

# **ZAR**

a smashword screenplay

**by**

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## **INTERIOR: THE KITCHEN - VERKEERDEVLEI FARM HOUSE: DAY**

We flow through the kitchen: A place of warmth and love despite the dim lighting. A pot steams on the stove; an old Agar stove the lids blackened from years of use. The kitchen table is huge, the wooden planks sturdy enough to carry an ox.

Ma, dressed in her usual colourful clothing, leans against the window peering out, a corner of the curtain pulled back.

Brik, the second born and as stubborn as the kitchen table, sits at the table; the plate of food in front of him steaming, smelling just great. But he refuses to touch it. He just waits. He is dirty, his clothes torn and ragged, his face sun burnt, alive and arrogant. He stares at his mother; the nineteen year old warrior and perfect know all that he is.

Brik v/o

When a bad omen comes in you smell it first; before you see it. You can't touch it...there is nothing you can do about it; just puke in the smell of it.

Ma pulls the curtain closed; just a crack, her nose filling the crack.

Brik v/o

I knew something was wrong. When Ma looks like that something's wrong, and she's right...that's the problem; she's always right.

He looks around the kitchen bored by its warmth and comfort.

Brik v/o

What the shit. If you gotta be someone you gotta cut the strings.

(stands)

Get the hell out of here.

Ma

It's never too late son.

(she sits, rubbing her finger)

You don't have to do this thing. Not for us...or the farm.

They stare each other down; holding the challenge; neither prepared to let go.

## **TITLE SEQUENCE**

Over a black screen the sound of a flag flapping in the breeze grows on us and as the

sound grows so the screen becomes red.

Old Afrikaans music plays, lead by the banjo and 'squash box'.

On screen we read: Eendragt Maakt Magt.

A corner of the ZAR flag flashes ...and flashes again...it flashes bright red; then an old leather weapon belt unfurls and twists into the figure of a seven; and this figure becomes the "black seven" of the ZAR flag.

We zoom into the ZAR flag and the inscription "One God One Son" and our story begins; a nostalgic story, revisiting the past as we come to realise what could have been.

### **EXT: A DIRT ROAD ON THE BANKS OF THE TUGELA RIVER: DAWN**

A line of Eland 90 vehicles wait, one behind the other. The soldiers stand in the turrets of their Elands silhouetted against the skyline; their breath a white vapour. Dark shadows loom. The sounds of movement hollow in the chilly dawn.

WE HEAR the sound of men breathing; a cough; weapons loading and the clink of metal on metal; the sounds are the well known sounds of a nation about to go to war; well rehearsed. Then all becomes very quiet.

The battle flags and insignia of the ZAR forces are similar to those of the Islamic State – black and red – aggressive flags; and the ZAR soldiers dress like the Russian rebels in Ukraine with their balaclava headgear and cut-off-finger gloves. This gives the impression of a present day story, but the Eland vehicles are definitely an outdated "little tank" of the past; perhaps a useful weapon in the late nineteen seventies, but certainly not of twenty fifteen.

All characters speak in their home language; the Afrikaners speak Afrikaans – Portuguese speak Portuguese - the Black people speak their vernacular language; except Solomon Xholiwe, he speaks English and speaks it well.

In a series of quick cuts we meet BRIK (19 yrs old) a young Afrikaner, the hero of our story and commander of the lead Eland; he stands tall in the turret, rubbing his hands, his teeth chattering.

Brik

Fuck'n cold.

He punches his chest; quick jabs; left and right; punching harder and harder.

VAN HEERDEN (23 yrs old) the overall Eland Unit Commander, nicknamed Herr Kommandant even though he is only a major; a violent man and every inch the professional soldier. We meet him as he pulls on a "three fingered glove".

This glove represents a secret society amongst the rebel Afrikaner unit; he who wears

this glove is held in awe and admiration by all, especially the Eland Unit. To wear it means he has met the three qualifying actions; actions regarded by most as impossible to attain...that is by any mortal man. van Heerden now pulls on this glove with deliberate care his face hypnotized by the significance of the three fingers.

Two of the fingers depict a snake; they guard the middle finger, a golden cross.

van Heerden speaks to the snake fingers and at the same time into his head set microphone thus deliberately sending the message to his men in their respective Eland vehicles.

van Heerden

Kill....convert...

(kissing the golden cross)

...receive gratification.

(tightens the glove around his wrist)

I've done it men. Now it's up to one of you.

He adjusts his head set microphone; then barks out his orders.

van Heerden (continues)

Safeties locked. Eyes front and keep your line. No jerking off on your own glory mission. To wear the glove you gotta earn it and since I've got it let none of you bitches fuck up and have it stripped from me. You got that; got it tight.

ROCKON, a Portuguese soldiers of fortune and the commander of the 3rd Eland in the column, sits cross legged on the roof of his Eland. His brother, MINKI pops his head out of the turret and Rockon pushes him back down into the safety of the "cockpit".

Rockon

Stay out of trouble little Minki.

Minki kisses the air above him and ducks down.

Minki

Up the glove...wherever it fits.

Rockon plays the bugle tune of a full on cavalry charge with his lips; the sound travelling through the Eland Unit via his headset microphone.

**CUT TO**

Brik

(angry and vehement)

Can it Rockon. This is not your Porko concert.

**CUT TO**

van Heerden

You can give us the victory march later...though your arse.

**CUT BACK TO**

Rockon hugs Minki.

Rockon

See Minks; don't go play the fool with the chiefs. You'll get it from them; they just love this bullshit.

van Heerden v/o

(through the radio microphone)

Rockon right flank. And hold your line brother; hold your fuck'n line.

**CUT TO**

Brik pulls his balaclava over his face, his eyes fierce and determined.

van Heerden v/o

Brik you go left. Keep it tight. We don't want to lose the first round because you couldn't take it.

GIDEON (19 yrs old), the driver of Brik's Eland, wedges a spare magazine into the slit opening of his windscreen. He is a bigoted no-nonsense son-of-a-bitch and Brik's best friend. He has decorated his driving cockpit with his specialised killing machines; a knife; a pistol; even a Zulu spear. He settles into his seat; then practices drawing his pistol and firing through the slit opening; not satisfied he settles the pistol back adjusting its position by a millimetre.

Brik watches, looking down through the turret.

Brik

Grease 'em mate; but remember...later.

Gideon

I got you Brik...Holy fuck we're made for this.

van Heerden v/o

(emphatically; without doubt)

Hold your fire. I repeat hold your fire.

(mutters)

I give the orders so you girls just wait...button your pussies and listen.

Brik

You hear that Gideon. Run them over...

(urgently in Gideon's ear)

Don't let that fucker see you.

The sound of a shell rammed into the 90mm gun brings Brik to full attention.

Brik

(to the gunner)

Spoefie...that goes for you too; take your hard on off the trigger. Herr Kommandant says safety on lock.

(slaps the top of Spoefie's head)

Put it away sweetheart.

Spoefie

(itching to kill)

I can't fight like that. Once this knob is loaded...

(pats the 90mm)

I get a hard on that needs a bitch?

Spoefie bounces a live mortar round off the floor and up into his hands; his eyes on Brik; his mouth open...daring the fuck'n thing to explode.

Brik

Maybe it's a dud Spoefie.

The game continues; one...two...three bounces, before Brik climbs back into the turret.

**CUT TO**

Brik surveys the setting; standing tall in his turret. He claps his hands; partly against the cold, but mainly to calm the butterflies.

Brik

Let's go; get this hard on something to play with.

The line of Eland vehicles cough into life spewing diesel smoke across the dirt road.

Now the energy levels rise as our heroes go to war; the action becomes fast and furious; the events captured haphazardly by a roaming eye.

The Eland Unit dips down a steep concrete causeway and splashes across the Tugela River. They crawl up the other side; engines growling; wheels spinning. They make it...just...the last vehicle bucking sideways over the lip. Nicknamed "Noddy Cars" the Eland vehicle cannot operate in mud or soft sand and as such mirrors the flaws in this military action.

The sun bursts over the hills revealing the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) camp.

A bugle sounds the call "reverie-reverie".

The SANDF Flag flies over a sandbag machine gun post.

The following scenes are typical of those played out in the early stages of an internal rebellion where "brother faces off against brother" each with a weapon in hand, but no one prepared to fire the first shot. The soldiers of both armies' masquerading like peacocks in a mating dance.

#### **EXT: THE SANDF CAMP: DAWN**

The soldiers of the SANDF army line up for roll call; standing at ease; nonplussed by the arrival of the ZAR Eland Unit; their weapons held in a sloppy position and their line a zigzag formation.

The ZAR column sweeps into the camp. Brik's Eland rams the SANDF flag pole and brings it down. Rockon smashes into the radio room and blows up the radio. Brik cuts the telephone lines.

A BEEFY BLACK SANDF sergeant major, bellows out the names of the SANDF soldiers on parade.

Serg Major

Potwe, Silo, Jungblud, Titus, Xholiwe...

Solomon Xholiwe does not reply:

Serg Major

(repeats; his blood boiling)

Xholiwe...Solomon Xholiwe...Solomon...

Solomon (19 yrs old), slouches across the parade ground and raises his hand in acknowledgement of his name. He sneaks into line; any place will do; alongside the tallest soldier on parade even though Solomon is a short man.

Brik v/o

He never seemed to care; nothing important enough for him. Just a joke...always the fuck'n joker.

Solomon grins...pleased with his decision and the place in which he stands.

The Eland of van Heerden arrives at speed. van Heerden slides from the moving vehicle as he would from a galloping horse. Still on the run he addresses the SANDF soldiers until he is in amongst them shouting and spitting in their faces, waving his snout nosed machine gun.

van Heerden

You are surrounded. Any resistance will be met with force. We proclaim all of the land south of the Tugela as Afrikaans territory. You leave us alone and we leave you alone.

(eye-balls the soldiers)

Simple...for simple people.

(mimics)

I not understand. Sorry boss...not me...no understand.

(fires a burst into the air)

Now you understand.

While van Heerden lectures the SANDF soldiers on the current status quo, we see the ZAR force consolidating their "victory".

Minki scrambles up the roof of the HQ building and waves the ZAR flag.

Gideon tosses a hand grenade into the machine gun post.

Brik wrecks the SANDF HQ office; slashing maps with his bayonet; while Spoefie bludgeons the sand model of the camp.

van Heerden (continues)

We have cut your communications; destroyed your weapons. No help will come to you; from today you are

on holiday. Just relax and everything will be fine; and don't bother to look for anyone who goes missing. We intend taking some of you with us. Call it insurance.

Solomon sneaks out of line and crawls under the flap of a nearby tent.