND for a shelter?

ALEXANDRIA
Yes. Except even if you do sign up, they won't let you go.

PAUL
Well, that's totally unfair!

ALEXANDRIA
I could be fired for telling you, but you are about to be terminated.

PAUL
Like a cockroach?

ALEXANDRIA
That's just the medical - asked to leave. You guys don't get it. Their hands are tied. Every patient must be doing community from tomorrow, or SunValley shuts.

PAUL
Well I'm screwed.

ALEXANDRIA
I'm going to try and make a plan to find something for you to do - so you've got a chance. But not if you're not willing.

MICHAELA

Please Hannah, I'm sure I'll be fine anywhere except around Tammy's friends.

ALEXANDRIA

It'll be a small group, Jamilah. No one will know we're from here.

Jamilah nods.

PAUL

I'm not full of shit, I'll do whatever.

They look at Hannah.

HANNAH

OK.

ALEXANDRIA

I'll see you tomorrow. Wear sunscreen and stuff.

46

INT. CLINIC NURSES STATION - NIGHT

46

The patients are mostly dressed in pyjamas. They're lining up for their night medication. Nurse comes out to address them:

NURSE

After medication you'll see there's a paper. If you're NOT planning on going to the recycling tomorrow, put your name in the red column.

Paul has been handed his pills in a small cup. He turns to Jamilah, doing a Morpheus from the Matrix impersonation.

PAUL

This is your last chance. After this, there is no turning back.

He picks up one of the white pills from his cup.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You tick the blue column - the story ends, you go home to your own bed, and you tell everyone you were... wherever you want them to believe you were.

Paul stares at Jamilah. Some of the patients around are watching and giggling. Michaela stands next to Jamilah and rolls her eyes whilst laughing. Kelly looks disapproving.

Paul picks another random pill out of his cup.

PAUL (CONT'D)

But if you tick the red column, you stay in Wonderland, you'll go to work sessions...

Hannah joins in seamlessly:

HANNAH

...And group therapy... And individual therapy... And other kinds of therapy. And I will show you just how deep this navel hole really goes...

Hannah gives Jamilah a series of exaggerated listening faces: interested, compassionate, sad, outraged.

Olivia is standing at the top of the stairs watching.

OLIVIA

The red column is to say you're planning to not attend.

She leaves.

PAUL

Shit.

47 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY 47

It's Jamilah's third morning. Paul is acting out some kind of Mission Impossible type scenario. Hannah films him with her iPhone.

PAUL

Plastics narrowly averted. Tin! To the right!

Luella shouts at them through the window.

48 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 48

LUELLA

Hey! No cell phones after 8 am!

49 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY 49

PAUL

I'm using it for photography! It's practice for my job someday!

Paul catches himself.

PAUL (CONT'D)

OK I'm handing it in!

He dashes off.

50 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

50

OLIVIA
Exhibit A. Unbelievable

Luella and Alexandria prepare to leave. Alexandria approaches Olivia.

ALEXANDRIA
There's an idea I've had I'd like to chat to you about quickly.

OLIVIA
OK.

ALEXANDRIA
I saw that all the patients signed to go out for work sessions.

OLIVIA
Really? That's surprising.

ALEXANDRIA
It's just, I've had a friend from the animal shelter ask if we had a few patients to help there today.

OLIVIA
That's a lovely idea, but I think it will be more disruptive right now. The group is geared for recycling.

ALEXANDRIA
But what about... I thought perhaps I could take Paul and Michaela who can't go to Remagine.

OLIVIA
I don't think that's a good idea.

ALEXANDRIA
That's a pity. It seems a shame to lose the contact at the animal shelter. It was hard to get their ear.

OLIVIA
Would you go along?

ALEXANDRIA
Of course!

OLIVIA
OK. But if in doubt, abort mission.

ALEXANDRIA

Right. And maybe Jamilah?

OLIVIA

I'll leave the details to you. If they've signed up, they can go.

51 INT. CLINIC CONSULTING ROOM 1 - DAY

51

Jamilah sits waiting, her feet tapping. Olivia comes in.

OLIVIA

Sorry to keep you waiting. How are you finding everything?

JAMILAH

It's fine.

Olivia assesses Jamilah's appearance, which looks better.

OLIVIA

Jamilah, why do you think your work said you needed to come into a place like this?

JAMILAH

They thought I took too many calming tablets on purpose. It was a mistake though.

OLIVIA

You didn't mean to take the tablets?

JAMILAH

I did. But I forgot I had already taken some earlier. I didn't have time to eat so they were a bit strong.

OLIVIA

Have you lost weight recently?

JAMILAH

(Defensive)

Yes. From stress.

OLIVIA

What's causing your stress?

JAMILAH

Everyone keeps piling their work onto me and then I get blamed it's not finished.

OLIVIA

And at home?

JAMILAH

There's been some fighting.

OLIVIA

About anything in particular?

JAMILAH

My younger brother's taking drugs and stealing. My daddy and brother want to change the locks but my mommy doesn't want to.

OLIVIA

That does sound very stressful.

Beat.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Your mom seemed very set on you not going to a private hospital.

JAMILAH

My mommy's old boss does the catering for all those hospitals. My mommy thinks her boss will tell everyone I'm in there. To spite us.

OLIVIA

Jamilah, do you think you need to be here?

JAMILAH

Yes.

OLIVIA

OK, good. How do you think this place will help you?

JAMILAH

Then my work will let me keep my job.

52

EXT. CLINIC PARKING LOT - DAY

52

The patients climb into a combi. Nurse 1 is signing them all off as they get in. Unenthusiastic Luella is in the driver's seat and Olivia sits in the front passenger seat.

Alexandria waits uncomfortably, trying to look nonchalant.

OLIVIA

(through the window)
Are all of yours late?

ALEXANDRIA

No. Oh no! I sent them back. To get more appropriate foot wear. And sunscreen. And hats!

LUELLA

Alexandria, I'm glad we've got someone as responsible as you here.

Olivia is not as readily convinced and watches Alexandria closely. Nurse 1 closes the door of the combi. Alexandria grins cheerfully and waves.

ALEXANDRIA

Bye!

The combi drives off. Nurse 1 looks at Alexandria.

NURSE 1

If they don't appear soon I'm going to have to tell them.

Alexandria nods.

53

INT. CLINIC MICHAELA AND HANNAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

53

Michaela, Hannah, and Jamilah are crowded into the small bathroom. The door is open and Paul is sitting on one of their beds. The girls are putting on sunscreen and generally preening.

MICHAELA

In the girls' bedroom! Yoh! I'd think you'd be avoiding breaking any more rules, Paul.

PAUL

Hey, I've risked getting into yet more trouble to bring you people sunscreen, so be nice.

HANNAH

Racist.

Jamilah comes and waits quietly on the other bed.

PAUL

How is that racist? Because I have sunscreen and you don't? Would you like to pull the sexism card too?

Michaela is arranging her hair through a pink cap.

MICHAELA

Time check.

No one says anything.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Jamilah?

JAMILAH

I don't have a phone.

HANNAH

But you're the time-type one.

JAMILAH

(repeating)

I don't have a phone.

MICHAELA

What's the friggin' time?

Hannah looks at her phone.

HANNAH

Oh shit.

54

EXT. CLINIC PARKING LOT - DAY

54

Nurse 1 is on the phone.

NURSE 1

Hello, Olivia? There's a problem.

Alexandria paces, frustrated.

NURSE 1 (CONT'D)

Alexandria's patients have disappeared. We've looked everywhere. Must I call the police?

Alexandria watches Nurse 1.

Jamilah, Michaela, Paul and Hannah come sprinting to the car park.

NURSE 1 (CONT'D)

Can you hear me? Hello? Hello?

The patients, out of breath, reach Alexandria and Nurse 1.

ALEXANDRIA

What part of two PM sharp don't you understand? Perhaps you're in the wrong facility. Maybe a neuropsych assessment is in order? Is the problem with the hands on the clock, or the numbers on the computer thing??

Nurse 1's phone rings. She answers.

NURSE 1
Hello. Hello?

She walks towards the gate.

NURSE 1 (CONT'D)
No, everything is fine.

ALEXANDRIA
Let's go.

She she pulls out a bunch of dog leashes.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
I hope I have enough for all of
you.

55 INT. ANIMAL SHELTER BAKKIE - DAY

55

The vehicle is on its way to a mountainous destination.

In the back seat, Jamilah sits in the middle between Hannah and Michaela. Hannah has a hoodie pulled over her head and appears asleep.

The sexual tension in the front is palpable, where Alexandria is driving and Paul is filming through the passenger window with a video camera.

ALEXANDRIA
You might want to take it easy with
the shooting. There aren't a whole
lot of memory cards.

Paul ignores her and carries on filming a little longer before bringing his head back into the car.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Do you want to put the strap around
your neck?

PAUL
I'm good, thanks. Most pros find
the strap restrictive.

Paul catches Jamilah's reflection in the rear view mirror as she looks out of the car anxiously. He passes her his oversized sunglasses.

PAUL (CONT'D)
For privacy.

Paul winks at Jamilah who puts on the sunglasses.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Looks good.

ALEXANDRIA

We're making a video for the animal shelter, there's nothing to hide from.

Alexandria notices Hannah is fiddling on her phone.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Your phones were supposed to be handed in.

HANNAH

Don't worry, it's on flight mode. It's just to use as a second camera.

Jamilah is startled by the excited dog, BETSY, who jumps up behind her across the glass panels.

MICHAELA

Cute!

Jamilah does not look convinced.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Uh uh. Don't make eye contact. You can't let him think he's calling the shots. You're the boss, Jamilah. Trust me, I've done quite a lot of dog training.

HANNAH

We've all seen the Dog Whisperer, Cesar.

PAUL

This looks good.

56

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY

56

The combi pulls into a vague parking area at the bottom of the mountain. There's a path nearby. Paul and Alexandria get out the front.

ALEXANDRIA

Let's set up over there to get wides of them getting out.

PAUL

It will look better in close.

ALEXANDRIA

Yes, but we need to get a wide first.

PAUL

I don't think we need both. You said we were low on cards. Anyway, I thought I was shooting this?

ALEXANDRIA

You are. Which means you carry the tripod (she hands him the tripod). I'm directing it.

Alexandria turns to Michaela, Hannah and Jamilah who are getting out of the car.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

OK, so Michaela, so you're good with dogs?

MICHAELA

I'd say so.

Alexandria takes the dog leashes out of the front seat where Paul has left them and passes them to her.

ALEXANDRIA

These are the shelter's office dogs. They're very submissive.

She looks to Hannah and Jamilah to explain.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Very friendly and obedient.

HANNAH

(Under her breath.)

Yes, again: We've seen the Dog Whisperer. And also, we speak English and live on earth.

ALEXANDRIA

Jamilah, you OK with this?

JAMILAH

Yes.

ALEXANDRIA

Good to challenge those fears?

JAMILAH

Yes.

ALEXANDRIA

Awesome! OK, so when I say 'Action', Michaela opens the boot.

Michaela stands near the boot of the bakkie with the readiness and professionalism of shooting an Axe commercial.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Then, Michaela will call out
Betsy...

Michaela interprets this as a sign to practice the action.
She stands away from the bakkie and claps on her legs.

MICHAELA
Betsy!

Alexandria was not expecting a full mime of the entire action
but goes with it.

ALEXANDRIA
Good... Then Michaela puts the
leash on Betsy and passes Betsy to
Hannah.

Michaela clips the air Betsy onto the air leash which she
hands to the real Hannah.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Then Michaela will call out
Rustles.

MICHAELA
Rustles!

Michaela repeats the action with an air Rustles jumping out
of the boot.

ALEXANDRIA
And she puts Rustles on a leash.

Hannah is tortured by Michaela's air leashing of the second
air dog.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
And then Hannah and Michaela walk
with Betsy and Rustles towards the
path, and Jamilah closes the boot!

Jamilah (air) closes the boot.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Got it?

The three girls nod.

Alexandria walks over to stand with Paul who is finishing
mounting the camera on the erect tripod. The wind is blowing
unpleasantly loudly.

PAUL
There's no microphone.

ALEXANDRIA

It doesn't matter. Ready....
Action!

Michaela opens the boot, stands back and claps on her legs.

MICHAELA

Betsy!

Betsy leaps out of the boot. She rushes around the area excitedly.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Betsy, Betsy!

Hannah rolls her eyes and then rubs them. She surreptitiously checks her phone. Jamilah is growing more comfortable with the whole dog scenario and watches with interest.

Michaela manages to clip Betsy onto the leash and passes her on to Hannah.

At their distance away, Alexandria watches Paul.

ALEXANDRIA

Are you getting this?

Paul doesn't answer. Alexandria's phone rings. Paul gives her a dirty look. Alexandria looks at the number and answers.

Over at the car, Michaela calls out and puts the beautifully gentle RUSTLES onto the leash.

MICHAELA

Rustles! Good boy. Good boy!

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Hello. Hello?

Alexandria walks away from Paul.

Jamilah walks over to the boot. She stops.

MICHAELA

Let's go.

JAMILAH

There's another dog here.

MICHAELA

Oh.

She looks over to Alexandria who has her back towards them on the phone.

ALEXANDRIA

Because I've been driving.... The dogs are what? Are what?

The wind is strong and the reception poor.

MICHAELA
(to Jamilah)
What are you doing?

Jamilah is looking in the back seat of the car.

JAMILAH
I'm getting that other leash.

MICHAELA
Are you sure? Let me come and do
it.

Jamilah walks back to the boot. A DOG looks out at her. It growls. Jamilah freezes. Michaela stops. The dog growls more aggressively.

ALEXANDRIA
No everything is good... I can't
hear you - they're fine.... No,
it's the office dogs.... There's
what?

MICHAELA
(Michaela stays calm and
talks softly)
Back away, Jamilah. Just back away
nice and slowly.

Jamilah remains petrified with fear, whilst the dog snarls.

On the phone, Alexandria's face changes to shock. She turns to look towards the car.

The dog leaps out of the boot, lunging at Jamilah's face, snarling with bared fangs. Michaela screams.

Michaela, Hannah and Alexandria sprint over to the car.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
Jamilah!

COMM 3

57

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY

57

The dog snarls at Jamilah's neck and knocks her to the ground, to the horror of Michaela and Hannah nearby. Michaela screams loudly.

MICHAELA
Jamilah!

The dog runs off. Michaela races after the dog.

Hannah and Alexandria (who is further away) run towards Jamilah.

Paul is capturing all of the above on film.

Hannah looks down at Jamilah.

HANNAH

You OK?

Jamilah has a small trickle of blood from a bite between her face and neck. Luckily, it has missed her throat. She jumps up and starts running after Michaela.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

What the?

In the mean time, Paul unscrews the camera from the tripod and runs after the dog and two girls, filming from his shoulder.

Alexandria arrives at the scene and picks up the human end of Rustles' abandoned leash.

ALEXANDRIA

Shit, shit, shit!

She puts her hand in her back pocket and pulls out a business card.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Follow them and keep them away from that dog!

HANNAH

I don't really run.

ALEXANDRIA

I can't leave the car, dogs and two hundred thousand rands worth of film equipment. Go! You have a phone.

Hannah looks at the business card. It has Alexandria's name and contact details on it.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Make sure nothing happens to that camera.

(She curses inaudibly.)

And don't let them near that dog!

Hannah looks at Alexandria with thinly veiled contempt. She shows no sign of having bought into Alexandria's sense of urgency or plan. Alexandria shouts at her more loudly.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

That dog mauled a kid! It's vicious! It was supposed to be euthanised.

Alexandria picks up her phone and dials.

Hannah makes no move.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Yes, give me Yvonne. It's an
emergency.
(aside to Hannah)
GO! And keep your phone on.

Hannah reluctantly jogs off.

HANNAH
These people are addicted to drama.

58 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY

58

The dog races up the mountain. It looks cheerful and happy to be on an adventure.

Michaela runs behind it.

MICHAELA
Come! Come here boy!

Jamilah runs behind Michaela. She smiles and concentrates, closing her eyes briefly and then looks serious. A thin trickle of blood blows from her face. She passes Michaela.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
Jamilah! What are you doing? He
will smell your fear!

Michaela is out of breath and walking. Paul catches up to her.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
I don't understand. She's scared of
dogs. And it bit her.

Jamilah continues running. She has a steady, sporty stride and a serious, athletic expression. She doesn't look at the dog but concentrates on setting an even, steady pace.

PAUL
(to Michaela)
I think maybe... maybe she just
likes running.

Hannah is far behind the rest of the group. She can see them ahead and jogs on after.

59 EXT. CAVE - DAY

59

The dog slows down and starts sniffing the ground. It sniffs its way to a hole in the rock, a large cave.

Jamilah runs behind, following him as if he were the leader in a trail run.

60 INT. CAVE - DAY

60

Despite the abundance of branches, leaves and litter blown in by the wind, there are signs of human inhabitation. There are the remains of an old fire. A few large logs have been roughly pulled around it, presumably for seating. There is a very old bed and mattress, presumably salvaged from a dump. There's a paraffin lamp and some old clothes.

The dog enters and sniffs around the fire. Something has caught its attention. It finds some scraps of food which it gulps down and an old bone which drags it off deeper into the cave.

Jamilah arrives and stops in the entrance. Now that the running has stopped she is uncertain what to do. She sits down on a log to wait. She watches the dog who has seen her but is ignoring her. Jamilah feels her neck and sees the blood on her hands.

Michaela arrives, very out of breath. Paul follows behind her, filming her entrance from the camera still on his shoulder.

Michaela scowls at him through the viewfinder.

PAUL

Freaky spot. I wonder how much they'd charge me for rent?

MICHAELA

Don't joke.

Michaela confidently approaches the dog. Jamilah hangs behind her. At some point the dog starts growling.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

He's eating something.

Michaela takes another step forward and the dog snarls. Jamilah hangs back, looking worried. Paul films.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Can you please turn that bloody thing off!

PAUL

Jeez! Yes, Ma'am.

Paul turns off the camera and puts it down. He walks around the cave, inspecting the signs of human inhabitation. He picks up a shirt with a branch.

PAUL (CONT'D)
With skinny jeans?

Michaela watches the dog.

MICHAELA
I'll wait till it's finished
eating.

Paul lights a cigarette and continues looking around.

PAUL
No way!

He has found a large stash of *dagga* rolled in a newspaper. He picks it up and holds it gently to his cheek.

MICHAELA
Is it...?

Paul opens the newspaper to show her.

PAUL
Yes... it is green goodness.

MICHAELA
Paul, man! Just now you're going to
smoke that.

PAUL
No Michaela. Right now, I am going
to smoke that.

Paul puts his cigarette down and starts cleaning some of the heads of *dagga*.

MICHAELA
You're going to ruin your recovery.
What about going to the photo
thing?

PAUL
Don't worry about me. Worry about
yourself.

Paul winks at Jamilah.

PAUL (CONT'D)
It's too late for me, save
yourselves!

MICHAELA
It's drugs! It's a relapse.

PAUL
Chill the fuck out. It's weed. It's
less addictive than cigarettes.

MICHAELA

You idiot! You're screwing yourself over, and you're going to screw things over for us.

PAUL

And there you have it. That's what you really care about.

61 EXT. CAVE - DAY

61

Hannah reaches to top of the path, out of breath. She sees the cave and can hear Paul shouting from inside.

PAUL

(Off screen)

Don't pretend you care about my recovery when actually you're just scared you'll get into trouble.

62 INT. CAVE - DAY

62

Hannah wearily enters the cave.

PAUL

Oh look, you can use Hannah's phone. Call SunValley to tell on me. Then they'll know you had nothing to do with it...

Hannah spots the abandoned camera and goes to pick it up.

HANNAH

There was a mistake. That's not the shelter's dog. Leave it alone.

MICHAELA

What? How did it end up with us?

HANNAH

The shelter picked him up earlier today. Someone forgot him in the bakkie.

Jamilah moves closer to the dog. He snarls. Jamilah watches the dog closely.

JAMILAH

He's an orphan.

HANNAH

Leave him! He's not an orphan. He's a vicious dog. The shelter took him to put him down.

JAMILAH

I just gave him a fright earlier.
He's not actually vicious. They
mustn't put him down because I gave
him a fright.

Hannah shakes her head at Jamilah's logic. Michaela chides
her bossily.

MICHAELA

No Jamilah, they found him being
vicious before you met him.

Paul finishes rolling his joint. Michaela shrieks.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Don't!

Hannah turns to leave.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Your friend is about to smoke a
joint!

HANNAH

Oh.

MICHAELA

Is that all you have to say.

HANNAH

I suppose you could have offered to
share.

PAUL

Um, OK. Thanks. Is that all you
care about me relapsing?

MICHAELA

So you admit it's a relapse?

PAUL

Shut up.

HANNAH

I think I'll wait outside.

Hannah walks out with the camera.

PAUL

Fine!

Jamilah is distressed at Paul's intention to smoke *dagga*, and
even more distressed about the discovery of the dog's
imminent fate. She eyes him helplessly. The dog is oblivious
to this and enjoys his bone. Jamilah takes a tentative step
towards him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Jamilah, he's just not that into you.

MICHAELA

Jamilah if you take another step towards that dog I swear to God I'm going to put the leash on you!

PAUL

(To Michaela)

Why are you so obsessed with controlling everyone else? Look at yourself. You're trying to control me, you're trying to control Jamilah, you're trying to control the dog...

MICHAELA

Stop with your *kak* already and let's go. You've already given me one seizure in the last twenty four hours.

PAUL

You are such a martyr.

Paul does an unflattering impersonation of Michaela.

PAUL (CONT'D)

"Don't worry, it's not your fault"... "Oh, you're not to blame, I just have this sickness..." What a lot of bullshit! You just keep everything for ammunition later!

Jamilah is crying softly and tapping her feet faster and faster.

MICHAELA

Stop it!

PAUL (CONT'D)

Stop it!

63

EXT. CAVE - DAY

63

Hannah sits down under a nearby tree. She takes out Alexandria's business card. The card is brown. On it, in a darker brown, is written:

"Alexandria Browne" followed by "+27721340846" and "AlexandriaBrownewithane@gmail.com".

The word "Browne" is written in red in both her name and email address.

Hannah adds Alexandria to her contacts and sends her a text message:

"Have camera. Waiting for others. Then coming down".

MICHAELA
(off screen)
Paul!

Hannah plugs in her headphones, puts on her music at high volume and lies down to wait.

64 INT. CAVE - DAY

64

MICHAELA
What the fuck are you doing? It's
drugs!

PAUL
It's just weed. It's not crack
cocaine. It's not heroine!

Paul lights the joint. Michaela flies at him, grabbing at the joint. She loses her temper and kicks him. The paraffin lamp is kicked over and smashes and paraffin spills out all over the ground. It lights up upon coming into contact with the burning cigarette on the ground. Newspaper, wood and dry leaves rapidly produce a strong fire, spreading all over the cave.

65 EXT. CAVE - DAY

65

Hannah twitches as she lies listening to music on her phone, eyes closed. She turns her head away from the cave.

HANNAH
God help us.

COMM 4

MIX TO BLACK:

A song is playing, audible as through headphones. An uneasy, hostile drone sets in.

MIX TO:

VFX: Texture of heat waves and smoke over the black.

There is a scream and sounds of crackling and hissing grow slowly in volume.

66 EXT. CAVE - DAY

66

Hannah, lying under the tree blinks and her nose twitches. She starts to cough and slowly wakes up. She looks up to see smoke coming from the entrance of the cave.

She jumps up and runs to the entrance. As she approaches, the heat of the thick smoke and flames causes her to jump back.

HANNAH
Paul? Michaela?

Shouts and coughing are audible. Hannah looks around helplessly for some kind of solution. She can see some movement through the smoke. Coughing at the smoke, she turns around and runs back to the tree.

Hannah pulls out Alexandria's card from her pocket and shakily inputs the number into her handset. She presses the green button. The phone beeps. Hannah looks at the screen: 'No Service'. She holds the phone up above her head. The 'No Service' notification remains.

67 INT. CAVE - DAY

67

The fire shoots up between Paul and Jamilah where the paraffin spilt. Paul leaps back. The dry leaves, newspapers and branches around him go up quickly in flames.

The fire dominates the side of the cave's exit, where the branches, large logs and firewood were stacked.

Paul turns towards Michaela and is met with thick smoke. The fire is noisy.

PAUL
Michaela? Jamilah?

Paul can't see anything but hears a cough and scream.

On the other side of the paraffin's path and the thick smoke, Michaela lies on the ground.

MICHAELA
Paul?

She coughs at the smoke and gets up, her eyes tearing. She looks in Paul's direction. His silhouette is only just visible through the smoke.

Paul coughs and stands back. Paul is now frightened. He turns towards the direction of the exit, but the fire and smoke is thick there too. The fire's sounds of popping, crackling, exploding and burning grow louder. Paul pulls his shirt over his mouth and tries to walk through the smoke towards the exit. He leaps back at the heat.

Paul's heart is beating loudly over the other sounds of the fire. The dog's whining and crying can be heard along with Michaela's shouting. Paul looks around wildly. Towards the back of the cave, there are no signs of smoke or flames. He moves in that direction.

Jamilah, also deeper in the cave but on the other side, catches sight of Paul before he runs away. Jamilah is frightened and coughing at the smoke and the dog nearby is wheezing. A branch collapsing nearby terrifies her.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
(off screen)
Jamilah!

Jamilah can hear Michaela shouting through the smoke but can't see her.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
Jamilah, come this way.

Jamilah sees Michaela through the smoke. She is not too far away. She could reach her, but Jamilah is completely frozen and doesn't move.

On her side Michaela is frantic and shrieks desperately. She doesn't seem to be able to see Jamilah.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
Jamilah!

The springs from the old bed explode. Michaela runs towards Jamilah but the smoke and flames between them are now too thick.

68 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY 68

Hannah runs along the path, holding her phone up in an attempt to get reception. The signal climbs to one bar and then drops again. Hannah moves around looking for signal. The signal returns at a point just above the path and Hannah scrambles up the rocky, bushy mountainside. She scrambles onto a large boulder. She has two bars of reception.

She presses the redial button.

HANNAH
Alexandria?

69 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 69

Alexandria is waiting at the bakkie. She is relieved at the call.

ALEXANDRIA
Where are you guys?

70 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY 70

HANNAH
There's a cave...

Hannah is out of breath. Talking brings back the coughing from the fire.

71 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 71

ALEXANDRIA
OK, I know the cave. Don't move.
Chill.

72 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY 72

HANNAH
It's on fire. They're in the cave
and it's on fire.

73 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 73

ALEXANDRIA
What? What!

74 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY 74

HANNAH
They're in the cave and the fire's
blocking the entrance with flames
and smoke and shit.

75 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 75

HANNAH
(off screen)
You've got to call those helicopter
fire mountain stopper guys... with
the water things...

ALEXANDRIA
There's no other entrance. Oh, my
God-

HANNAH
(off screen)
You can't panic. Phone the fire
fighters.

76 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY 76

HANNAH
Now, Alexandria. Phone them!

77 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 77
Alexandria hangs up and searches for "Mountain Rescue" on her phone.

78 INT. CAVE - DAY 78
Deeper on the other side of the cave, Paul's heart beats loudly and his eyes dart around. He is aware that the smoke and flames are following him. He sees a ledge on the side of the cave and makes a move towards it.

VFX: Suddenly, Paul's vision turns red and then black. He stops dead. The diegetic sounds around him drop dramatically in volume. He turns around, more slowly this time. The fire and smoke loom as before but a light translucent passage resembling the water vapour in a steam room appears amidst the smoke.

VFX: Paul's loud heart rate has slowed and dropped. His breathing is steady. He walks towards the translucent passage. From behind him as he walks, there appears to be no passage, only thick smoke. In the vapour, Paul doesn't cough and walks through. There is the sound of water streaming.

VFX: Paul's looks calmly at the large, raging flames ahead of him. They are far taller than he. As Paul looks at them, the flames turn blood red and then a translucent, gentle white. Paul walks towards them. Once again, at a distance he appears to be walking into the raging flames.

VFX: As the flames flare and roar loudly and smokily around Paul, he flinches and closes his eyes. The flames once again become translucent, with a HUMAN FIGURE standing in their midst. The figure holds his arms out towards Paul. Paul keeps his eyes closed and walks onwards towards the figure. He disappears into the thick smoke.

In the midst of the cave, Michaela grows hysterical. She screams at Jamilah.

MICHAELA
Jamilah!

There is no sign of Jamilah through the smoke. The sounds of her coughing and the dog's wheezing and whining have stopped.

Michaela puts her arm over her face and begins walking into the fire and smoke. A hand touches her shoulder. She turns around. The hand belongs to a TALL WOMAN FIGURE. It is difficult to make out her features. The sounds of the fire and other diegetic sounds lower.

TALL WOMAN FIGURE
Come with me.

Michaela's hysteria subsides.

MICHAELA
My friend is in there.

TALL WOMAN FIGURE
Come with me.

MICHAELA
I can't leave her.

TALL WOMAN FIGURE
You can't save her.

VFX: The Tall Woman Figure takes Michaela by the hand and leads her through the flames. The flames don't touch them. Michaela is calm but crying. The Tall Woman Figure puts her arm around Michaela's shoulder and hugs her tightly as they walk into the midst of the flames.

In the back of the cave, Jamilah lies in the foetal position. She is completely lifeless. So is the dog lying nearby.

The fire surrounds them and even more closely the thick smoke. The smoke encloses around Jamilah's pale, still doll-like face.

FADE TO BLACK

The screen is black and silent for a long moment.

A soft wind sound fades up along with the following sub-title:

"Wake up."

MIX BACK TO:

Thick smoke.

Jamilah's lifeless face becomes visible in the smoke again. The wind sound rises. Jamilah coughs and colour returns to her face.

The wind blows as the sub-title reads:

"Get up."

Jamilah opens her eyes and stands up, the smoke still thick.

Jamilah is calm. Her eyes stream from the smoke but she isn't coughing.

The wind blows and the sub-title reads:

"Get going."

Jamilah picks up the dog and heaves him onto her shoulder. The smoke is thick and black and the flames strong and loud.

VFX: The smoke turns translucent for a split second and Jamilah walks and disappears into the thick smoke.

VFX: Jamilah finds herself under a wall of fire and smoke. She's not moving magically through anything; she coughs and chokes and screams in the heat as flames lick her. She turns around.

The wind blows and sub-titles comes up:

"Jamilah, I have rescued you."

"I am rescuing you."

"And I will rescue you."

VFX: Jamilah turns around and walks back into the flames. She continues walking until she reaches sunlight.

79 EXT. CAVE - DAY

79

Jamilah leaves the cave; the dog on her shoulder is quietly panting. Outside the cave, the smoke is thinner. Despite the wind, the fire hasn't moved out beyond the interior of the cave, presumably stopped by the dry, rocky ground.

Jamilah continues walking until she reaches the tree where Hannah was lying. "Reality" has returned to hard and cold. (In other words, audio and visual are completely natural). Jamilah puts down the heavy dog and turns back towards the cave.

Michaela walks out of the cave towards her. Michaela is still crying. She doesn't appear in the least distressed, rather extremely relieved.

Michaela and Jamilah see each other.

Paul is there also. It is unclear whether he has arrived after Michaela or was at the tree before Jamilah, unnoticed. He picks up the camera, left at the tree.

80 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY

80

Hannah is running back towards the cave. She looks very frightened. She looks up and sees Jamilah, Paul and Michaela at the tree. She stops and staggers towards them, staring.

81 EXT. CAVE - DAY

81

HANNAH

What... How... Is this a joke?

Hannah wets her pants.

The three others remain calm.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
You were inside. I saw you. You
were inside! What the hell?

MICHAELA
She saved us.

PAUL
He saved us.

JAMILAH
It was God. God saved us.

HANNAH
Are you mad?

The dog sniffs Hannah's damp leg and licks her. Hannah shakes violently. Paul takes off his hoodie and puts it around her shoulders, although it doesn't reach very far.

82 INT. CLINIC BOARDROOM - DAY

82

Sandile and Amelia sit at the table. Amelia is on the phone and hangs up.

AMELIA
Olivia says it went well. So
everyone is on their way back from
Remagine.

SANDILE
Except the four patients with
Alexandria.

Amelia raises her eyebrows.

SANDILE (CONT'D)
We sent the more... potentially
problematic patients on a separate
venture. Depending on how it went,
maybe they'll all be fine!

AMELIA
If you've isolated the problematic
patients and the others interacted
well as a group - you know who to
lose.

SANDILE
Why? The animal shelter thing could
be a good thing.

AMELIA
We need to lose beds to make room
for sorting recycling.
(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Really, if patients are tricky keep things simple. Leave the agonising to Olivia. How many patients went to the shelter?

SANDILE

Four.

AMELIA

That's perfect. We'll rearrange the bedrooms accordingly. Terminate the four.

83

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE NEAR CAVE - DAY

83

Michaela, Hannah, Jamilah, Paul and the dog stand at a safe distance from the cave. Hannah is heavily perturbed, but the others look calm and sober.

HANNAH

What did you do?

PAUL

I set the cave alight trying to smoke pot.

JAMILAH

Then God led us out.

HANNAH

I guess you all smoked the pot.

PAUL

I have never been this sober in my life.

JAMILAH

I feel like a new person.

MICHAELA

I feel like I woke up.

HANNAH

Oh my God, listen to yourselves!

The three look at Hannah.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Well, how did you know it was God?

MICHAELA

When she took my hand - I knew she was God.

HANNAH

So God is a woman?

JAMILAH

God's not a man or a woman, God
is... God.

HANNAH

I actually can't... I can't deal
with this day anymore. Enough!

JAMILAH

You don't understand. God is love.
God loves us. God loves you,
Hannah!

HANNAH

Jamilah, I swear to God I'm going
to hit you. And if you could
actually hear yourself, you'd know
God backs me up on this one.

Michaela looks at Hannah evenly.

MICHAELA

Hannah, calm down.

HANNAH

OK. Let's go.

Hannah heads down the mountain side.

84

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY

84

Alexandria is walking towards the road in an attempt to get
signal. She is on her phone.

ALEXANDRIA

Hello? Hello? Can you hear me? Can
you hear me? I keep getting cut
off. If you can hear me...

The call disconnects. The phone reads 'No Service'.

Alexandria screams in frustration.

She keeps walking. She looks at the screen. The reception is
better. She re-dials. Her phone speaks back to her:

AUTOMATED PHONE VOICE

You have insufficient funds
available to make this call. Please
recharge...

Alexandria throws the phone on the grass.

85

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY

85

Hannah, Michaela, Jamilah and Paul walk down the mountain. The dog walks along keeping step with Jamilah.

HANNAH

Apparently, if you save a dog from a burning cave it will stop wanting to rip your face off and be your friend. Next on Cesar Milan.

The others continue to walk in silence, their eyes shining.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

What do you mean God saved you? I mean, how did you know it was God?

PAUL

Hannah, I just knew.

JAMILAH

When the voice told me to get up and walk the first time, I could see the fire disappearing in front of me. It was, like thin, man. But when I got near to the exit, the flames and smoke was thick again. And very hot. And then I felt it say: "I have rescued you, I am rescuing you and I will rescue you." And I knew it must be good and that I must just keep walking.

HANNAH

So did you hear the voice out loud?

JAMILAH

Not out loud. I just knew that was what was being said to me.

HANNAH

So you thought it?

JAMILAH

Yes. But it wasn't my thought.

MICHAELA

I heard her voice. And I saw her. Her voice was very light, but powerful and very caring. And I knew everything was all right.

PAUL

Exactly. I knew everything was all right. I was just suddenly completely calm.

HANNAH

I guess smoke laced with that amount of marijuana might do that to you.

Paul doesn't respond.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(incredulously to Paul)

You also saw God? But as a man?

PAUL

Yes.

HANNAH

So how do you know it wasn't spirits or angels? Or evil spirits tricking you into the fire?

JAMILAH

No, it was good. I was so peaceful. I knew it was God.

HANNAH

Well, everyone has a dark side. Even God.

JAMILAH

I don't know about a dark side. But today I know that God is a god of goodness only.

HANNAH

A god of goodness only. You saw the God of Goodness Only.

PAUL

GOGO.

HANNAH

Brilliant. God is a black granny. Not hugely original, but it will do, seeming you can't agree what He/She looks like.

She doesn't get a response.

PAUL

God is God.

JAMILAH

GOGO is OK as a title, I think. It's respectful.

HANNAH

Of course it's respectful! That's the point. And God has to be the underdog, the God of the people.

No one responds.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
GOGO it is, then.

86 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 86

Alexandria gets in the car. She opens her hand bag and takes out a plastic envelope with smaller plastic envelopes inside. She takes out one with 'Michaela' written on it. Inside are two white pills. She takes one and washes it down with a sip of water. She can hear Betsy and Rustles whining in the back.

87 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY 87

MICHAELA
Is this the right way?

JAMILAH
Yes, we turned over here.

They continue walking.

HANNAH
There's probably going to be hundreds of people there. Mountain men, fire department, maybe police. Probably Olivia.

JAMILAH
Maybe my brother. He's a policeman.

HANNAH
I hope my brother's not there. What are we going to tell them?

PAUL
The truth.

MICHAELA
We can't lie.

HANNAH
Well maybe you don't want to speak too much then, because we are in a crazy load of trouble.

Hannah stops. The informal car park area is now in view.

88 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE PARKING - DAY 88

The parking area is empty. Alexandria is smoking a cigarette whilst sitting on the grass and throwing a ball for Rustles and Betsy.

Hannah, Michaela, Paul, Jamilah and the dog approach her.
Alexandria jumps at the sight of them.

ALEXANDRIA
Oh, thank God. Thank God, you guys
are OK! Let's go.

HANNAH
Where's the fire rescue? Shouldn't
you tell them we're OK?

ALEXANDRIA
I couldn't get hold of them yet.

HANNAH
You what?

ALEXANDRIA
I kept getting cut off and then I
ran out of airtime.

HANNAH
Why didn't you drive and call
someone? Or dial a toll-free
number? Or stand at the side of the
road?

PAUL
Maybe she was praying.

ALEXANDRIA
I - I don't know. I kept trying to
call. And then my airtime was
finished, so I was trying to figure
out what to do next.

HANNAH
Are you high or something?

ALEXANDRIA
Let's go. Olivia thinks everything
is fine, so let's keep it that way.

HANNAH
I'm sure her sixth sense tells her
something is up.

ALEXANDRIA
Well I told her -

Alexandria stops.

HANNAH
You told her everything was fine?

ALEXANDRIA

I couldn't tell her three patients were trapped in a fire, could I?

HANNAH

She called after the fire and you didn't tell her? Are you mad? You'd rather we burnt to death than get into trouble? You do realise she would have found out eventually?

ALEXANDRIA

I'm not the one who ran off after a dangerous animal!

HANNAH

You brought the dangerous animal!

ALEXANDRIA

I told you to come back and you ignored me! The next thing you're burning to death in a cave. And it's a good thing I didn't get hold of the fire department or say anything! It would have been worse.

Alexandria bursts into tears.

JAMILAH

It's OK, Alexandria. It wasn't your fault. You did the right thing.

HANNAH

That's the shock speaking, ignore her.

ALEXANDRIA

Look, no one can know about this. Everything will be ruined for... everyone. We all fucked up. I don't want to know what happened up there. Nothing happened. We went on a nice walk. We may have got separated at some point because the shelter gave us a rabid FUCKING dog.

JAMILAH

He's fine now.

ALEXANDRIA

But, you guys dealt with it amazingly. Michaela was the Dog Whisperer. Jamilah had a wonderful phobia breakthrough and you guys - didn't make some mocking movie impersonation.

Paul smiles cheerfully.

PAUL

This work therapy stuff is doing wonders already!

ALEXANDRIA

If anyone asks, the walk was nice. Bit tiring. Change the subject. "I'm hungry," or "What kinds of plastic did you recycle?"

HANNAH

What do we say about our clothes?

MICHAELA

I don't want to lie.

ALEXANDRIA

Then don't say anything. There were people burning alien vegetation. The strong wind blew smoke and ashes. There. Can everyone manage that? Do you guys need one of your pills or something?

Alexandria takes out the plastic sachet with Michaela's name on it.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Nurse said you can have for panic attacks.

MICHAELA

I'm fine.

Alexandria stares at her and takes one of them.

PAUL

How many of those have you had?

ALEXANDRIA

Shut up!

Alexandria's eyes are twitching. She addresses the four calm, patients with a paranoid tone in her voice before starting the car and driving them away.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

No one can know our secret!

FADE TO BLACK

- 1 EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD HILLSIDE - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE) 1
- It is an open stretch of monochrome, hilly land. An unpleasant wind blows and the sky is covered in grim clouds. Leaves fly everywhere.
- MICHAELA looks up at the hillside.
- VFX: Michaela sees a boat on the hilltop amidst the blowing leaves. The boat's pink roof flashes through the flurry of leaves amidst the otherwise monochromatic scene.
- Michaela presses into the wind and starts climbing the hill. Three figures are with her.
- VFX: The boat rocks as if on water and the wind screams.
- The four figures, Michaela, JAMILAH, PAUL and HANNAH, continue to approach the boat. The sounds of wind, creaking and waves almost suggest they are at sea. At odds with this, a low slightly beast-like breathing sound fades up and slowly grows in volume.
- VFX: The four figures pull themselves aboard the boat with ropes. They encircle the cabin with the pink roof and ascend the walls. Together, they each lift up one side of the pink, square roof.
- A thick swarm of white butterflies flies out from the open roof. The wind and sea sounds die down and all is calm for a brief moment, except for the animal beast-like sound...
- 2 INT. MICHAELA AND HANNAH'S BEDROOM - DAY 2
- The beast-like sound from the previous scene continues as Hannah snores loudly. Michaela opens her eyes and blinks for a few moments before awakening properly. She pulls open the curtain and the morning sun flows in. She looks out meditatively at the breezy day, the sounds of waves barely audible in the background.
- 3 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY 3
- Outside the window, the day is starting. A few patients are getting an early start in the garden: Jamilah reads a book in the sun and KELLY is writing in her journal.
- 4 EXT. CLINIC GATE AND PARKING - DAY 4
- Near the 'SunValley Centre for Mental Health' sign, SECURITY GUARD 1 and SECURITY GUARD 2 are drinking coffee. Security Guard 1 waves at Olivia's approaching car.

5 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - DAY 5

OLIVIA waves back at Security Guard 1 as she turns into the driveway.

A TEENAGE SKATEBOARDER flies in front of her car out of seeming nowhere. Olivia swerves to avoid the skateboarder and hits a concrete pillar at the entrance.

The skateboarder has fallen over but appears unharmed.

TEENAGE SKATEBOARDER
(shouting at Olivia)
This is a residential
neighbourhood! I could have been
killed.

The air bag has come out of Olivia's steering wheel and she has a bloody nose. SANDILE is just getting out of his car in the clinic car park and runs out to check on Olivia.

Security Guard 1 barks back at the skateboarder.

SECURITY GUARD 1
*Ja, it's a residential area not a
skate park. You the one who caused
an accident!*

Sandile helps slightly shell-shocked Olivia out of the car.

TEENAGE SKATEBOARDER
It's the congestion this place is
causing that's the problem!

SECURITY GUARD 2
Congestion of one single car?

Sandile takes the keys from the ignition and takes a handkerchief out, helping Olivia to hold it to her nose as he steers her towards the gate. As he walks past Security Guard 1 he passes him Olivia's keys.

SANDILE
*Kan jy sy motor asseblief uit die
weg parkeer, Lionel?*

6 EXT. SMOKERS DEN - DAY 6

Jamilah and Paul sit inside with coffee. Michaela is mid a dramatic retelling of her dream.

7 INT. SMOKERS DEN - DAY 7

MICHAELA
And then, as we slowly lift the
pink roof up...

She pauses as Hannah enters.

HANNAH

A whole lot of white butterflies stream out. And I wake her up with my snoring.

PAUL

(To Hannah)

No spoiler alert, at least?

HANNAH

I can't hear her tell that story twice before 8 am.

JAMILAH

Do you think GOGO is trying to tell us something?

HANNAH

Don't eat cheese sandwiches before bed, maybe?

JAMILAH

You don't have to be nasty.

Hannah is taken aback by being told off by mild-mannered Jamilah.

HANNAH

Sorry. Sorry. I'm just ultra bleak at going on the umpteenth litter walk today.

PAUL

Again?

HANNAH

Again. There is no litter left. None, in the entire neighbourhood. We are scavenging for litter like hungry dogs. The ADT guys speak into the radio when they see us. They probably think we're plotting a break-in.

MICHAELA

They probably think you've escaped from the mental hospital.

Hannah flops dejectedly onto the couch.

PAUL

Shame man. I was so sick of sorting recycling. I asked GOGO for something adventurous and meaningful, and now I'm setting up a community rock-climbing wall!

HANNAH
Evangelist.

Paul winks at Hannah.

PAUL
I'll put in a good word for you.

HANNAH
Do you guys actually pray now?

JAMILAH
Yes.

HANNAH
How do you pray?

JAMILAH
I just kind of listen and say what
I'm feeling. Not out loud. But
sometimes I sing also.

PAUL
Serious? That's cool. I like to
draw. Express myself and listen
through pictures.

MICHAELA
We should pray together some time.
Oh, if the staff hears us now they
might lock us away forever.

8 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

8

Olivia stands with her head tilted back, holding the bloody
handkerchief over her nose.

SANDILE
You weren't at fault in the least.

OLIVIA
I'm not sure that will make much
difference to the neighbours. This
is just what I needed.

Olivia sniffs and holds her head back further.

SANDILE
Probably be a good idea to get to a
doctor to check you out.

OLIVIA
No time. I've got to consolidate
that community work partnership...

SANDILE
I'm happy to help where I can.

OLIVIA

And I have to solicit at least three glowing letters of undying appreciation from existing partners. So that maybe, hopefully, just perhaps our investors do not pull out.

SANDILE

It's not all on you, Olivia.

Olivia doesn't notice NURSE 1 enter with a tea tray.

OLIVIA

I conceived of this place. I've been here from the beginning.

Olivia is angry and trying very hard to not to cry. Sandile nods at the Nurse 1 who pours a cup of tea and adds sugar.

SANDILE

OK, OK, I hear you. But it would really put my mind at ease if you allowed a nurse to have a quick look at you.

Olivia regains control and smiles professionally.

OLIVIA

Good idea. I think I'm a bit more shaken than I realise.

Nurse 1 takes her tea and mother hens her out the office.

Sandile watches them walk out as he munches on a biscuit thoughtfully. LERATO SETENE (a smart and fashionably dressed woman in her mid-twenties) arrives at the door. She looks annoyed and impatient.

LERATO

I'm looking for Olivia Henshall?

SANDILE

She's had a bit of an unforeseen emergency. Could you give her twenty minutes?

LERATO

This is already an inconvenient squeeze time-wise for me, I'm afraid.

SANDILE

Would you be prepared to meet with me in her stead?

Sandile puts his hand out in greeting.

SANDILE (CONT'D)
Sandile Ntshinga. Managing
Director.

They shake hands. Lerato is flattered by the attention of important, handsome man in a suit.

LERATO
Certainly. It makes more sense to
speak to the man in charge anyway.

9

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER KENNELS - DAY

9

Jamilah and Michaela are busy cleaning the pen of a litter of puppies. The little bundles of mongrelly cuteness are fenced in a small area, whilst Michaela and Jamilah pick up newspaper and wash floors. Jamilah has noticed a policeman (SALIM) at reception and is eying him.

MICHAELA
It just didn't feel like a dream
dream. It was more like a *dream*
dream...

JAMILAH
It *is* him.

MICHAELA
What?

Jamilah approaches the policeman.

JAMILAH
Salim?

SALIM
Jammie?

He gives her a big hug.

SALIM (CONT'D)
What you doing here?

JAMILAH
Just helping a bit.

SALIM
That's nice. That's very nice. I
miss you. You getting better?

JAMILAH
Ja, I'm fine. I miss yous also.

SALIM
Mommy says you not allowed a phone.

JAMILAH

No, we can. Just not the whole day.

SALIM

So if I bring your bb we can chat?

JAMILAH

Yes. This is my friend Michaela.

SALIM

Very nice to meet you, Michaela.
Nice to see you girls helping in
the community.

JAMILAH

Why you here?

SALIM

Ag, just dropping off this *brak*.

YVONNE opens the door to the Operating Room and walks in.
Through the open door, they hear the loud howls of a small
dog in agony.

Yvonne fetches some medical equipment from a cupboard. She is
crying.

MICHAELA

What happened?

YVONNE

It's Pom Pom.

Yvonne points up to the adoption board above the reception
desk before she returns to the Operating Room, closing the
door behind her.

The adoption board is headed by a large cartoon. The cartoon
shows the rear end of a car driving off. It's trailing bones
and old shoes and has a sign taped to the boot reading 'Just
Adopted'. A cartoon dog with a suitcase waves out the back
window.

Below the cartoon are photos of a few dogs: "Pickles",
"Smoochies" and lastly "Pom Pom" (under a photo of a small,
fluffy, friendly-looking, ball of dog.)

MICHAELA

He was homed last week. Did he get
hit by a car?

SALIM

No man, they took him for dog-
fighting.

HANNAH
Whose Mr Ntshinga?

LERATO
The managing director.

HANNAH
Oh. Sandile.

LERATO.
Did Sandile explain to you what
this business is about?

KELLY
I just know you need help sewing
and I can sew.

LERATO.
Is that all he told you?

Silence.

LERATO
Well I am concerned that you aren't
a little bit more in the know. I
need people who I can trust. On
board! Enthusiastic and excited
about this project!

HANNAH
Most of the patients here are
depressed. So not really
enthusiastic. And if you're excited
you generally get prescribed more
mood stabilisers.

Beat.

LERATO
Okay then. Well, let's see what you
think.

She passes Kelly and Hannah each a business card and launches
into a sales pitch-like explanation.

LERATO (CONT'D)
My name is Lerato. I'm a young
entrepreneur running a small
business, also currently developing
two startups.

Neither Kelly nor Hannah react to this. Lerato presses on.

LERATO (CONT'D)
I've also recently conceived of an
innovative business concept to
generate employment and income
within this community.

Hannah yawns as discreetly as she can.

LERATO (CONT'D)
It's simple, it's cost effective,
and it's profitable.

Lerato pauses.

KELLY
What is it?

Lerato beams.

LERATO
I'm so glad you asked that! Themed
costumes and accessories. For
parties and small events. Bachelor
parties. Bachelorette parties.
Stork parties. Birthday parties.
Office parties, team building
functions, you name it...

KELLY
Dress-up parties for adults?

Kelly is not convinced. This displeases Lerato.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Why would people buy costumes for a
party when you can just hire them?

LERATO
So say, you work in the accounting
department. For the end of the year
party, the accounting department
wants to go dressed up as the
Thundercats. Our company would make
you Thundercats costumes. Character
costumes that can be churned out
quickly and roughly. We have old
sewing machine donations and
factory fabric off-cuts. Costs are
minimal.

Kelly thinks this is ridiculous.

KELLY
I don't think most adults will want
dress up costumes.

Lerato is defensive.

LERATO
My initial research...

HANNAH
No, I get it. Its brilliant.

LERATO

Really?

HANNAH

We're living in the age of nostalgia and perpetual childhood. Grown men have T-shirts with their favourite Nintendo games from the 90s. Yes. Your favourite childhood TV show or video game: The perfect theme to send-off uncertain grooms and hormonal pregnant women. Literally wearing the safety, innocence and possibility of childhood, the aura of fun and adventure... Oh, and the selfie opportunities.

KELLY

I think it's silly.

HANNAH

Yes. But self-consciously silly. Ironically silly. Fashionably silly.

LERATO

OK, wow, I'm so excited! You totally get it. Yay!

Hannah enjoys the audience.

HANNAH

This is perfect. You must strike now, while the whole hipster thing is still hanging on. Make it a collective. Punt the whole locally made bla. Throw in "*Liewe Hexie*" or South African shows. Flip - that Tekken movie is coming out! Mix Candice Hilldebrand KTV nostalgia with Tekken fighting. Brilliant.

KELLY

I have no idea what you're talking about.

LERATO

I'm not quite following everything either but, she's obviously a marketing savant.

KELLY

It doesn't really matter. I can make the patterns, no problem.

LERATO

Fabulous! OK, OK - there's a catch!
I've had three outfits commissioned
for a bachelorette party this
Friday night. Eek! That's two days.
So Kelly Doll here and I are going
to go and get whatever she needs to
sew whilst Hannah GENIUS is going
to source pictures of the outfits
etcetera, because I have never
heard of this TV series. Go team!

Lerato passes her laptop to Hannah.

LERATO (CONT'D)

Use this, my genius.

11 INT. YVONNE'S CAR - DAY [TRAVELLING] 11

Yvonne is driving. There is a cat carrier on the front seat.
Jamilah and Michaela sit in the back, looking out the window
at the neighbourhood outside.

The car is old and noisy. Yvonne raises her voice so that she
can be heard.

YVONNE

After poor Pom Pom this morning and
poop duty, I thought you might
enjoy an outing.

12 EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY 12

It's a bit of a dodgy area and pretty desolate.

YVONNE

(off-screen)

Bit more fun, saving a clean cat!

A cell phone rings loudly.

13 INT. YVONNE'S CAR - DAY [TRAVELLING] 13

Yvonne pulls over to park so she can answer the phone.

Michaela looks out the window at the scene outside.

14 EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY 14

MICHAELA'S POV - The area outside is somewhat desolate.

It's windy and starting to rain.

VFX: The picture flashes monochromatically.

15 INT. YVONNE'S CAR - DAY 15

Michaela blinks as she looks out through the car window.

YVONNE
(in the background)
Hello?

16 EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY 16

MICHAELA'S POV - On the hill, there is a house with a pink roof.

VFX: The picture flashes monochromatically again, only the roof retaining its pink colour. (The area is now recognisable from Michaela's dream in scene 1.)

17 INT. YVONNE'S CAR - DAY 17

Yvonne continues on the phone in the background while Michaela nudges Jamilah and whispers loudly.

MICHAELA
It's the hill - that's the roof!

YVONNE
(off-screen on the phone)
Oh dear.

Jamilah looks out the window.

MICHAELA
From my vision!

JAMILAH
We should come back with the others.

MICHAELA
No, let's go see.

Michaela winds the window open madly on Jamilah's side while Yvonne finishes her phone call.

YVONNE
OK, well I'm on my way.

Michaela holds Jamilah's head out the window.

MICHAELA
Oh no, Yvonne, Jamilah's car sick.

YVONNE
What? Oh no.

MICHAELA

I hope it didn't get on your door.

YVONNE

I'm so sorry. Maybe a drive out was a bit too much.

MICHAELA

No, no. Jamilah just gets car sick sometimes.

YVONNE

Are you OK?

Michaela pulls out a tissue and hands it to Jamilah

YVONNE (CONT'D)

Shit, I've got to get to this cat.

MICHAELA

Please don't worry, we'll go sit at that cafe and get some water. You can fetch us on your way back.

YVONNE

Are you sure? I don't think I'm supposed to leave you alone.

MICHAELA

We'll stay together. Go! That cat needs you!

YVONNE

OK, I'll be forty minutes. Get some cool drink. And here's the shelter cell to call if you need.

Yvonne passes Michaela a twenty rand note and an old cell phone.

Jamilah finishes false wiping her mouth and scrunches the tissue. Yvonne looks queasy.

YVONNE (CONT'D)

And some mints, maybe.

Michaela and Jamilah walk across the road to the cafe. Yvonne waits a moment and then drives off.

18

INT. CLINIC CONSULTING ROOM 1 - DAY

18

Hannah sits with her email account open on Lerato's laptop, waiting. An email arrives from Lerato Setene titled 'Link'. Hannah opens the email and clicks on the youtube link.

The link opens to a montage or title sequence to an anime TV show called 'Cats' Eyes'.

Hannah immediately recognises the show.

HANNAH

No way!

Youtube clip: Shots of the show reveal three scantily cat suit clad women running and leaping across buildings at night.

Hannah regresses to some euphoric child-phase, humming and singing along with the french lyrics in the special way children confidently learn and recite foreign words phonetically, which come out a mixture of nonsense and humour.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(Singing along)

Trois vives pantheres

Qui en un éclair

Savent bondir sans un bruit...

Hannah sings and dances along 'sexily' whilst she watches feats of daring and sexualised leaping around on screen.

She joins in the chorus with renewed gusto:

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(Singing along)

Cat's eyes, *signé* Cat's eyes

Cat's eyes, *signé signé* Cat's eyes!

The video comes to the end. Hannah sets it to replay and opens another tab in her browser to search for images.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

They were proper little minxes.

19 INT. CLINIC PASSAGE OUTSIDE CONSULTING ROOM 1 - DAY 19

Olivia walks past Consulting Room 1 and hears the 'Cats' Eyes' music coming from inside.

She cautiously opens the door to investigate.

20 INT. CLINIC CONSULTING ROOM 1 - DAY 20

Olivia watches Hannah clicking on youtube videos of the 'Cats Eyes' TV series and humming along to the music on replay.

HANNAH

hmmm hum hmmm hum hum.. Cats' Eyes!

OLIVIA

Hannah? Why aren't you at work sessions?

Hannah is startled and defensive.

HANNAH
I am, actually.

OLIVIA
This is not on. What are you doing
in here?

HANNAH
I was sent here.

OLIVIA
It seems to come back to this again
and again: taking responsibility.

Hannah doesn't respond.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Whose laptop is that?

Hannah passes her the business card.

HANNAH
Lerato Setene's. Sandile -

OLIVIA
(the penny dropping)
Sandile. Sandile set you up to work
with Lerato.

HANNAH
Yes. Kelly's gone with her to fetch
stuff to make patterns. Lerato told
me to stay here and... research.

OLIVIA
I apologise. This is poor
communication on our part.

HANNAH
So I can carry on?

OLIVIA
Yes. Great stuff. Well done.

Olivia leaves the room and on second thought pops her head
back in.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Please sign that laptop back into
reception when you're done if
Lerato's not back.

Hannah nods and Olivia closes the door.

HANNAH
Yes, m'am.

21 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 21

It's hot, still and cloudless. Michaela and Jamilah arrive at the top of the hill, Michaela particularly out of breath.

They circle the structure cautiously - something between a shed and a small house. The windows are boarded shut and the door is locked with a rusty old padlock.

JAMILAH

I suppose we must try the roof.

Michaela doesn't like that idea. She does another half circle of the house. One of the boarded windows has a loose plank. Michaela wiggles it a little bit and it comes off. The rest of the window and boards are even more disintegrated. Michaela and Jamilah look inside.

22 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 22

Michaela and Jamilah POV - It takes a half a moment for their eyes to adjust to the dark.

There are a dozen crates and boxes of varying sizes.

Michaela and Jamilah climb in through the window cautiously.

Michaela approaches a crate. Jamilah looks around. Their noses wrinkle at the foul smell.

MICHAELA

It smells bad.

Michaela opens the crate. Inside, there are ominous dark stains. Michaela looks more closely.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

I think it's blood.

Jamilah calls out from the other side of the room.

JAMILAH

Michaela.

Michaela turns around and looks to what Jamilah is looking at. On the side of the room least lit by the open door are some old cages with padlocks and chains attached.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

I think we should go. Now.

They climb out of the window.

23 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 23

Michaela covers up the window with the loose boards.

JAMILAH
Someone's coming.

The sound of a car approaching becomes audible. Michaela and Jamilah crouch behind the house.

24 INT. CLINIC PASSAGE OUTSIDE ADMIN OFFICE - DAY 24

Olivia marches up to the door. It's closed. She rolls her eyes and angrily knocks.

Beat.

Sandile opens the door. Olivia glares at him before noticing CEO is there. Documents, open laptops and a tea tray suggest they are mid-meeting.

OLIVIA
It's fine, I'll come back.

Olivia half slams the door shut behind her and walks off, her eyes burning with reigned in anger.

25 EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY 25

Past the parking area is an open, rather abandoned section of ground. A climbing wall is in the process of being erected: there are no grips on the wall as yet.

ALEXANDRIA and Paul are preparing to set up grips on the climbing wall. Alexandria hands Paul a harness. She puts a second harness on herself.

PAUL
I cannot believe we're going to have a climbing wall.

ALEXANDRIA
Yeah, some private school in Constantshiaahh passed it on. A student had an accident so they were chucking it out.
(She catches herself)
Don't tell anyone about the accident. I'm pretty sure Olivia and the boss people would not have given me a go ahead if they'd known.

Alexandria opens a box with climbing grips in it. Paul picks one up to check it out. Alexandria continues unpacking tools.

PAUL
All good. Guess we'll just keep it super top-ropey and stuff.

ALEXANDRIA

Exactly. I have sold it to them as
"a liminal space, where the
community and the clinic can meet
and build trust."

Paul opens the bag of climbing rope and begins to clean it
effortlessly. He has clearly done this before.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

So you've actually done a lot of
climbing?

PAUL

My folks were big into climbing so
I climbed a lot as a kid.

ALEXANDRIA

Why did you stop?

PAUL

I guess I just developed other
interests.

ALEXANDRIA

Were you any good?

PAUL

Oh, you will see good!

He rapidly makes a figure of 8 at the end of the rope and
expertly ties into his harness.

26 EXT. CLINIC GATE AND PARKING - DAY

26

Across the fence in the parking lot. Olivia comes to inspect
the damage to her car. She notices Alexandria and Paul at the
climbing wall and observes for a few moments.

ALEXANDRIA

(off screen)

Uh, no.

27 EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY

27

Alexandria hands Paul a belay device.

ALEXANDRIA

I will climb and you will belay.
Because if there's a loose grip I
will be held responsible.

PAUL

So I'm just supposed to be your
belay slave?

ALEXANDRIA

You can climb after. During tea break.

PAUL

Offer so rejected!

ALEXANDRIA

You are lucky to be on this work session!

PAUL

Are you going to throw me off?

ALEXANDRIA

Not now. I will wait till we get to the top of a mountain.

PAUL

Cha ching ha ha.

ALEXANDRIA

Seriously, you can climb once I've set the grips.

28 EXT. CLINIC GATE AND PARKING - DAY

28

Olivia watches Alexandria and Paul. She can't necessarily hear any or all of the their conversation, but the flirtatious body language and lack of anything constructive happening is telling enough.

Olivia walks up to the fence and calls across.

OLIVIA

Alexandria, could I speak to you for a moment please?

29 EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY

29

Alexandria looks towards Olivia. She walks up to the fence and talks to Olivia across it.

ALEXANDRIA

Hey. Things are going really well.

OLIVIA

With the wall?

ALEXANDRIA

Yes.

OLIVIA

I want to remind you that you are here in a particular capacity, as staff.

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

It's important you keep that boundary with patients. You're not a friend. You're not a volunteer. You're staff.

ALEXANDRIA

Well, technically I am a volunteer.

OLIVIA

You're volunteering as staff, in a professional, boundaried capacity. There can't be any fraternising with patients. And that's not so much for my sake, or your sake, but for the sake of the patients. Do you understand?

ALEXANDRIA

I think so.

OLIVIA

Who else is working on this wall?

ALEXANDRIA

Well, there was only gear for two people.

OLIVIA

Please get more.

ALEXANDRIA

It's expensive. I'm going to source some stuff at cost and second hand and donations.

OLIVIA

Please go in the morning and get what you need. I'll give you my credit card to use.

She looks directly at Alexandria.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I trust you.

30

EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY

30

Jamilah and Michaela wait tensely behind the house.

They can hear the sound of a rickety combi parking and switching off, followed by footsteps and something heavy being lugged and dropped. The door opens and the heavy object is dragged inside.

Jamilah and Michaela look through the gap in the boarded window.

31 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 31

TWO TEENAGE BOYS drag a large crate in. They drop it next to the cage. They open the crate and carry out TWO GERMAN SHEPHERD DOGS. They are breathing, but not moving.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY
How can we tell him these are prospects? They didn't fight us and they didn't fight each other.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY
They young still.

The boys go back outside to the vehicle, taking some of the empty crates with them.

32 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 32

Michaela goes to the edge of the house to look around the wall and spy on the boys.

Michaela's POV- The boys are loading the crates from the combi before going back inside the house.

Michaela returns to Jamilah at the window to watch them inside.

33 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 33

The boys rearrange a mixture of dogs and a few cats in the crates and boxes. Most animals are small. They throw some donkey blankets over the crates and cages.

They finish and sit down on some crates for a cigarette. Older Teenage Boy looks straight at the window Jamilah and Michaela are spying through.

34 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 34

Jamilah and Michaela freeze. They duck down as Older Teenage Boy approaches them.

35 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 35

Older Teenage Boy pulls at the loose plank.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY
We must fix this window.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY
It's just for a day, man. No one comes here. The *bergies* are scared.

Older Teenage boy sits down again.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Ja, we fetch them tomorrow night. I
can get the combi again after
eleven when my brother's shift
finishes. Then we come here.

Older Teenage Boy picks up a rock and walks back towards the
window. He closes the gap between boards and bangs the nail
that's loose back in.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY

Let's waii.

The two leave the house, padlocking the door behind them.

36 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - DAY 36

Jamilah and Michaela wait as the old combi struggles for a
moment before starting up and driving off.

Jamilah starts to cry. Michaela puts her arm around her.

37 COMM 2 37

37 EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY 37

Angry eyes look straight ahead with focus. Alexandria
finishes screwing in a grip. She is halfway up the climbing
wall. There are now a whole lot of grips screwed in below
her.

Alexandria looks down at Paul who is belaying her from the
ground below.

ALEXANDRIA

Coming down.

Paul lowers Alexandria to the ground and she takes off her
harness.

PAUL

And my after work duties session?

Alexandria carries on removing her climbing shoes.

ALEXANDRIA

I got crapped out by Olivia for
being unprofessionally friendly.

PAUL

What?

ALEXANDRIA
(Sarcastically)
Yip. Boundaries Paul, boundaries.

Paul removes his harness as Alexandria packs up tools and gear.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
And I'm supposed to source more gear before tomorrow morning so there's no chance of us fraternising.

Alexandria slams the box of grips shut.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
What bullshit. Sorry, now I am being unprofessional.

Paul cleans the rope before packing it up.

PAUL
Whilst you're being unprofessional, fill me in on the goss. Are we still getting shut down? Or are the sponsor's satisfied we are all learning to become well adjusted members of society?

They head off around the back of the clinic towards the storeroom to pack the gear away.

ALEXANDRIA
I can't tell you for sure, but I get the feeling they're not the "oh well done, gold star for effort" types.

Alexandria looks over her shoulder to make sure no one is around to overhear and continues with a hushed tone and exaggeratedly nonchalant, professional walk.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Picking up vibes that there's pressure for lots of super functional work collaborations and stuff.

Alexandria unlocks the storeroom with a set of keys with a life saver key ring. She enters the storeroom with some of the gear. Paul stays outside, passing gear and tools to her inside.

PAUL
It's all preparation for us patients for the real world. Demanding bosses who are never satisfied!

Alexandria returns from the storeroom and locks up.

ALEXANDRIA
You've seemed different these last
couple of weeks.

PAUL
Like what?

ALEXANDRIA
I don't know. Calmer and more
responsible.

PAUL
Oh, thanks. Want me to sign the
keys back into reception?

Alexandria waves the keys with the lifesaver key ring.

ALEXANDRIA
No, they've got the bakkie's keys
on it too and I need to run a
couple of errands. Thank you for
offering though and yes, I do trust
you.

Alexandria looks at Paul a split second too long.

PAUL
Well, thanks professional person.
I'm off to drink tea with my kind.

38 INT. SMOKERS DEN - DAY

38

Hannah is sitting on a couch, hunched over her phone. She is watching 'Cats' Eyes' Youtube videos. Paul comes in.

PAUL
Greetings!

HANNAH
Check this out.

Paul sits down next to Hannah. She gives him one earpiece.

He watches the screen. Faint French dialogue can be heard over the video.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Severely awesome, right?

PAUL
I'll take your word for it. I can't
understand theirs.

HANNAH

Oh please. It's hot anime chicks speaking french. You don't need to understand the words. Those are the words.

PAUL

So just a show that's anime girls speaking french. That's it?

HANNAH

Don't be silly! They're cat burglars. They sneak out at night to steal art work that belongs to their father. Or something.

PAUL

Why are you so in love with this show?

HANNAH

When I was a kid, my cousins from France visited with these VHS tapes. They only played back in black and white.

Hannah touches the screen.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I'd never seen them in colour until today. They were the most beautiful women I had ever seen. I so badly wanted to be her.

Hannah points to the character with the most flowing hair.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I remember being so sure I would be her one day. Gah! I hate getting older!

PAUL

For a black African woman you have a lot of first world problems.

Jamilah and Michaela walk in looking serious and secretive.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Why so serious?

MICHAELA

The place from my dream - we found it. We went up the hill to see.

HANNAH

You found a boat on a hill?

MICHAELA

No, it's a little house. But I recognised the pink roof and the hill - it's definitely the same place.

JAMILAH

Then these boys arrived with stolen pets. To use as bait for fighting dogs.

MICHAELA

To train for dog fighting, man.

PAUL

No way! What did you say to them? What did you do?

MICHAELA

They didn't see us. We hid. We couldn't do anything. They locked up the animals and we had to go.

JAMILAH

They're coming back tomorrow night to get the animals.

PAUL

This is crazy! What do you think we're supposed to do?

MICHAELA

Something. We must do something, that's for sure.

JAMILAH

GOGO showed us so we can help them.

HANNAH

The boys or the animals?

MICHAELA

Those boys are on their own.

39

INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

39

Sandile packs up his laptop and work belongings. The door is open. Olivia arrives at the door. She is calmer and more composed. The door is open and Sandile is inside.

OLIVIA

Have you got a moment, Sandile?

SANDILE

Sure.

Olivia enters and closes the door behind her.

OLIVIA

Did you met with Lerato Setene without me?

SANDILE

She was in a hurry. You weren't available.

OLIVIA

And you just made a decision on which patients to include on her project?

SANDILE

Was there a problem?

OLIVIA

Lerato Setene is extremely vocal in this community. What she thinks of us will likely make or break our chances at future partnerships. And you chose Hannah to work with her. Hannah! Really?

SANDILE

Of all our patients, I think Hannah is probably the best suited for internet research around pop culture!

OLIVIA

Of all the patients, she's also proven to be the most consistently disinterested and passive aggressive.

SANDILE

Well, maybe this will help.

OLIVIA

Or maybe it will screw things up completely.

SANDILE

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

OLIVIA

The real issue is that you went into my meeting without me and made decisions on my behalf without consulting me, or anyone else!

SANDILE

I'm sorry Olivia. I did what I thought best under the circumstances. You have so much on your plate -

OLIVIA

Do you realise how condescending that is? You walk in here - you don't know the patients, you don't know how anything works. I appreciate you've been given "executive powers" but you could at least give us the courtesy of pretending to bounce things off us before you make major decisions.

SANDILE

That really wasn't my intention. In future...

Olivia's phone beeps.

OLIVIA

I have to go. My taxi is here.

40

INT. SMOKERS DEN - NIGHT

40

Hannah, Paul and Michaela are alone in the lounge. Hannah is watching a 'Cats' Eyes' video on her phone.

PAUL

I was so pumped to climb. It's been so long!

Hannah ignores him, engrossed in her video.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Gah! I've actually been doing crazy cat burglary moves. You could listen to me.

HANNAH

I am listening to you. I don't speak french. Do you fly? I mean, do you like, jump through the air?

Jamilah walks in holding a pink blackberry.

MICHAELA

Did Salim bring your phone?

JAMILAH

Yes.

MICHAELA

What did he say about the dogs?

Michaela turns to explain to Hannah and Paul.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

Her brother's a policeman.

JAMILAH

I didn't tell him. He's going away with his wife till Friday.

HANNAH

So?

JAMILAH

The other day he kept saying how there's so many people involved with the dog fights. I've been thinking, what if there are policemen involved?

PAUL

So you think maybe the policemen on duty now might just go along with it?

JAMILAH

If GOGO showed us, then I think GOGO wants us to do something.

MICHAELA

So what, we just magically fly over there tomorrow and free the animals?

HANNAH

Butterflies.

Jamilah notices Paul's hand has a burn on it.

JAMILAH

Paul, are you harming yourself?

PAUL

What? No, no it's from work service. I'm helping Alexandria with the climbing wall.

JAMILAH

Oh, so it was on the belay device.

PAUL

You climb?

JAMILAH

Yes. My school sent us on a workshop. I was very good.

PAUL

That's crazy! You must join us.

Hannah sits bolt upright.

HANNAH

We can fly out. With your climbing thingies.

PAUL

What?

HANNAH

We can use your climbing ropes and thingies to escape from the building.

MICHAELA

Are you crazy?

HANNAH

(to Michaela)

Do you know where we are?

Hannah turns to Jamilah and Paul

HANNAH (CONT'D)

You guys both say you're good at it. You want to save the animals. It's your vision, Michaela! If doubting fat-ass suggests leaping out of windows to save butterfly dogs, it can only be from one place!

MICHAELA

And then what?

PAUL

We take the clinic's bakkie. Because I can get the keys.

HANNAH

This is the most awesome thing ever!

They stare at Hannah.

MICHAELA

I think I'm having a spiritual experience.

41 INT. DAY CLINIC HANDS ON ROOM - DAY

41

Alexandria is setting up before the patients gets in for the first session of the day.

Paul opens the door and enters. The sounds of breakfast down the hall are audible.

PAUL

Good morning!

ALEXANDRIA

Morning. Would you like to see the new gear?

PAUL

Yes!

Alexandria takes out a bag and shows Paul the contents.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Only two more harnesses?

ALEXANDRIA

These were the only well priced ones.

PAUL

Ah shame man. Hannah and Michaela heard me telling Chad about the climbing wall last night. They are desperate to join.

ALEXANDRIA

Really? Chad keen I can imagine, but not Hannah and Michaela.

PAUL

Right? Shows stereotypes about girls being scared to climb are rubbish.

ALEXANDRIA

True.

PAUL

And they would set a good example that you don't have to be super skinny or fit...

ALEXANDRIA

OK, I get it! They can come. I'll put their names on the list.

PAUL

Ah, thanks Alex.

Other patients start arriving. Alexandria is suddenly very busy with whatever she is doing and looks down. Paul stands up and goes to take a seat.

Olivia turns the kettle on and goes through the files on a shelf. Sandile coughs at the open door.

SANDILE

Hello Olivia. I wanted to apologise for yesterday. I'm so sorry for not consulting you about the Lerato thing.

OLIVIA

Thank you Sandile, I really appreciate that. I also wanted to apologise. My manner was out of line and I shouldn't have lost my temper.

SANDILE

I understand. You're under a lot of pressure.

The kettle boils. Olivia makes her tea and takes out a cup for him. Sandile makes some instant coffee.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

Look, I've read all your research on treating mental health institutionally. I have huge respect for your work. That's why I jumped at the chance to be involved here.

Olivia listens.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

I don't pretend to have the kind of experience or insight you do. But whatever I can offer from my organisational psych, business and management background that will help, I want to do that. I would hate to see this place shut.

OLIVIA

Thanks Sandile. I really appreciate that.

Beat.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Anyhow, I better get back to chasing this horrid deadline.

SANDILE

Of course.

Sandile is about to leave, then thinks better of it.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

I don't want to be that person that says 'if there's anything I can do to help' and it's lip service.

(MORE)

SANDILE (CONT'D)

There must be something with this deadline I can help with.

OLIVIA

You know how it is. At this point, it's going to take longer to explain than to do it. As it is I'm going to be here all night.

SANDILE

I'd like to be supportive. I'll stay and make you tea. Print out documents.

Olivia is taken off guard.

OLIVIA

That's really sweet...

SANDILE

Now look whose being condescending! I will spell check, I will format documents!

OLIVIA

Oh gosh, if you would format documents...

SANDILE

Done deal. I've got a meeting, but I'll see you after.

Sandile leaves. Olivia half-smiles to herself; her defences have come down some.

43

EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY

43

Alexandria, Paul, Michaela and Hannah are at the climbing wall. They are each wearing climbing harnesses.

HANNAH

If I'd known this was the kit, I would have thought twice.

ALEXANDRIA

Do you want to swap with Chad? He wants to be here.

HANNAH

No, no. Sorry. I'm in.

ALEXANDRIA

The thing we start with and the thing we end with is safety. Safety, safety, safety. Your safety and your partner's safety.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
So before you start, you perform
your safety checks.

Alexandria turns to demonstrate on Paul.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
You check your partner. You check
the straps aren't tangled at the
back.

She examines Paul's harness situation around his butt.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
The buckles are doubled back. The
belt is tight above the hips.

She checks the buckles around Paul's harness and gives the
belt a testing tug. She checks the tension in the straps
around Paul's thighs.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
The leg straps should be fitted
with room to move.

HANNAH
I'm getting a no feeling.

ALEXANDRIA
Safety. Then your partner checks
you. Straps doubled back on
buckles. No tangles. Belt tight.

Paul slightly sheepishly inspects the necessary around
Alexandria's harnessed pelvis.

Hannah is horrified as Michaela starts inspecting her.

HANNAH
Stop it.

MICHAELA
You're being ridiculous.

Alexandria walks up to Hannah and looks at her harness.

ALEXANDRIA
That's loose. If you took a fall,
you'd fall right out your harness.

44 INT. ANIMAL SHELTER RECEPTION - DAY

44

Yvonne is busy with some administration at the desk. Jamilah
arrives.

JAMILAH
Morning.

YVONNE

Morning Jamilah. Where's Michaela?

JAMILAH

She couldn't come today. How is Pom
Pom doing?

YVONNE

Ah love, he was too injured. We had
to put him to sleep.

Miserable Jamilah nods.

45

EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY

45

Michaela is clinging on someway up the wall.

MICHAELA

I'm scared! I'm going to -

ALEXANDRIA

Take!

Michaela falls off screaming. She rope goes taut and she
falls only a few centimetres down the wall as Hannah catches
her on belay with Paul providing a second safety on the rope.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Nice, Hannah.

Michaela gets back onto the wall.

HANNAH

On belay.

MICHAELA

Climbing.

HANNAH

Climb on.

Montage:

1. Hannah climbs and falls.
2. Michaela catches Hannah.
3. Alexandria and Paul have an intense moment.
4. Michaela climbs with confidence.
5. Alexandria and Paul laugh
6. Hannah does a victory dance wiggle at the top.

END MONTAGE

Hannah and Michaela are relaxed and confident.

Paul and Alexandria pack up the gear as Hannah and Michaela figure out how to take their harnesses off.

ALEXANDRIA

So Hannah, is that sewing project not happening then?

HANNAH

It is. Going well.

ALEXANDRIA

Oh that's a relief. Olivia seems to think pleasing or disappointing that Lerato chick is the single most decisive factor of whether SunValley will survive.

MICHAELA

Pardon?

Alexandria stops packing to explain.

ALEXANDRIA

Lerato Setene knows every community development project and person on the peninsula. She's got the full-blown Joburg networking plague. Olivia is worried that if we piss Lerato off, she will literally put the whole community off us.

PAUL

I can imagine... You don't mess with a lady in leopard print.

ALEXANDRIA

Apparently, she's also a bit difficult.

HANNAH

I was not aware of this. Of any of this. I preferred not being aware.

ALEXANDRIA

Well, keep her happy!

Hannah passes her shoes and harness to Alexandria and leaves. Alexandria glances at her watch.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

Shit! I'm going to miss my pilates class. Ugh.

PAUL

It's cool. Michaela and I will pack the gear away for you.

ALEXANDRIA

Ah, thanks! You know where to put the key?

PAUL

I'll sign it back into reception straight after.

Alexandria hands him the key and runs off.

ALEXANDRIA

Awesome! Thanks, guys.

46 INT. CLINIC HANDS ON ROOM - DAY

46

Kelly is sewing noisily on an old sewing machine.

Hannah comes in. She takes a look at the lycra cat suits. They have long sleeves and are in orange, blue and purple as in the Youtube videos.

HANNAH

They look awesome. Well done Kelly Girl.

KELLY

Lerato asked where you were.

HANNAH

My job was done. I went to another work service for the day.

KELLY

Ja, well you could have helped me. The seamstress ladies' machines didn't arrive yet. I've done all these myself.

HANNAH

Well done. I'll sew the belt loops in tonight.

Kelly scowls and hands her some sewing material.

47 INT. ANIMAL SHELTER RECEPTION - DAY

47

Jamilah walks through the reception area. She checks no one else is around, and opens the door to the operating room.

48 INT. ANIMAL SHELTER OPERATING ROOM - DAY

48

On the operating table is a blanket lying over a small mound. Jamilah stares at the blanket.

She opens a drawer and pulls out a scalpel, some syringes and needles from the cupboard. She slips them into her big jacket pocket and leaves the room.

COMM 3

49 EXT. CLINIC ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT 49

It's past bedtime.

50 INT. CLINIC MICHAELA AND HANNAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 50

Michaela, Jamilah and Hannah get ready to go out. Although they're dressing up to be incognito, they're putting great effort into their appearance.

Hannah is wearing a wig of long curly locks to emulate the blue cat suit character from the Cats' Eyes show. She puts on make-up.

Michaela flat irons her hair and also puts on make-up. She is extremely busty in a purple cat suit. She takes the odd photo/selfie with her phone.

Jamilah is wearing the orange, more boyish cat suit. She ignores issues of appearance and meticulously organises four small back-packs and climbing gear. She checks her phone.

ON SCREEN:

Me:

tht bait dog died :(</3 have u found others?

Salim:

:-(I'm sorry Jammi. No dogs since saw u. *hugz*

There's a knock at the door. Paul comes in with a big blanket.

Michaela flicks her hair.

MICHAELA

Up or down?

Paul puts down the blanket, holding more rope and climbing gear.

HANNAH

Up, but loose enough so that it
will stream outwards when you fly
down.

JAMILAH

Let's go.

MICHAELA
But first... Selfie!

They take a stream of selfies.

51 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - NIGHT 51

There's a laptop screen with a SunValley related document on it. A few keyboard shortcuts and the font and layout of the document is transformed into slick professionalism. Sandile scrolls rapidly down the document and adjusts a couple of minor things.

SANDILE
Perfect. Done.

OLIVIA
That's the last one.

Olivia looks exhausted, but relieved. Sandile's slick suit is looking slightly worse for the wear.

SANDILE
Brilliant.

OLIVIA
Thanks, Sandile. Support appreciated.
(Jokingly)
If things don't work out as executive manager or whatever your title is, you'll always have a place here as a secretary.

SANDILE
Ouch.

52 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 52

Michaela and Jamilah crouch in the shadows.

Hannah rappels down from the window above.

53 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - NIGHT 53

Paul stands in the road with the rope going from his waist up to the tree. He is belaying someone (Hannah) on the other end of the rope.

54 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 54

At the bottom of the tree on the other side of the wall and rope from Paul, Michaela starts climbing as Jamilah points to hand and foot holds.

55 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 55

Olivia and Sandile leave the building and walk to the parking area via the garden.

OLIVIA
I really don't want to
inconvenience you.

SANDILE
It sounds like it's on my way home
anyway.

A rustling in the trees catches their attention.

Across the garden and up in the large tree, Jamilah is about to abseil down through a hole in the fence to the street on the other side.

Olivia and Sandile stop and look towards the rustling tree.

OLIVIA
It's probably just a cat.

In the tree, Jamilah freezes as she hears Olivia.

Hannah who is crouching in the shadows at the bottom of the tree also hears Olivia.

56 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - NIGHT 56

Michaela and Paul stand in the street, wearing harnesses. They have already abseiled down and are directly on the other side of the fence from Jamilah and the tree.

OLIVIA
(off screen)
I'll call security.

Paul and Michaela look up helplessly at Jamilah.

57 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 57

Sandile and Olivia look on at the now still branches.

SANDILE
Better safe than sorry.

They walk onwards towards the security cabin and the gate.

Jamilah is terrified.

OLIVIA
(of screen)
Would you mind checking the garden.

58 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - NIGHT 58

SANDILE
(off screen)
In the tree, there was definitely
something there.

Michaela and Paul wait in trepidation.

59 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 59

NIGHT SECURITY GUARD's large boots crunch towards the tree. Torchlight sweeps across the garden around the tree. Hannah, still crouching beneath the tree just out of sight, squints at the brightness.

The torch flashes around the branches.

Jamilah is frozen in fear.

A sudden noise of cats fighting and rustling bushes comes from the bottom of the tree.

Night Security Guard flashes his light towards the sound. All he can see are some rustling bushes.

Hannah, hidden from view, is contorted against the ground. She shield's her cellphone's screen to avoid giving herself away by the light. A Youtube video titled 'Cat Fight!' plays on her phone. The video ends and there is silence.

Night Security Guard looks perplexed. Then the sound of a yowling, wounded cat running away on the other side of his fence catches his attention.

The Night Security Guard waits a moment.

60 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - NIGHT 60

From the direction of the wounded cat sound, Paul and Michaela wait tensely. Paul is holding his phone with a Youtube video of 'Kitty Cat says I'll be back' on the screen.

61 INT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 61

After a few moments of silence, Night Security Guard is satisfied, pulls his headphones back on and returns to the cabin.

Hannah lies in the grass, relieved.

In the tree, Jamilah smiles.

62 EXT. SOUTH PENINSULA STREET - NIGHT 62

The eatery is on the main drag. It is quiet enough to seem intimate and full enough to count for convivial.

Sandile's car is alongside on the road, waiting at a Main Road Stop-Go traffic.

63 INT. SANDILE'S CAR - NIGHT 63

Olivia looks out of the passenger window.

OLIVIA

This place has the most exquisite pizzas. You can almost forgive them for coming only in organic gluten-free.

SANDILE

I'm on the gluten-free trip. And my energy is much better.

OLIVIA

Should we get a bite? I'm starving. Looks like their kitchen is open late.

SANDILE

Excellent idea.

Sandile looks back over his shoulder and reverses into the open parking space between them and the restaurant.

64 EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT 64

Paul, Hannah, Michaela and Jamilah pull up in the clinic bakkie. Michaela is driving.

65 INT. CLINIC BAKKIE - NIGHT 65

HANNAH

(to Paul)

But how did you know it was a video cat fight? And how were you so quick to find a video?

PAUL

I don't know. I think maybe I was looking for it before I heard yours.

66

EXT. DODGY NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT

66

They park at the bottom of the hill, near the cafe. They get out, each carrying a small back-pack. Their climbing gear and shoes have been left in the bakkie. Hannah is now wearing heeled black boots. Paul points up towards the house with the pink roof.

PAUL

There it is.

MICHAELA

I don't know if this is right. In the dream it was windy and stormy.

HANNAH

It's symbolically windy and stormy.

PAUL

Come, let's go.

They walk silently up the hill. The odd car passes below. One blasts loud music.

Hannah curses as she stumbles on the uneven ground. Michaela is also out of breath.

Hannah wipes out dramatically on a particularly uneven section.

HANNAH

That's it. I'm going back for the car.

MICHAELA

If we take the car up there they'll see it when they arrive.

PAUL

(Singing)

Dead giveaway... Dead giveaway.

HANNAH

Then I'll wait in the car.

MICHAELA

No man. There's two boys, the one is big. Just now they high on *tik*. We can't go just three of us.

HANNAH

I'll wait for their car and follow them up in our car.

MICHAELA

You're being full of *kak*. They'll obviously notice you following them.

PAUL

Also, you can't drive.

HANNAH

Well, if you'd told me that your hill was actually a mountain.

MICHAELA

I told you there were obstacles!

HANNAH

Are obstacles a metaphor for my fat arse?

MICHAELA

Maybe a hint not to wear heels!

Paul takes out a water bottle and gives it to Hannah.

PAUL

Half time, guys.

JAMILAH

They're going to arrive soon, we have to hurry.

The others help Hannah carry her stuff. Paul and Michaela give her each an arm for stability as they continue.

67

EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

67

Michaela, Jamilah, Paul and Hannah arrive at the top. Jamilah and Paul are in good shape whilst Hannah and Michaela are breathless. Jamilah points to the dirt road.

JAMILAH

They'll be coming from that side.

In the distance, a vehicle approaches.

MICHAELA

It could be them.

The four go around to the back of the house (where Jamilah and Michaela hid before) where they are out of sight from the approaching car.

The combi approaches the house.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

It's them.

The four open their backpacks.

The combi revs on an uphill.

The four put on masks.

The combi's lights flash across the house as it nears.

The four finish extracting what they need from their backpacks. Jamilah looks up nervously as the car arrives.

The combi parks and Older Teenage Boy and Younger Teenage Boy get out.

The four listen for sounds of their approach. Michaela nods and they go in pairs around the house towards the door: Jamilah and Paul around one side of the house, Michaela and Hannah around the other.

The two boys lug a large crate towards the door. As they put it down and Older Teenage Boy reaches for the keys, Jamilah flashes a bright light into their eyes. Paul grabs the Older Teenage Boy and uses quick draws (climbing equipment) to clip his wrists together. Meanwhile, Michaela and Hannah grab the younger boy. Both boys shout and kick violently. Jamilah throws a blanket over their heads as Paul opens the padlocked door. They go inside and shut the door.

68

INT. SOUTH PENINSULA EATERY - NIGHT

68

Olivia and Sandile sit in the restaurant, waiting slightly awkwardly to be served. A band is tuning up in the corner.

OLIVIA
(looking at the band)
Unexpected for a Thursday.

A WAITER brings them two glasses of sparkling red wine.

WAITER
Complimentary glasses of our new
sparkling red.

The Waiter leaves.

SANDILE
Why not. Cheers.

Olivia and Sandile raise their glasses.

OLIVIA
Well, thank you for the moral
support and the formatting and,
well, being an extra pair of eyes.

SANDILE
I'm actually grateful. It's helping
me get more to grips with things.

OLIVIA
So you can fix them?

SANDILE

So I know how the game works.

Beat.

Olivia looks a little sheepish.

OLIVIA

I'm sorry. I realised I possibly prejudged you. Took you for that cocky young guy, who knows everything, shmoozes everyone, talks all the talk of synergising and unpacking and...

SANDILE

That's so not me!

Sandile pauses.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

Maybe a little bit me. My sister always tells me I've got the arrogant confidence of a black man, aggravated by too easy success and the stropiness of youth.

OLIVIA

Harsh words. Poetic, but harsh.

SANDILE

It's all good. I know she's looking out for me.

OLIVIA

Then I guess she's a good person to have on your side.

SANDILE

She is. For a woman.

He winks at Olivia.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

I'm pulling your leg.

The lights lower slightly as the band starts up from the corner.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

(Indicating the wine glass)
This is going to my head.

OLIVIA

I see this. Let's order.

69

INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT.

69

The two teenage boys are sitting on the ground. Their legs are bound with tape and their wrists securely clipped behind their backs. The blanket is still over their heads.

Michaela, Hannah, Jamilah and Paul stand some distance away. Michaela looks at Jamilah.

MICHAELA

OK, let's fetch the bakkie.

JAMILAH

I'm not going with.

MICHAELA

That was the plan.

JAMILAH

I don't feel that it's the right thing.

PAUL

Is this from GOGO?

JAMILAH

I think Hannah should go.

Jamilah takes off her black *takkies*.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

We the same size. We can swap.

HANNAH

Amen.

Hannah pulls off her boots and she and Jamilah swap shoes as Michaela goes to address the boys, lifting up the blanket.

MICHAELA

You be quiet and do what they say, or there will be some very heavy consequences.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY

This is child abuse!

MICHAELA

You want to see child abuse? We'll send you off to human trafficking and you'll know something about child abuse.

Hannah and Michaela leave. Jamilah stands up considerably taller in the boots and approaches the boys. She lifts up the blanket and points to the crates.

JAMILAH

This is animal abuse, for cruelty and money.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Who are you people?

PAUL

This is the PG version of the trailer for what happens if you continue with abusing animals.

JAMILAH

Who are you taking these animals to?

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

No one, man.

JAMILAH

Where? Where!

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

No where.

JAMILAH

Liar!

She kicks him hard. Despite her small frame, the boots elicit a scream.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Jy's mal.

Jamilah throws the blanket back over the boys heads.

Paul is shocked by Jamilah's actions and tries to take over. He lifts up the blanket and talks sternly to the boys.

PAUL

What is the dogman's name? Tell us, otherwise you're going to wind up in a lot of trouble.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

We don't know his name.

JAMILAH

Jy lieg!

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Fok jou.

Jamilah walks up to an empty cage and opens it, then walks over to the boys and takes the blanket off again.

JAMILAH

Get in.

She takes out a scalpel and walks calmly up to the Younger Teenage Boy. She slices the tape off his feet. He limps into the cage.

She turns to Older Teenage Boy, who starts hopping into the cage without needing instruction. She removes the quick draw from his wrists and closes the cage. They are quite cramped.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)
Take off your clothes.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY
We really don't know, m'am.

JAMILAH
Take all your clothes off.

She holds the scalpel in her hand.

70 EXT. CLINIC GATE AND PARKING - NIGHT 70

A car stops and Alexandria gets out. She sticks her head back in.

ALEXANDRIA
I'll be fine! I use it all the time.

Alexandria closes the door and waves to the car as it leaves.

She approaches the Security Cabin, manned by Night Security Guard

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
Hi there. I work in Psych.
(She shows him her staff card.)
My car broke down so I've just come to use the clinic vehicle.

Night Security Guard nods.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)
I've got a key to get in, so...

The security guard nods again opening the gate for her.

71 INT. CLINIC RECEPTION - NIGHT 71

Alexandria swipes into the building. She goes around to the reception area and opens the key cupboard. There's a key slot labelled 'Gardener set' with an icon of a life saver on it, (recognisable from earlier scenes.) Alexandria reaches for these automatically, but the keys aren't there.

Alexandria frowns, confused.

She takes another set called "Bakkie 1" keys and leaves the building.

72 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 72

Alexandria looks through the gate at the parking lot.

73 EXT. CLINIC GATE AND PARKING - NIGHT 73

There are a couple of cars parked (but no bakkie).

74 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - NIGHT 74

Alexandria blinks and frowns.

75 EXT. CLINIC GROUNDS CLIMBING WALL - DAY (FLASHBACK SC 45*) 75

PAUL

It's cool. Michaela and I will pack the gear away for you.

ALEXANDRIA

Ah, thanks! You know where to put the key?

PAUL

I'll sign it back into reception straight after.

Alexandria hands him the key and runs off.

76 INT. CLINIC RECEPTION - NIGHT 76

Alexandria comes back into the building and goes behind the counter. She opens the 'Keys' sign-out book and opens to the last day. Next to 'Gardener set' under 'signed out' is 'Alexandria' and her signature, listed at 10:15 am. The 'Returned' column is blank.

Alexandria takes out her phone and dials.

ALEXANDRIA

Hey. Sorry, I'm going to need a ride after all.

77 INT. SOUTH PENINSULA EATERY - NIGHT 77

The restaurant has filled up with people watching the band.

The Waiter approaches.

OLIVIA

Hi there, wondering what's happened to our food?

WAITER

It won't be long. We ran out of wood for the pizza oven. Could we offer you another drink on the house?

Olivia and Sandile nod and the waiter fills up their glasses with more sparkling red wine. He leaves the bottle on the table and hurries off.

OLIVIA

So much for a quick bite to eat.

SANDILE

This is surprisingly good. Not too sweet.

OLIVIA

So, what's your game plan?

SANDILE

The main thing really is securing relationships with investors -

OLIVIA

No, not for SunValley. For your career.

SANDILE

Eish. Oh, I don't know.

OLIVIA

Oh, I think you do. You've got a plan.

SANDILE

I've always been fascinated by mental illness. I don't have a mother or sister or relative that I need to 'save' or anything...

OLIVIA

(joking)

What? Are you fit to be a mental health practitioner?

SANDILE

Well, that's a good question. After the last place I worked, I don't think so. Being passionate about access to treatment is one thing, practising the treatment is another.

OLIVIA

Where were you working?

SANDILE

(evasive)

Doesn't matter. Kids with drugs, foetal alcohol syndrome, loads of stuff. I was so in over my head. I had a burn down. That's my version of a mixture between burnout and break down.

OLIVIA

That's a heavy environment to work in.

SANDILE

It made me realise, I think my strength is more in strategy, in funding, in research, in... in...

OLIVIA

(Cheekily)

Synergising?

SANDILE

Yes. In keeping abreast of the latest research and work in the field. And keeping abreast of the best potential funders and funding models. I'd like to work in putting those things together.

OLIVIA

That's amazing. My problem is I can never look that far.

SANDILE

You're looking at the patients.

OLIVIA

And I'm realising what a control freak I am with patients. I was trying so hard to protect them from this work programme, that SunValley nearly shut.

SANDILE

That's why I prefer to keep a distance from individual patients. If I can see big picture, then I can think strategically.

Sandile lifts his glass.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

And that is why you are brilliant.
Because you look at the individuals
and you have the instinct and the
patience for everyone who walks in.

OLIVIA

Thank you. I hope we can compliment
each other's strengths.

They toast their glasses, smiling.

A ROSE VENDOR has slipped into the restaurant and approaches
them.

ROSE VENDOR

A nice rose for the lady?

SANDILE

Uh, no thanks.

ROSE VENDOR

Come on, I see how you're looking
at her...

SANDILE

I'm not sure this lady would like a
rose.

ROSE VENDOR

Oh I see how she's looking at
you...

Olivia and Sandile are trapped in the awkward not dating
retail match-making triangle.

78

INT. CLINIC BAKKIE - NIGHT

78

Michaela drives with Hannah in the passenger seat. Michaela
is somewhat distracted from the driving.

MICHAELA

I don't understand why Jamilah
would change her mind. I hope
they're OK.

Hannah is trying to keep an eye out for the turn-off to the
dirt road up the hill, which is on Michaela's side of the
car.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)

They're just boys but if they get
loose or something, she's a very
small girl.

HANNAH

She can jump on them with my awesome heels.

MICHAELA

I don't know if it was GOGO protecting you. But then what about her? What could be wrong? Do you think she's sick maybe?

HANNAH

Maybe she didn't feel like walking, maybe she knew my arse needed it more than hers. Maybe she *smaaks* Paul. Maybe she's sick of your company. Who knows. So many possibilities.

MICHAELA

Are your dry remarks the only response you have to anything? What did you do when we were in the burning cave.

(Impersonating Hannah)

"Oh well. Guess I can delete their numbers from my phone. That will give me space for another app".

HANNAH

Obsessing about it isn't helping. I'm sorry my 'dry comments' aren't helping either, perhaps they are the result of my irritation at your worked up-ness. I am trying to spot the turn-off to the hill, so that we can join them and actually do something. And I'm starting to think that - surprise! - amidst all this worked up-ness, you've missed the turn-off.

Hannah breaks and pulls over.

79

INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

79

The two teenage boys are stark naked in the cage, afraid and self-consciously covering their bits.

Jamilah is taking photos and videos of them with her blackberry.

Paul is talking softly to Jamilah.

PAUL

Jamilah, this isn't right. Seriously. Stop it.

83 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 83

Up ahead of Sandile's car, the traffic is slightly thicker. On closer look, it's a traffic police road block.

84 INT. SANDILE'S CAR - NIGHT 84

Sandile turns left into Olivia's road.

SANDILE

Do you think they're looking for a stolen car?

Olivia points to her car.

OLIVIA

No, alcohol testing. Crap. This one, on the right.

Sandile pulls over.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Crap.

SANDILE

It's fine, I'll go back the other way.

OLIVIA

They'll have closed the other side as well.

SANDILE

Well, I'll call a cab.

OLIVIA

A cab around here through road blocks is going to take hours. You better come up.

SANDILE

I don't want to intrude. I've got my laptop, I can work in the car...

OLIVIA

No, please. Come and have a cup of tea.

Sandile hesitates.

SANDILE

I'd love a cup of coffee actually.

85 INT. OLIVIA'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

85

Olivia hands Sandile a cup of coffee and sits down next to him.

OLIVIA
This day has been somewhat surreal.

SANDILE
Which part?

OLIVIA
Let's see, the part where I get my arch-nemesis to be my secretary?

SANDILE
Hey, I contributed some valuable points to those documents -

OLIVIA
Oh you certainly did. You demonstrated your core competency to synergise with the best of them and streamline ecosystems...

SANDILE
Sarcasm! And my layout? That was good layout!

OLIVIA
Then the arch-nemesis goes from secretary to chauffeur.

SANDILE
Chauffeur? How about just "gentleman" or even "colleague"?

OLIVIA
And in my attempt to thank the poor man with a quick takeaway, the eatery accosts us with wine and candle light.

SANDILE
And then your arch-nemesis comes home with you.

Beat.

SANDILE (CONT'D)
Sorry, that came out wrong. I didn't mean -

OLIVIA
It's OK, I understood.

She puts her hand on his. He holds it for a moment.

They do that whole awkward slowly intimate romantic leading to a kiss thing.

86 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT 86

Dogman holds the screwdriver to Paul's throat and looks at Jamilah.

DOGMAN
Get in that cage quietly.

Jamilah stands her ground and begins singing and praising loudly and marching with her feet. Paul and the Dogman look incredulously at the tiny, worshipping, cat suited, masked Jamilah

JAMILAH
GOGO has shown us love and rescued us from death! GOGO, we will not be afraid!

DOGMAN
Hey! Stop it.

Jamilah refuses to look at Dogman and continues praising GOGO more loudly. The dogs start howling.

JAMILAH
God of Goodness Only, you are love and you protect us...

87 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT 87

Jamilah's singing and worship, the dogs howling and Dogman's shouts are audible from outside.

The clinic bakkie is parked some way behind the foreign vehicle (Dogman's car). Michaela and Hannah quietly approach the door, watching the scene inside.

HANNAH
She's gone proper crazy.

MICHAELA
She drowned out our arrival.

88 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT 88

Jamilah's singing continues. Dogman pushes Paul into the cage adjacent to the boys and slams the door shut.

JAMILAH
God of Goodness Only! God of Goodness Only! You have protected us and you will protect us!

Jamilah waves her arms in adoration as Dogman grabs her, reaching to cover her mouth.

With a loud thwack, he drops to the ground. Jamilah opens her eyes. Michaela stands wielding a wheel jack.

Hannah and Michaela grab the wrists of the stunned Dogman and pull him towards the cage. Jamilah lets Paul out of the cage and they push Dogman inside.

Michaela, Hannah, Paul and Jamilah look at each for half a moment.

MICHAELA
Is everyone OK?

Everyone nods.

PAUL
Let's go.

They start carrying crates to the clinic's bakkie.

89 EXT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

89

The four load the crates of animals into the combi. Michaela dispenses a quick drink of water to each animal.

Jamilah takes photographs of Dogman's vehicle's number plate. She pulls on gloves and rummages in Dogman's car, finding his wallet. She pulls out his driver's license and bank cards and photographs them.

90 INT. HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

90

Jamilah returns with something in hand. She approaches the caged Dogman and boys.

JAMILAH
Vicious dogs get put to sleep, if they can't be contained.

Jamilah plays with a syringe.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)
They say prevention is better than cure. If only there was a vaccination against evil.

Jamilah fiddles with some medical-looking stuff.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)
I brought these pet microchips. They use them for tracking domestic animals. It's very simple.

Jamilah stands above one of the incarcerated and holds the syringe near their back.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

They just inject it between the shoulders. It's smaller than a grain of rice, man. So simple. Well, not to get it out. That's major surgery. For people serious about the safety of their domestic animals, it's a worthwhile investment. I've only got two chips though.

She looks from face to face at the three in cages. Her eyes rest on Dogman.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

A dogman knows I couldn't track his location with a pet microchip. The info from your phone and wallet will probably be more useful. So I'm just going to ask you nicely, Mr Andrew Jenkins. When you cause harm to domestic animals I feel angry. So please don't do it again. Next time, I'm not doing the talky talky thing. I will see you bleed.

Jamilah passes the boys their clothes back.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

Get dressed.

COMM 4

91 INT. OLIVIA'S LOUNGE - DAY (DAWN)

91

Sandile wakes up. He's in his clothes, alone passed out on the couch. He looks around. There is no sign of Olivia. He looks up at the closed bedroom door at the end of the passage.

He walks into the toilet to pee.

He comes out a moment later and looks at the bedroom door again. He walks up to it and all but knocks. He stops. He turns around and heads out the front door.

92 INT. OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY (DAWN)

92

Olivia is awake listening to the sounds of Sandile leaving. She rolls over.

- 93 EXT. MUIZENBERG ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY (DAWN) 93
- The wall bears the faded letters of "Muizenberg Animal Shelter" along with a string of painted images of smiling cats and dogs. The street is deserted.
- Across the road at the nearby intersection on the most deserted side, the clinic bakkie inconspicuously waits.
- 94 INT. CLINIC BAKKIE - DAY (DAWN) 94
- Michaela and Hannah finish changing their clothes. Hannah looks out at the mural as she ties her shoelace.
- HANNAH
Next time, GOGO, how about we just redo that mural?
- 95 EXT. MUIZENBERG ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY (DAWN) 95
- The teenage boys' combi pulls up with Paul at the wheel and Jamilah next to him.
- 96 INT. BOYS' COMBI - DAY (DAWN) 96
- Jamilah finishes typing an SMS on Dogman's phone. She presses 'send'. She wipes the phone down with a cloth and puts it in the cubby hole.
- PAUL
You message the police?
- Jamilah nods and wipes the steering wheel and gear stick.
- 97 EXT. STREET INTERSECTION NEAR ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY (DAWN) 97
- Jamilah and Paul walk towards the intersection where the bakkie is waiting.
- 98 EXT. QUIET STREET NEAR CLINIC - DAY (DAWN) 98
- The bakkie pulls over and Michaela parks. She, Jamilah, Hannah and Paul get out. They have now all changed into 'jogging gear'.
- Jamilah pulls out her own cell phone and Older Teenage Boy's phone. She copies Yvonne's cell number onto the dialing pad of the boy's phone. She passes the phone to Paul.
- PAUL
Seriously, Jamilah. The shelter is going to open in a moment.

JAMILAH

Just call her. She will recognise
my voice.

Paul presses the dial button and holds up the phone to his
ear. A moment later:

YVONNE

(off-screen, through phone)
Hello?

PAUL

There's an abandoned combi filled
with animals outside the shelter.
Please send someone quickly.

He hangs up.

The four begin jogging towards the clinic.

99 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - DAY (DAWN)

99

Paul, Jamilah, Hannah and Michaela jog up to the entrance.
The Night Security Guard has left and Security Guard 1
(Lionel) is having coffee.

SECURITY GUARD 1

What? Running so early! You
normally running late, Paul!

MICHAELA

It's the new, healthy active us!

They jog in through the gate.

100 INT. MICHAELA AND HANNAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

100

Hannah is in the small, rickety en suite bathroom. She is
bent over the sink, gently but fervently Lady MacBething the
evidence of wear out of the three cat suits. The water is
brown.

She lifts up hers, the blue suit, and notices the rip in the
arm. She inspects the rest.. The one knee is damaged and the
other has a hole.

Hannah curses under her breath.

101 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY

101

Paul stands outside with a coffee, smoking a cigarette. He is
clean and showered but looks exhausted. Alexandria arrives.

PAUL

Hey.

ALEXANDRIA

Hey. Thanks for packing up and taking care of the keys yesterday.

PAUL

No problem.

ALEXANDRIA

Everything go all right?

PAUL

Perfect.

ALEXANDRIA

As long as things are safe and you signed the keys in.

PAUL

Yip.

ALEXANDRIA

All those keys I trusted you with. The keys to the storeroom. Keys to the bakkie. Keys with the little lifesaver key ring. The keys with my head on them...

Paul turns around.

ALEXANDRIA (CONT'D)

You did sign them in?

Paul doesn't respond for a while.

PAUL

Yeah, well actually, Jamilah asked for them.

ALEXANDRIA

Excuse me?

PAUL

I mean Jamilah said that the animal shelter requested the bakkie for an emergency.

ALEXANDRIA

So who did Jamilah give the keys to?

PAUL

It was legit, OK? It was for the animal shelter.

ALEXANDRIA

You lied to me. You betrayed my trust with the keys, and then lied to my face about it.

PAUL

I don't think using the keys for the animal shelter counts as betraying your trust. And you're the one whose being dishonest, trying to entrap me with key stories.

ALEXANDRIA

How dare you turn this onto me? You're the liar!

PAUL

You're the one with double-standards. You want to be all like 'oh, we're all just people, I'm mature enough to rise above petty roles and rules. I'm not going to like, paint by numbers...' But everyone else has to play by the book!

ALEXANDRIA

That's -

PAUL

You want the benefit of socialising with people your own age on your terms, along with the benefit of being 'staff', on your terms. Well news to you: You don't get to do both. Pick a team!

102 EXT. CLINIC GARDENS - DAY

102

Kelly is writing in her diary in the sun. Hannah approaches her.

HANNAH

Kelly, there's a problem.

KELLY

What?

Hannah shows Kelly the ripped cat suit.

KELLY (CONT'D)

How did you... and why is it wet?

HANNAH

I'm so sorry. Can you fix it?

KELLY

And here as well... I can't fix it. There's not enough material left.

Silence.

Hannah sits down and looks almost verging on tears.

HANNAH
I'm so, so tired.

KELLY
Well if I cut the arms off... And then I'll line the knees with that material.

Kelly looks at Hannah.

KELLY (CONT'D)
The sleeves are short in some of the episodes?

Hannah nods and starts to cry. Kelly gives her a hug.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Don't worry, Hannah. We'll fix it.

103 INT. CLINIC ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

103

Luella is sipping on her tea and looking at something on her laptop. Sandile is making coffee. Olivia arrives and freezes.

LUELLA
Morning. Your reports look fancy. Did Alexandria help you or something?

OLIVIA
Sandile gave me a hand.

LUELLA
Oh, that's nice.

Olivia self consciously makes a cup of tea as Luella leaves.

SANDILE
Quite a surreal evening.

OLIVIA
A crazy day.

SANDILE
I think that wine reacted with the end of my antibiotics or something. Anyway, thanks for including me on the reports.

OLIVIA
Thank you. For helping me and the lift.

SANDILE

Thanks for the dinner and
hospitality.

Awkward silence.

SANDILE (CONT'D)

I'm going to go with a unique
welcome rite into the SunValley
nonnuclear family.

Olivia takes her tea and leaves.

OLIVIA

See you later.

104 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

104

Salim is busy questioning Older Teenage Boy and Younger
Teenage Boy. He is writing down a statement.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

And they wore like, cat suits man.
Like superheroes.

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY

They made us take off our clothes
and they took pictures.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

They're the criminals!

SALIM

You're telling me three cat women
kidnapped you, cut your shirts off
and made you strip bare in a cage?

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Yes!

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY

No, just one.

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

There were three girls, but one
went *bossies* and made us take off
our clothes.

SALIM

Did she touch you?

OLDER TEENAGE BOY

Yes!

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY

No man, She took pictures!

OLDER TEENAGE BOY
For that child pornography! Now
that's a real crime.

SALIM
And then she injected you with an
animal tracker?

YOUNGER TEENAGE BOY
Yes! No, she said she was going to!

Silence. Salim looks exhausted and fed-up.

SALIM
(aside)
Tik koppe.

105 INT. CLINIC DINING HALL - NIGHT

105

A few patients sit around drinking hot chocolate.

Hannah and Paul sit in the corner with theirs. Paul wears
pyjamas and black sheep slippers.

HANNAH
By now, those bachelorette girls
must be wearing our costumes.

PAUL
You're wearing yours on the inside.

HANNAH
Where I look thin and un-sweaty.

Michaela arrives.

MICHAELA
Have you seen Jamilah?

Paul and Hannah shake their heads.

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
I'm worried about her, man.

PAUL
You didn't see the half of her
crazy!

MICHAELA
It's abuse man. She must have been
abused.

PAUL
I couldn't tell if and when she was
acting or if and when she was
serious. But I'm not OK with that!

MICHAELA

Yes! It's bad enough we had to go in there and tie up children. Those boys are going to have sexual dysfunctions or something.

HANNAH

Or Andrew Dogman Smith is going to track us down and get revenge.

PAUL

Yes. I was honestly more freaked out by Jamilah than by the screwdriver in my neck.

Jamilah walks into the dining hall and fetches hot chocolate. Paul, Michaela and Hannah are silent. Jamilah joins them.

MICHAELA

Are you OK?

JAMILAH

Yes. I messaged my brother to fish about the criminals. He just said they caught some guys.

MICHAELA

Jamilah, what happened with all that naked boy stuff and violence?

JAMILAH

I think it worked.

MICHAELA

Why didn't you talk to us about it?

JAMILAH

There wasn't enough time to discuss every possible plan we might implement...

PAUL

Even just a "Hey, what do you guys think of using violence and intimidation so they never do it again?" whilst you were doing your hair would have been good.

JAMILAH

I didn't do my hair.

MICHAELA

OK, Jamilah. I think you were very brave and amazing. But I don't want to be involved in anything like that again.

PAUL

Me neither. And I don't want to use violence. Can we agree to discuss things together before?

JAMILAH

OK, sure.

Jamilah fiddles on her phone.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

Hannah, can you send me that photo?

Silence as Hannah sends her the photo.

Hannah sends her the photo. It's of Jamilah, Michaela and Hannah in Cats' Eyes outfits.

JAMILAH (CONT'D)

I'm going to make it my bb profile picture.

HANNAH

I don't know if you should put us onto social media in disguise. Do you want Andrew Smith to get his revenge?

PAUL

It's a blackberry profile pic. Which of her seven contacts could possibly make any connection?

106 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

106

Salim is on duty. Nothing is happening around him and he is fiddling on his phone.

He writes Jamilah an instant text message:

Miss u Jammie. So gud 2 b able 2 chat. and proud of u! :-)) X

Her profile pic changes as he writes the message. He clicks on it to see it properly. It enlarges to fill his blackberry screen.

Salim looks incredulously at Jamilah's profile picture (of the three in 'Cats' Eyes' costume).

107 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLINIC - DAY

107

Furious Alexandria marches outside without greeting Security.

She walks briskly down the street around the corner to where she is out of sight.

She sits down on a low wall and pulls cigarette papers and tobacco pouch out of her bag. She shakily rolls a cigarette and lights up. She looks up and finds herself looking straight at the Clinic Bakkie.

She stares at it and walks over to observe. She checks all the windows; all is locked and unbroken. She gets to the boot and, with the hand not holding a cigarette, leans around to press the faulty boot release button.

She opens the boot. Inside are the harnesses, climbing shoes, ropes and other equipment, as well as Hannah's boots.

On Alexandria's expression:

FADE TO BLACK.

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Introduction

This essay accompanies the creative project (TV series Bible and two episodes) and serves to highlight the academic research behind what the series addresses (a coming to faith of patients in a psychiatric hospital in Cape Town). As this essay serves as a rationale and explication of a creative project, it also allows for less academic moments of reflection on the personal motivations and experiences behind it.

The essay is organised into three sections. The first (A) addresses the three research goals surrounding mental illness:

1. To explore the extent and nature of the problem of mental illness, particularly in South Africa;
2. To explore the issue of places of treatment of mental illness, especially in South Africa; and
3. To explore the relationship between mental illness and religious belief.

The second section (B) addresses representations of mental illness on screen and analyses and critique trends in, and significant instances of, such representations.

The last section (C) substantiates the creative choices made in regards to the design of the TV series.

A) Mental illness

A1) The social reality of mental illness

In the World Health Organisation's 2001 global survey of Mental Health, the most wide-ranging effort to judge the extent of mental illness as a global phenomenon, the report notes:

Initial estimates suggest that about 450 million people alive today suffer from mental or neurological disorders or from psychosocial problems such as those related to alcohol and drug abuse. Many of them suffer silently.

Many of them suffer alone. Beyond the suffering and beyond the absence of care lie the frontiers of stigma, shame, exclusion, and more often than we care to know, death.

Major depression is now the leading cause of disability globally and ranks fourth in the ten leading causes of the global burden of disease. If projections are correct, within the next 20 years, depression will have the dubious distinction of becoming the second cause of the global disease burden. Globally, 70 million people suffer from alcohol dependence. About 50 million have epilepsy; another 24 million have schizophrenia. A million people commit suicide every year. Between ten and 20 million people attempt it.

Rare is the family that will be free from an encounter with mental disorders. One person in every four will be affected by a mental disorder at some stage of life. (World Health Organization, 2001: x)

Though the stance of the WHO report is based on western medicine, they also examine cross-cultural phenomena and note that “Studies in many African and Asian countries show that about 40% of the clients of traditional healers suffer from mental illnesses (World Health Organization, 2001: 58).

A more recent survey led by the National Institute of Mental Health of the USA, whose major findings were published in *Nature*, confirms the extent of the problem, noting that “Depression is the third leading contributor to the global disease burden...” (Collins, 2011: 27).

Despite these high rates of mental illness, across all countries, investment in research into prevention and treatment remains disproportionately low relative to the disease burden. In developing countries, the situation is even worse. The WHO’s European region has 200 times as many psychiatrists than the whole of Africa, for example. (Collins, 2011: 27).

The pervasive stigma surrounding mental illness - that spills over onto family, care-givers and even clinicians - (Tawiah PE et al, 2015: 30) in itself hinders efficacy of treatment, and is an added burden to the patients and others involved (Corrigan, 2015: 16).

The extent of the problem of mental illness – the amount of people who are rendered unable to work and the pressure this places on the surrounding economies - along with the patient's suffering worsened by stigma surrounding such illness, seems to offer it great potential for a dramatic exploration on screen.

A2) The Place for treatment

In line with the state of treatment of mental illness globally, places of treatment are lacking in a variety of ways. With the de-institutionalization of lunatic asylums and other formally separated mental institutions across much of the western world in the late twentieth century and the cutting back on funding for dedicated institutions for the mentally ill, much of the treatment has devolved to community organisations, NGO bodies, or for-profit hospitals funded more or less directly by medical aid payments. When the dedicated institutions were closed, it was usually hoped that mental health would be treated locally and absorbed in broader community health programmes, but the reality has been different (Mkhize & Kometsi, 2008: 106-110).

A survey done in America gives stark illustration of the global trend South Africa has followed after: in 1955 there was one psychiatric bed for every 300 Americans. By 2005 this had dropped to one psychiatric bed for every 3,000 Americans. The summary of this report (Torry et al, 2010:1) also noted that the end result is that more people are treated for mental illness in America in jail and prison than anywhere else. Similarly perhaps, human rights violations of people with mental illness in places of treatment are consistently reported, particularly in low income and middle income countries. One person sent to a Zambian hospital reports:

It was characterised [by] unhygienic living conditions, physical abuse, nakedness, and lack of enough food. This experience taught me that mental hospitals are more of a torture chamber causing more mental anguish and torment than ameliorating the mental situation of patients...It led to feelings

[of] worthlessness, helplessness and hopelessness”. (Drew, N et al., 2011: 1667-1668)

The report found similar situations in most of the 51 low income and middle income countries sampled. (Drew, N et al., 2011: 1673)

In Africa generally, there has been an increase in decentralised community programmes with a focus on patients having work programmes for re-integration into society. This emphasis contrasts favourably in some ways with a western view where many mentally disturbed people end up incarcerated (Collins et al., 2011; Patel et al., 2007).

With regard to problems with South African mental health treatment in communities, analysts report “some progress in decentralised care for severe mental disorders, but also insufficient resources to adequately support community-based services, resulting in the classic revolving-door phenomenon” (Petersen & Lund, 2011: 751).

Also with regards to places of treatment of mental illness in South Africa, although I found no literature to support this, my three personal experiences of private ‘psychiatric clinics’ increased my interest in these as exceptional South African spaces of dialogue and understanding between socio-economically, racially and even generationally divided South Africans.

In 1999 I was put into an ‘adolescent unit’ after a ‘Major Depressive Episode’. Teenagers drawn into Cape Flats gangsterism, prostitution and drugs (whose parents’ basic medical aid covered 6 weeks of outpatient treatment) sat in hours of group therapy a day alongside wealthier ‘white’ counterparts whose underlying problems often boiled down to similar things (such as sexual abuse, peer pressure and domestic violence). My perception was that the socio-economic diversity amongst patients resulted in rapid and substantial growth in mutual understanding, acceptance and even respect for different backgrounds (in this ‘crucible’ of the group). The excellent (also socio-economically diverse) practitioners steered communication and connection to identifying similarities and compassion amongst patients in an environment where

respect and confidentiality were cornerstones. I can't think of another situation that would have provided such an intimate connecting of such a diversity of young South Africans.

Ten years later when as an adult I again spent some time in private psychiatric clinics with a focus on group treatment programmes, I found that the spaces now included far more black South Africans (presumably previously without access to medical aid) and a high degree of socio-economic diversity across patient demographics remained. Most patients I encountered echoed the view that being in the clinic had made them less afraid of mental illness overall and helped them to manage and accept their illness - a lessening self-stigma (Egbe, C et al., 2014:1, 9-10). It struck me that if people who hadn't struggled with mental illness were to spend time in such a facility and programme, it would probably do a lot to promote understanding and lessen stigmatisation of illness and treatment centres.

While my personal experience does not equate to the kind of detailed fieldwork and journalism of a David Simon for *The Wire* or of the South African researchers who researched local schools before producing *Yizo, Yizo*, it did give me experiences and insights that I return to and explore in the writing of the script and in the academic investigation below. I also interviewed Vic Hulme, one of the therapists concerned, to get more information from a therapist's perspective, on large changes in the medical and social realities over the past decades.

Less optimistically, I also wished to explore creatively more ominous observations from my experiences with treatment facilities: The 'revolving door' phenomenon was very real, and some patients simply didn't seem to recover from something as seemingly basic and treatable as 'depression'. The political and financial realities of inadequate treatment times and the motives of people running these clinics remain major problems that the series explores.

Linked to this are the major problems of people unable to hold down jobs, the strange status of the 'medically boarded' patients and (as I witnessed first hand from patients I

remained in touch with) what that status does to their identity which to me personally reiterated the importance of employment for mentally ill people which many projects in developing countries are addressing and led to it being included as a main theme in the TV series.

A3) Mental illness and the religious and spiritual dimensions

For some therapists, any religious sentiment automatically suggests an illness of sorts. For example, the standard psychiatric view in South Africa is that traditional healers (whose diagnosis often include a spiritual dimension and references to the ancestors) simply prolong serious mental illness and delay cure (Burns, Jhazbhay, & Emsley, 2011:538, 543). Others are more sympathetic to ways in which spiritual beliefs may help healing or give purpose and argue for greater collaboration between, for example, clergy and therapists (James, Igbinomwanhia, & Omoaregba, 2014; Leavey, 2010; Sullivan et al., 2013).

A survey of mental patients in South African hospitals suggests, however, that religious discovery and experience are a very important part of the experience of mental illness for many patients (Trump & Hugo, 2006). The authors note that: “It is noteworthy that 25% of respondents sought religious help (25%), spiritual/psychic counselling (10%) or traditional healing (2%).” (Trump & Hugo, 2006: 259). They go on to point to mental illness as a time of spiritual questioning, upheaval and, perhaps surprisingly, growth of faith:

Surprisingly, 38% of respondents reported that their belief in God had strengthened as a result of the illness, with far less (25%) feeling that God had abandoned them. As this was a multiple choice question, 18 respondents (5% of cohort) checked both options. In some instances, they indicated that they had initially felt abandoned by God, but then regained their religious beliefs once their condition improved. (Trump & Hugo, 2006: 258)

From a creative perspective, my interest in the intersection of religion or spirituality and mental illness was sparked by my own experience of this: I had had a ‘coming to faith’ kind of experience at the same time I was diagnosed with ‘major depression’.

Despite the fact that I was never conscious of or diagnosed with any delusional, psychotic or manic symptoms, I was well aware of the irony and the implications: if you're not mentally well and you're suddenly believing in 'God', isn't that more likely to mean that this belief is a function or sign of mental illness? This of course is the belief of Freud and many others about religious belief more generally (Freud, 2005). On the other hand, could mental illness be a sign of alienation from a sick society and inauthentic behaviour, a sign of what Kierkegaard called the 'Sickness unto Death' and thus a sign of spiritual pain and growth? (Kierkegaard, 2013) While the script does not offer a philosophical debate and dialectic, it does reflect the tensions between these views and discourses and tries to explore them dramatically.

This section thus far relates to religion in terms of intra-personal meaning, but religion intersecting with mental illness on an institutional level is another issue: how does a 'top-down' organisation like a church relate to people rendered vulnerable by mental illness? My experience of my illness in the years of about 1999 to 2009 within a Protestant church context in Cape Town I recall as often times marked by shame and perceived judgement, which seems to echo McLatchie and Dragun's research done over a decade before amongst evangelical Protestants in the US, where a strong belief in demon possession and sin being a direct cause of mental illness was found. (McLatchie & Dragun: 1984) Over the years, as I shared my experiences of my own illness in the church context amongst other South Africans, I found many church-attending or previously church-attending sufferers of mental illness had had similar experiences, ranging from moral lecturing to reach their innate or hidden sinfulness to attempts at casting out of 'demons'. Others (myself at times included) found support and affirmation within a church.

A religious, institutionalised example of treatment of mental illness is in the prayer camps of Ghana. Human rights violations abound, with beatings, forced fasting, unsanitary conditions, chaining and sexual abuse amongst these. The religious belief of the often self-proclaimed prophets range from Christian theology to local religious beliefs. With an estimated over a hundred of these camps, they are not a comforting or hopeful image of what religion has to offer to sufferers of mental illness. (Edwards, J,

2014).

More hopefully, however, other studies on stigma and religion also found a variety of potential attitudes towards mental illness:

‘...our findings that members of different religious groups endorse these negative beliefs differently suggest the tendency for religious-based victim blame is not a universal phenomenon. It is possible that strategically targeted anti-stigma campaigns could combat these facets of mental illness stigma in the religious groups that endorse the religious beliefs about mental illness.’
(Wesselmann And Graziano, 2010: 434)

So from a creative perspective, I was particularly interested in exploring how an experience felt as a ‘calling by God’ could affect recovery. Is an incident experienced as supernatural an indication of a delusional onset – a worsening of mental health, or can such an ‘encounter’ play a part in ‘recovery’? Moreover, what happens if it’s a group of people rather than an individual who experience such an encounter?

A4) Conclusion

To summarise the above, the literature points to the fact that mental illness is a significant problem, both globally and locally, accounting for the highest cause of disability. The problem is further aggravated by the stigma surrounding mental illness, making the disease more burdensome on sufferers and caregivers, as well as impeding recovery (World Health Organization, 2001).

Places of treatment of mental illness range from psychiatric hospitals, prisons and prayer camps in other parts of the world. The literature points to places of treatment being lacking in number and quality. (Torrey, E et al., 2010; Edwards, J, 2014).

Religious belief may be associated with healing, although some therapists are sceptical of this. On an institutional level, religion has served to attribute sin and the demonic realm with sufferers, and even institutionalise human rights violations in the name of spiritual healing.

In relating the above to my choice to set the TV series in a fictional psychiatric hospital, it seems exposing an audience to the likes of a psychiatric clinic holds the hope of de-stigmatising illness and its places of treatment, perhaps even in lessening self-stigma.. My personal experience of places of treatment (although I did not find literature particularly to support this) indicated that that a fictional NGO psychiatric clinic could offer a levelled playing field of equal status for otherwise culturally and socio-economically diverse characters and be a setting for a South African story promoting acceptance and an integrated social identity. In terms of religion, spirituality and belief systems, the TV series allows for exploring whether individuals from different backgrounds and belief systems can move forward together ‘following’ God? Is the result the formation of a fundamentalist sub-group, rigidity in thinking or even violence? Or is the presence of purpose, meaning and hope conducive to an environment of social good as well as personal healing?

B) Mental illness and institutional dramas on screen

This section (B) looks at trends in representations of mental illness on screen. While not all late 20th- or 21st-century films and television shows which have mental illness as a central theme could be watched, a large sample was viewed to inform my own treatment of the theme. In my viewing, I found certain themes or issues which any writer wanting to treat this subject is likely to confront and I analyse these in some detail in the next sections. I also watched shows about adolescents, particularly in institutional settings, in order to ensure that my treatment of the particular setting in question still benefited from larger cultural movements and trends.

The television series that were most relevant and resonant include all or parts of the following: *Takin' Over the Asylum*; (1994) *Psychos* (1999); *Joan of Arcadia* (2003); *Wonderfalls* (2004); *Eli Stone* (2008); *Mental* (2009); *Misfits* (2009); *Homeland* (2011); *Enlightened* (2011) and *Black Box* (2014).

There is no space for even a cursory treatment of all of these series and many other

tangentially relevant television series and films, so what follows is a thematic breakdown of major themes and dramatic questions.

B1) Thematic Breakdown

Individual therapy or a group setting?

One major contrast in depictions of mental illness is whether the setting is primarily in the dangerous and private territory of the therapist's room or in a larger institutional setting. In the former, the audience acts as mental voyeurs of some kind and gains insight into the dysfunctions of characters who may in some ways have hidden this dysfunction from others or not be able to explain it to themselves. The disadvantage of this approach is that it can reduce dramatic tension to, literally, talking heads and that the approach via the 'talking cure' of psychotherapy may not be the best way of capturing the everyday landscape of mental illness or exploiting the dramatic possibilities of larger interactions.

Television series showing mental institutions are certainly indebted to films that were often adapted from novels or memoirs and directed by leading figures such as Ingmar Bergman or Milos Forman. Films where the mental institution is central include: *One Flew over a Cuckoo's Nest* (1975); *Lost Angels* (1989); *Girl, Interrupted* (1999); *K-PAX* (2001); *Manic* (2001); *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2010); and *Sucker Punch* (2011). Others where the institution is important include *Harvey* (1950); *Through a Glass Darkly* (1961); *Gothika* (2003) and *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012).

If the films often centre on the contrast between the mental institution and the 'normal', often with a critical view of the latter, then in the television series, the institutional setting has in many cases been used to explore the mundane consequences and textures of mental illness. Other series suggest that audiences may be open to exploring spaces (prison, a funeral parlour) that may previously have been considered, by broadcasters at least, as deviant or without interest, an issue I return to in a later section.

Of the television series set in mental institutions reviewed, *Takin' Over the Asylum* (1994) and *Psychos* (1999) are the closest to what I'm doing and therefore probably most relevant (Blair, 1994; Hiller, 1999). These UK television shows from the mid- to late- 1990s developed a small cult following as well as critical acclaim though neither was commissioned for a second season or re-broadcast.

Other important series set in institutions are *Mental* (2009) and *Black Box* (2014). These more recent American television series favour a medical-detective approach, often with more 'bizarre' mental illnesses depicted. (The pilot of *Mental* includes a patient who not only hoards live cats but keeps their bodies in a freezer when they die.) Neither *Mental* nor *Black Box* contains the social realism or psychological depth of *Psychos* or *Takin' over the Asylum*. Of all four, *Takin' over the Asylum* is the one that favours the patients' perspective the most (although the protagonist is really a middle character – an alcoholic washed-up DJ volunteer who is neither patient nor doctor).

Others TV series where institution is not the major setting but is important include *Enlightened* (2007); *Homeland* (2011); and *Skins* (2011).

Television or film?

While much of television remains highly generic, what Brett Martin calls the Third Golden Age of Television has given a complexity and depth of characterisation that film has struggled to match (Martin, 2013:10). Several series have shown the possibilities of dealing accurately and powerfully with mental illness, while other television series have shown ways in which institutions like prisons can be powerful spaces for drama and discovery.

Another important reason to favour the television series was that television has led to more complex expectations in audiences and the undermining of moral melodramas. As Martin outlines, *The Wire* was seminal in this complex characterisation: in refusing to make any central hero character rise and conquer -- or fall from grace completely (Simon, 2002).

Characterisation in *The Wire* seemed a marked change from previous series in that good and bad, heroes and villains, did not fall along expected lines (cops weren't all likeable or moral; gangsters weren't all unlikable and immoral). Morality itself is constantly shown to be uncertain or messy. None of the characters maintained ultimately heroic qualities. Some of them provided a bit of that for a time. Their character arcs rose and fell, grew in areas and fell in others. This somehow seemed to lend itself to highlighting the greater character of West Baltimore itself, intimately and insightfully painting the socio-political-economic-educational-law enforcement issues which David Simon knew intimately as investigative reporter.

Since then, television audiences have become more sophisticated, as shown by characters such as Carrie Mathison (played by Claire Danes) in *Homeland* or Walther White and Jesse (played by Bryan Cranston and Aaron Paul) in *Breaking Bad* (2008). While it is now almost a cliché to say that shows like *Game of Thrones* (2011) do not allow us to identify with any one character and that our sympathies have to evolve, it remains doubtful whether any other series has really reached the complexity of characterisation of *The Wire* which is why it remains such a hallowed show.

Shows like these are harder 'work' for the audience emotionally because they don't just side with the 'hero' and back her or him. They are also harder work intellectually or conceptually – the audience isn't just following the usual cues of moral melodramas with everything from music to costumes and dress producing our responses. There is a large cast of characters who in many ways defy rank.

Another technical or structural issue that affects these portrayals is the difference between a USA model, typically of 12 or 13 episodes, compared to a largely British or BBC based six-part commissioning structure. It seems more difficult to do much in six episodes, and not knowing if you've got a second season makes it tricky to create a series arc. Part of the success of *The Wire* may result from Simon always planning it to be five seasons. He didn't have the uncertainty of writing a show that would work either for six episodes or for six seasons.

Six-part BBC structures work well for 30-minute comedy shows and stand alone mini-series, but not so much for this kind of show, I suspect. The ‘universe’ is too big and needs more episodes to explore satisfactorily. (I took this into account with creating my series – and kept it as 12 episodes with an idea of what a second season would look like if it took place.)

Whose perspective: practitioner, patients, middle person?

If the classic detective novel involves a rational ego and logic deciphering the dark forces of the unconscious, (Symons, 1985) it has its descendants in shows involving profilers or detectives or teams of psychologists and cops who explain the motives of those committing ostensibly illogical and violent acts. A major modern development has been the rise of the ‘ profiler’ who has to enter the dark field of force of the serial killer to be able to understand and anticipate him – the obvious example being the psychiatrist-serial killer Hannibal Lecter who is at once serial killer and detective. The character of Dexter would be another example of how the clear division of roles between perpetrator and detective has become blurred.

There have also been examples of series which take the view of the patients to show that the ostensibly sane people in fact may be the insane ones or vice versa, as in the war comedy *King of Hearts* (1966).

In keeping with the expectations that a modern television audience will be sophisticated enough to switch between perspectives, many of the television series involved here switch perspectives between patients and healers. In *Psychos*, for example, the title, which led to a campaign against the show, could plausibly be seen as a commentary on the eccentric healers rather than the patients. What is typical in many of these shows is a shifting of perspectives from doctor to patient or even a move to a ‘neutral’ third party such as the DJ in *Takin’ Over the Asylum*.

Women or men?

The sexualised, mentally disturbed and often violent solitary female, often a psychologised version of the *femme fatale*, is a staple of cinema from film noir on -- see, for example, *The Big Sleep* (1946); *Play Misty for Me* (1971); *Betty Blue* (1986);

Fatal Attraction (1987); *Single White Female* (1992); *Girl, Interrupted* (1999). If there is a cliché of the mad woman, it is the dangerous ‘bunny-boiler’ of *Fatal Attraction* and the very term has passed into popular usage. There may be male equivalents of the mad and dangerous woman, but there have, until recently, been very few portrayals of the gifted but unbalanced woman, as will be analysed in more detail in a later section.

More recently, what Brunsdon and others call the ‘feminization of television’ (a term Vicky Ball has contested) (Ball, 2012; Brunsdon, 2003: 8, 20) allows for television series to show complex interactions of female characters without heterosexual love or individual obsession being the dominant issue.

The fragmenting of television audiences into targeted niches or sub-audiences also means that shows aimed, for example, at young women might attract a sufficient following to be viable (Paule, 2012: 203). This was particularly relevant given that clinics tend to have more women (Trump & Hugo, 2006: 251).

Mental illness and the ‘enlightened’

One of the major themes in treating mental illness in film and television is the relationship between mental illness and spiritual enlightenment. Historic figures such as Joan of Arc or Nongqawuse, the young woman whose predictions led to the great Xhosa cattle killing, who claim to hear divine voices giving them instructions raise complex questions of how to understand claims of divine revelation or inspiration and also of the relationship between conventional religious authority and the individual voice. Joan of Arc, tried by the church and executed as a heretic but later sanctified, is the key and most obvious case study.

This theme has led to a variety of treatments and attitudes with Joan of Arc the subject of several plays, notably *Saint Joan* by George Bernard Shaw and *Joan of Lorraine* by Maxwell Anderson, and films, one of which was based on Anderson’s play and Dreyer’s *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928). (Anderson, 1946; Besson, 1999; Dreyer, 1928; Fleming, 1948; Shaw, 2001). In a modern take on the story, the television series *Joan of Arcadia*, the writer Barbara Hall has explicitly stated that her intention was to

explore how a young person might come to a religious life, yet the medical and psychological elements are given considerable force in the series as well (Hall, 2003; Paule, 2012: 207-213), thus retaining some of the tensions found in Shaw's play and treatments of Joan of Arc.

The plot question of 'Are they Crazy or Enlightened' has become a device which is used in a wide variety of television shows. In *My Name is Earl* (2005), the comic and farcical elements became a way of popularising the underlying moral and spiritual questions and here too the dual perspectives, medical and spiritual, were part of what audiences had to take into account. Several other films or television series – *Harvey* (1950), *K-PAX* (2001), *Wonderfalls* (2004), *Eli Stone* (2008); *Enlightened* (2011); *Take Shelter* (2011) – also return to the issue of how to understand sudden onsets of altruism or goodness and to weigh claims of divine inspiration and to consider the consequences of religious zealotry, for those around them.

Mental illness and the 'gifted'

John Dryden wrote, "Great wits are to madness near allied, / And thin partitions do their bounds divide" and modern scriptwriters often agree. The autistic 'idiot savant' has occurred so frequently from *Rain Man* to recent shows like *Eli Stone* (the pilot) and *Touched* that Ricky Gervais played on this trope in a stand-up sketch where he recounts taking his neighbour's autistic son for an outing and is angered when he loses money at a casino because the child can't count cards (Gervais, 2010).

Gervais's comedy illustrates criticisms that have been made of this 'idiot savant' autism stereotype, such as it skirts the reality that people with disabilities may not have 'exceptional' other abilities and require tolerance and effort from the rest of society to include and accept them. It highlights another point made by that the disabled person exists only for the people around him and is not meant to have any life of his own. More sympathetic rounded treatment of autism can be found in films like *Temple Grandin* (Jackson, 2010).

The 'mad genius' stereotype is another trend. From more frightening characters such as Hannibal Lecter in *Silence of the Lambs* and Dr Bishop in *Fringe* to troubled prodigies (*Shine*; *A Beautiful Mind*; *Proof*) (Hicks, 1996; Howard & Hallowell, 2001;

Levinson, 1989; Madden, 2005) this is a strong theme in the approach to depictions of mental illness on screen. It is interesting to note that films and shows depicting a female ‘mad genius’ are starting to become more common, with few noteworthy examples prior to *Proof* or *Homeland*.

A milder version of the ‘mad genius’ is the ‘gifted and eccentric’ figure, found in shows like *Monk* (2002) or the character of Jerry Espenson in *Boston Legal* (2004) (Breckman, 2002; Listo, 2004).

Horror

While there has been a long-standing cinematic link between the horror genre and insanity, this was peripheral to my interests and so I only watched a few fairly recent films on this theme: *Session 9* (2001), *Gothika* (2003), *The Jacket* (2005).

Thematically, these seemed to move away from the idea that the mentally ill were the larger society. The recent British television series *Bedlam* (2011) is also set in a haunted ex-insane asylum. (Riley, 2011).

Adolescents and institutions

In addition to films and television dramas explicitly about mental illness and mental institutions, several influential works dealing with adolescents or young adults, particularly in ‘troubled’ groups and institutional settings, were considered. There is an obvious overlap in many of these cases as the institutions (‘community service’, educational institutions, rehabilitation centres) may be places of discovery and critically considering the world of adult authority while the interactions between adolescents outside the family or larger social setting gave important models.

Influential films include *The Breakfast Club* (1985), *Kids* (1995), shocking in its time for its portrayal of amoral hedonism, and *Donnie Darko* (2001). In other cases, the staple high school coming-of-age film is complicated by the mentally disturbed character or darker psychological overtones (*Archie’s Final Project* (2009); *Cracks* (2009); *Never Let me Go* (2010)). The 2009 British film *The Unloved* is unusual in its portrayal of the reality of a child’s-eye view of the authorities involved in adoption and fostering.

Television came to use institutional settings for young adults only recently, perhaps because the notion of a broad audience meant that adolescents were best portrayed in relationship with adults, for comic or serious intent. While many of these shows still show such dynamics, there is more interest in the relationships between the young adults.

Shows I looked at include *Orange is the New Black* (2007) *Skins* (2008), *Shameless* (2009), *The Inbetweeners* (2009), *Community* (2011) and *Misfits* (2013).

B2) Critiques of representations of mental illness on screen

General overviews of screen portrayals of mental illness, whether in films or television dramas, rehearse several important complaints. In general, mental illness on the screen is far more likely to be violent and to lead to hurt to others than in real life. (Diefenbach, 1997: 291-300; Wilson, Nairn, Coverdale, & Panapa, 1999: 232) In other cases, mental illness is treated with mockery or derision. (Philo et al., 1994)

A particularly valuable creative perspective emerges from the account by Donna Franceschild, writer of *Takin' Over the Asylum*, reflecting on the media attitudes towards mental illness in Britain in the 1990s:

Nobody, it seemed, had "mental health problems" in those days. They were just "loonies". Murderers were always "psychos", "maniacs" and "schizos" according to the tabloid press. Coronation Street ran a storyline about a scheming, vicious character with "erotomania" that had a whole country bay-ing for her blood. Comic Ruby Wax ran a comedy sketch with a shaking, gibbering Joanna Lumley, newly released from the "loony bin", doing an elaborate dance routine in which she was wrapped up in a strait jacket.

When challenged, the producers always protested that they were just trying to "make good television". (Franceschild, 2008)

Most of these overviews of film and television drama date from the last century.

Many of their concerns are still valid. Most television dramas dealing with the mentally unbalanced centre on sociopathic murderers, most obviously the serial killers who have to be tracked by the sane though affected profiler or team of psychological experts. Women, too, are often shown as the *femmes fatales*, whose condition is attributed to mental disorder rather than mythic power.

Developments in the past 20 years

Nonetheless, this view of how mental illness is shown on television and film has been enormously complicated by a host of late 20th and 21st century figures where our sympathies are divided and we are no longer sure who the sane figure is. The character of Dexter in *Dexter* is the obvious example, but even Hannibal Lecter emerged as the sane protector of Clarice Starling in *Hannibal*, the second Thomas Harris novel dealing with the anti-hero, and escaped with her to Buenos Aires at the end of the novel, before an outraged Hollywood separated them by having him cut off his own hand in the film version of the novel (Harris, 1999; Scott, 2001).

More influential, probably, is the relationship of Tony Soprano with Dr Melfi in *The Sopranos* (1999) (*Chase, 1999*). These portrayals of therapy, usually by writers who had undergone psychotherapy themselves, as Martin points out in *Difficult Men*, (Martin, 2013) is sophisticated and often drew the admiration of watching therapists (White, 2008: 68).

As Kaplan puts it: (Kaplan, 2007: 1)

Certainly, when mobster Tony Soprano sought treatment for panic attacks in *The Sopranos*, the process and purpose of psychotherapy received wide exposure. The television series provided one of the best depictions of psychotherapy "to ever appear on film or television," according to Glenn Gabbard, MD, Brown Foundation Professor of Psychoanalysis at Baylor College of Medicine and author of a book about *The Sopranos*.

Increasingly, writers, directors, and producers of prime time shows or feature-length films, along with actors, are shifting away from mental illness stereotypes and seeking the input of psychiatrists, psychologists, other mental health experts, family members of the mentally ill, and those suffering from the disorders.

There are even annual awards, the PRISM awards, given by the Entertainment Industries Council in collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in the USA and these are reported on in mainstream psychiatric publications (Bender, 2014).

A critique of specific shows and developments

It may not be, however, that all modern shows are more enlightened or are based on better models. It may be significant that the two shows I found most interesting and accurate date from 15 and 20 years ago.

Takin' Over the Asylum sought for authenticity by having extras who were mostly ex-patients of a nearby mental hospital and themselves contributed to directorial decisions when there were doubts about authenticity. The show seemed to open a subject that had been taboo to social examination and acted as a form of acceptance. Franceschild (Franceschild, 2008) recounts that:

Letters poured into the BBC from people with mental health problems who wrote about their lives and the discrimination they had suffered. Some of their stories could make you weep. Most were writing just to say thank you.

While Franceschild in general welcomed the changes in cultural attitudes from the late twentieth century, she notes that extreme openness has its disadvantages:

...the changes in attitude that have made it possible for mental health issues to be addressed and discussed openly have been undermined by the emergence of a television culture obsessed with the extreme and the bizarre.

She goes on to give concrete examples:

In the past year, I have been approached about writing two television dramas. The first was a story about the mother of a severely disabled child who, overwhelmed by the responsibility of looking after him, fantasises about bashing his head against the wall. The situation is resolved when the child is placed with a foster mother, and the natural mother goes back to the work she loves. The second was a story about two depressed teenagers who fall in love, and then deal with their alienation and rage by going on a killing spree and murdering their classmates. In the face of a rash of teenage suicides, where is the drama that explores why children with their whole lives in front of them choose to end them? Where is the drama that depicts the battles fought by parents of disabled children to get and keep their kids in mainstream education, to obtain any kind of support from their local authorities, to find housing for their children when they reach adulthood?

Reality TV shows featuring mental illness like *Hoarders*, *My Strange Addiction* and *Intervention* certainly use the draw of voyeurism and allure of the bizarre to hook their audiences. (Butts, 2009; Fitzgerald, 2010; Mettler, 2005). It seems likely that such shows work against the kind of layered textures for which Franceschild argued.

Another area where issues may not necessarily have improved is the portrayal of the psychiatrists and doctors involved with the institutions. One of the reasons that *Psychos* was pulled may have been the adverse judgement by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, perhaps because the last episode ends with a doctor under too much pressure stabbing someone. It explores the blurred lines between sick and healthy, patient and doctor, patient and family and other problems practitioners and patients face. (The line 'It's not so much finding the right medicine that's the problem, it's getting them to take the medicine at all' is a common complain of psychiatrists. But the show doesn't leave it at that: it's a bipolar psychiatrist who experiences a manic episode because he purposefully decides to abandon his medication.) (Hiller, 1999)

In spite of medical reservations, however, this show was more complex in its

portrayal of the realities of mental illness for doctors and patients alike than a more modern, sensationalistic show, *Mental* (2009) where a new head of a psychiatric hospital takes over with unorthodox practices. Not only did it lack the exploration of real issues and experiences surrounding patients and practitioners in mental treatment centres, but was also criticised for its poor research and for lacking the kind of meticulous research that marked many other medical dramas (Blumenfield, 2009).

C) Creative influences and creative choices

The above sections outlining the key issues with regards to mental illness, the issue of mental illness intersecting with religious belief and the discussions of the shows and the critiques of them lead to a consideration of how my own creative choices emerged. While this section will not mechanically mirror the previous sections, it will return to and recapitulate some of the earlier conclusions.

C1) Form and structure

Earlier sections already largely explain my choice of a 12-part hour slot television series structure (rather than a film or a six-part series) for a series set in an institution: A television series provides the time and space for a more complex exploration of multiple characters. In terms of number of episodes, my feeling was that the 6-part British structure works particularly well for half-hour sitcoms because sitcoms work with minimal character development or series story arc. The hour slot drama series is a different beast. The writer must limit herself to a relatively short and finite story arc and character focus if she wants to end the six parts with some kind of resolution. This was simply not what I wanted to do.

C2) Themes

The earlier mention of Joan of Arc and of Nongqawuse suggest that the tension between the Inspired/Enlightened and Crazy/Heretical may cross cultural divides and be a good basis for a series in South Africa and help justify my dramatic emphasis on this tension. There are promising possibilities for South Africa where there would be rich comparative view of how traditional beliefs would intersect with interpretations of mental illness, but to do this justice, a series like this would need a team of diverse writers. Should this script ever move beyond an academic application to production,

the first thing it would need is diverse team of writers.

The characterisation of God as ‘GOGO’ (God of Goodness Only) was in many ways to favour a feminine, African dimension of God, but this characterisation on screen is hardly original (or even African). The American depiction of God (or at least a wise, spiritual mentor figure) as a black woman is found in the long-running TV series *Touched by an Angel*, (1994-2003), *The Matrix*, (1999), the novel *The Shack*, (2007) and in various episodes of *Joan of Arcadia*, to name a few. It has become such a cliché that in the pilot of *Community*, the character of Jeff asks an African American woman passing by for romantic advice. When she expresses surprise, he replies: “Sorry, I was raised on TV. I was conditioned to believe that every black woman over 50 is a cosmic mentor of some kind.” (Shapeero, 2009) The appeal of God as an African-American (or black) woman seems more to make the point that God is best revealed in the most disenfranchised members of (western) society than to offer any actual authentic African perspective on the spiritual.

Nonetheless, the various manifestations of ‘God’, which the characters refer to as GOGO, I hope could be a starting point for an exploration of spirituality and meaning within a South African context that a more culturally diverse writing team could explore and develop.

In *Saint Joan*, Shaw tried to find ways to let the audience suspend judgement on Joan’s vision or sincerity and on the views of those prosecuting her. My series also faces the dramatic tension as to what one should make of those who believe they have been ‘enlightened’. For this, I created the character of ‘to give the audience an anchoring point. She is somewhat reluctantly part of the ‘GOGO’ group as she has not experienced a supernatural experience.

C3) Point of view

In the earlier discussions, it became clear why mental illness on screen is problematic when represented solely from the perspective of the rational ‘healers’ or doctors. The converse – telling the story solely from the vision of the romantically viewed ‘insane’ (or ‘enlightened’) – is also problematic. Part of the success of *Takin’ over the Asylum*

and *Psychos* is due to the creators working with this tension and finding ways of bridging it. For *Schedule 7*, I created the character of Alexandria. Alexandria is a clinical psychology (and ethnography) student, but is drawn more towards the patients socially than towards the staff. At some point in the series, she becomes a patient at the centre, which she rationalises to be an ethnographic project. She provides an anchoring point between ‘patient’ and ‘practitioner’ and invites space to question the distinction.

C4) Genre: “Dramedy” (or Drama and Comedy)

The choice of Drama as a genre seems straightforward, considering my choice to focus in depth on character and the human experience. That said, mental illness is a ‘heavy’ subject – and most often films and television series dealing with the subject mix drama with elements of other genres. Drama and Romance, such as *Betty Blue* (1986) and *Mad Love* (1995), Drama and Thriller (*Homeland* and *Gothika*), Drama and Biopic (*Girl, Interrupted* (1999) and *Frankie & Alice* (2010)) and Drama and Comedy (*Psychos* (1999), *Takin’ Over the Asylum* (1994) and *Enlightened* (2011)), are all common combinations.

My personal choice was to combine drama with a comedy genre. Apart from ‘lightening’ the ‘heaviness’ of the subject matter, my experience has been that many people who struggle with mental illness use humour as a way to deal with their own illness. A patient (who was diagnosed with bipolar) once told me to ignore a particular medical practitioner or else I would go ‘Tripolar’. Another patient with a ‘bipolar’ diagnosis sent me the official ‘bipolar’ emoticon “): (“ -a simultaneous happy and sad emoticon. My experiences within the setting of a psychiatric hospital is that patients often use humorous exchanges to socialise and connect with each other outside of formal group sessions. (Perhaps this is as much a respite from the barrage of serious, therapeutic language as the psychological difficulties we experience.)

That said, the use of comedy may be problematic. As Philo points out, the generally derogatory treatment of mental illness on other television formats is unacceptable (Philo et al., 1994) while Franceschild’s critique of the 1990s mass media culture shows this phenomenon is a much larger social problem (Franceschild, 2008). In

using comedy, I wanted to be careful that the mentally ill patients weren't the 'butt of the joke' (nor robbed of all comedic agency, on the other extreme).

One of the most promising shows about a mental institution, *Psychos* (1999) was pulled partially because of complaints about the insensitive name. The irony is that the series made it clear that the word applied, comically, to the doctors (and perhaps to humanity in general) rather than the patients. The political reaction reveals that, in a politically correct climate, the writer needs to tread very carefully. As the expression goes, perhaps it's the difference between 'laughing with' and 'laughing at' someone.

Humorous commentary on the illness rather than on the patient, and allowing the patient, fully aware of the irony, to be the one making the comment seemed to be important. For example, in *Takin' over the Asylum's* pilot (1994), the character of Campbell says, "I'm inspired!". Another character asks him how he can be sure he's not manic. He replies: "When you're inspired you feel like you can do anything. When you're manic, you know you can". It is perhaps the very representing of a mentally ill character as being able to identify the discrepancy or humour in his own behaviour or perception that grants the character an agency and identity beyond "mentally ill" or "crazy".

C5) Using Action/Adventure elements.

Both *Takin' Over the Asylum* and *Psychos*, 'dramedies' or dramatic comedies, gathered a small cult following as well as some critical acclaim. I suspect that despite the (often 'dark') humour the 'heaviness' of the setting and subject are what prevented a larger audience following.

I wondered if including elements of action and adventure would give a break from the potentially claustrophobic heaviness of drama and 'social realism' of the institution. This also allowed interactions with wider social groups and social problems – much as in shows like *Joan of Arcadia* (2003) or *Misfits* (2009).

C6) Effects and educational value

As I stated in my personal introduction, one of the reactions of many of the participants to being in a psychiatric hospital was that it had made them less afraid of mental illness and more able to cope with it. Ideally, this show could have the potential to destigmatise mental illness and to promote understanding.

While few shows can have the educational value of *The Wire* (Buttress, German, Holtgrave, & Sherman, 2013) or even well-researched medical shows, (Bender, 2014), this show could help start necessary conversations and debates, in families, schools and other places in South Africa.

Conclusion

This essay has attempted to outline why mental illness is an important issue with potentially complex dramatic material to explore on screen, why the relationship between religion and mental illness is potentially helpful as well as harmful and to give an outline of significant trends in recent depictions of mental illness on screen and a critique thereof. The hope is that the elements chosen: socio-economic diversity of characters in the intimate setting of a psychiatric clinic who share a ‘coming to faith’ experience (albeit individually) may make for a dynamic story allowing an exploration of how the above themes (mental illness and religion) could play out in a diverse group environment. Beyond the realms of an academic project, such a TV series would surely require an equally diverse team of South African screen writers and other film makers to hold credibility and integrity of the work.

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