

JUST BUSINESS

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Setting

The play is set in contemporary South Africa.

Characters

September is a “coloured” hitman in his early-fifties. He is a bit scruffy, but attempts to dress like a modern-day yuppie. He has the trappings of new wealth. He took early retirement from the police force and now he’s trying to make it as a businessman on the edge of the legal system. He is streetwise, sussed, with a sharp sense of humour, capable of being both sinister and sensitive. He can swing from being threatening to jocular in a second, and vice versa.

Hannes van Wyk, - “white” - was a diplomat during the apartheid era, but was retrenched from the Foreign Affairs Department after 1994, and now runs a strip club. In his late forties, he has the elegance and self-importance of a former diplomat, and the desperation of a white man having to make it in the New South Africa.

Mabusso is a thirty-five-year old “black”, upwardly mobile businessman. He is self-assured, incredibly sophisticated and ruthless.

Playing areas

There are basically three areas of theatrical activity:

- a. the veld where a grave is being dug (could be downstage, centre)
- b. the office of Van Wyk (could be stage right, raised on a rostrum)
- c. the home of Mabusso (could be stage left, raised on a rostrum)

Scene 1: Market Forces

It's in the middle of a veld with trees. It is night time, and there are the sounds of nature. Van Wyk – wearing a shirt and tie (with the top button undone, and tie loosened) - is digging a grave (reluctantly, slowly), which is very shallow at the time of the start of the play. There is a large torch on the ground shedding light on Van Wyk. September is wearing a smart suit, and has a gun visibly tucked into the front of his pants. He also has a video camera slung over his shoulder.

When the lights come up, September is putting on a pair of surgical, latex gloves and is casually chewing gum.

VAN WYK: (stops digging) Did you do Johnny?

SEPTEMBER: Johnny?

VAN WYK: Did you do him?

SEPTEMBER: Did I do Johnny?

VAN WYK: You did, didn't you?

SEPTEMBER: Johnny who?

VAN WYK: Johnny....

SEPTEMBER: Who the fuck's Johnny?

VAN WYK: You know...

SEPTEMBER: Johnny Walker? Johnny-come-lately?

VAN WYK: Visser.

SEPTEMBER: Johnny Visser?

VAN WYK: Did you shoot him?

SEPTEMBER: Did I shoot Johnny Visser?

VAN WYK: Yes.

SEPTEMBER: No.

VAN WYK: No?

SEPTEMBER: Maybe....

VAN WYK: Maybe?

SEPTEMBER: Maybe I did, maybe I didn't.

VAN WYK: It's not like I'm going to tell anyone.

SEPTEMBER: (*snorts*) You think I'm worried about that?

VAN WYK: So you can tell me.

SEPTEMBER: (*coyly*) Tell you what?

VAN WYK: If you shot Johnny Visser.

September has pulled on the gloves at this point. They look at each other. September chews, then blows a bubble. After it pops, he continues.

SEPTEMBER: Suicide....

VAN WYK: Suicide?

SEPTEMBER: Suicide!

VAN WYK: Bullet in the back of his head? How did he do that?

SEPTEMBER: He must have pissed off someone really bad.

VAN WYK: So?

SEPTEMBER: (*wry smile*) So that's like committing suicide, man.

VAN WYK: So you did him. *You* shot him in the back of the head.

SEPTEMBER: I didn't say that.

VAN WYK: You didn't say...

SEPTEMBER: (*threateningly*) Did I say I shot him?

VAN WYK: No, but...

SEPTEMBER: What did I say?

VAN WYK: You said...

SEPTEMBER: Suicide. I said it was suicide.

VAN WYK: You said maybe you did, maybe you didn't.

SEPTEMBER: Exactly. That's what I said.

VAN WYK: So...

SEPTEMBER: So, shit! Just keep digging, Mr Van Wyk.

Van Wyk digs a bit. September starts videoing Van Wyk. He circles the grave slowly, filming. There is silence for a little bit.

VAN WYK: So what's this?

SEPTEMBER: What's what?

VAN WYK: Is this... a "suicide" too?

SEPTEMBER: You must have pissed off someone.

VAN WYK: Someone wants me dead.

SEPTEMBER: Yeah, someone took out a contract.

VAN WYK: Hanky Spanky?

SEPTEMBER: Hanky who?

VAN WYK: They want me dead, don't they?

SEPTEMBER: (*snorts*) Hanky Spanky?

VAN WYK: Did *they* do Johnny?

SEPTEMBER: No. That was Humpty Dumpty. (*laughs*)

There is a silence as September considers Van Wyk.

VAN WYK: They did Johnny.

SEPTEMBER: Who?

VAN WYK: And now they've come for me.

SEPTEMBER: Hanky Spanky?

VAN WYK: I should've listened to Johnny.

SEPTEMBER: But Johnny's dead.

VAN WYK: Not *that* Johnny.

SEPTEMBER: (*half-angry, half-laughing*) Who the fuck is *this* Johnny?

VAN WYK: Mabusos!

SEPTEMBER: Johnny Mabusos?

VAN WYK: He said there were people after my business.

SEPTEMBER: They wanted to buy it?

VAN WYK: No, they wanted me to give it to them. Just about.

SEPTEMBER: No fucking way.

VAN WYK: That's what I said.

SEPTEMBER: What did Johnny say?

VAN WYK: Johnny said he could protect me.

SEPTEMBER: How?

VAN WYK: He said I should make him my business partner.

SEPTEMBER: How would that help?

VAN WYK: The people who want it are black high-ups and their Chinese partners.

SEPTEMBER: Fucking Chinese. They're everywhere!

VAN WYK: Johnny thought if I had a black partner that would help.

SEPTEMBER: But you said no.

VAN WYK: It's like a protection racket.

SEPTEMBER: So you said no.

VAN WYK: You do the hard work and someone else benefits....

SEPTEMBER: That's...empowerment.

VAN WYK: It's not fair.

SEPTEMBER: That's why you said no.

VAN WYK: Knowing what I know now...

SEPTEMBER: Spyt kom altyd te laat....

Beat.

VAN WYK: This is going to sound weird.

SEPTEMBER: What?

VAN WYK: What I'm about to say...

SEPTEMBER: Just fucking say it.

Beat.

VAN WYK: I want *you* to be my business partner.

SEPTEMBER: (*snorts*) Me?

VAN WYK: *You* can add *real* value to my business.

SEPTEMBER: How?

VAN WYK: I need security.

SEPTEMBER: (*snorts*) I'm not black enough.

VAN WYK: Not that kind of security. Guns. Bodyguards. Protection.

SEPTEMBER: You want *me* to be your partner?

VAN WYK: I see the sense in what Johnny was saying.

SEPTEMBER: You don't even fucking know me!

VAN WYK: I can see how professional you are...from when you hijacked me earlier...

SEPTEMBER: I've never seen a white man go so...white.

VAN WYK: You were very calm.

SEPTEMBER: You kept on farting...what is that?

VAN WYK: I need protection.

SEPTEMBER: I've been offered a lot of things at times like this. Money, cars, blowjobs...but this is the first business partnership...

VAN WYK: I could make you rich.

Half-beat.

SEPTEMBER: (*coldly*) Like you said, Mr Van Wyk, I'm a professional. I have a job to do. That's what I'm here to do. Keep digging.

VAN WYK: Please consider....

SEPTEMBER: (*firmly, pointing the gun at Van Wyk*) Shut the fuck up and dig!

Van Wyk digs. They are in silence for a few moments.

SEPTEMBER: I'm not sure if it makes you feel any better, Hanky Spanky didn't put in this order.

VAN WYK: Then who....?

SEPTEMBER: I don't know.

VAN WYK: No?

SEPTEMBER: This business works through referrals, third parties, anonymous networks. You very seldom know who places the order.

VAN WYK: So...

SEPTEMBER: So what?

VAN WYK: So...how do you know Hanky Spanky didn't order this?

SEPTEMBER: I would have heard...

VAN WYK: How?

SEPTEMBER: (*tired of all the questions*) Just fucking dig, Mr Van Wyk.

Van Wyk digs a spadeful, then stops.

VAN WYK: What did I do?

SEPTEMBER: What do you mean?

VAN WYK: To be in this position....?

SEPTEMBER: I don't know.

VAN WYK: You don't know?

SEPTEMBER: How would I know?

VAN WYK: Don't they tell you?

SEPTEMBER: Who?

VAN WYK: The people who contract you....

SEPTEMBER: I don't want to know.

VAN WYK: No?

SEPTEMBER: It just...complicates things.

VAN WYK: What if you got the wrong person.

SEPTEMBER: (*taking exception*) I'm a professional!

VAN WYK: So you can just...shoot someone.

SEPTEMBER: It's my job.

VAN WYK: What if you kill...good people?

SEPTEMBER: Mr Van Wyk, I'm an entrepreneur. I make business decisions. Not moral ones.

VAN WYK: You don't need to know if they're guilty....

SEPTEMBER: I need to know shit. The market wants someone dead. I give the market what it wants.

VAN WYK: Just like that.

SEPTEMBER: This is business.

VAN WYK: Just business.

SEPTEMBER: Nothing personal, Mr Van Wyk.

September spits out the gum and lights a cigarette. There is silence for a moment or two.

SEPTEMBER: Are you...a good person?

VAN WYK: I...think so.

SEPTEMBER: Running a strip club?

VAN WYK: I create jobs.

SEPTEMBER: You break up marriages.

VAN WYK: *(shaking his head)* I save them!

SEPTEMBER: You save them?

VAN WYK: Men get at the club what they don't get at home. They're happy, their wives are happy...keeps the family together.

SEPTEMBER: You really believe that?

VAN WYK: I do!

SEPTEMBER: It's disgusting! It's not right! *(Beat)* Keep digging!

VAN WYK: *(after digging up a spadeful or two of sand)* How much are you getting?

SEPTEMBER: *(taking exception)* That's my business.....

VAN WYK: I'll double it.

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: What did you say?

VAN WYK: I'll give you double. Whatever they're paying you.

September pulls out his gun and points it threateningly at Van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: Are you trying to bribe me?

VAN WYK: *(confused, anxious)* No.....

September goes up closer to Van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: You think because you have money...?

VAN WYK: Please....

September pointing the gun right at Van Wyk's forehead.

SEPTEMBER: This is why there's so much corruption....!

Van Wyk goes onto his knees with September aiming the gun at his head.

VAN WYK: It's...it's a business proposal.

SEPTEMBER: *(business-like)* I'm a professional.

VAN WYK: *(placating him).* They're paying you to kill me.

SEPTEMBER: Death is my core business.

VAN WYK: I'll pay you *double* to let me live.

SEPTEMBER: I make my living by killing.

VAN WYK: It makes business sense to let me live.

SEPTEMBER: If I start trading in life, who'll hire me?

September steps back from Van Wyk, no longer pointing the gun at Van Wyk.

Beat.

VAN WYK: I'll pay you a retainer...for life.

SEPTEMBER: What about the people who work for me?

VAN WYK: There are others?

With a quick movement, September points the camera at Van Wyk. Van Wyk thinks it's the gun, takes fright and shrinks away, putting his hands up as if to shield himself.

SEPTEMBER: Don't mess with the market, Mr Van Wyk!

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: Look into the camera. *(Beat)* Say your full name.

Van Wyk stands and is silent. September puts his hand on his gun which is stuck down the front of his pants.

SEPTEMBER: *(firmly)* Your name.

VAN WYK: Hannes Andre Fourie van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: I.D.

VAN WYK: *(sighs)* 600603 6233 07 7

SEPTEMBER: Today's date.

VAN WYK: *(beat, disoriented)*...Twenty....

SEPTEMBER: 23 November 2011.

VAN WYK: *(into the camera)* 23 November 2011.

SEPTEMBER: Okay, now say it all together. Name, ID, today's date.

VAN WYK: Hannes Andre Fourie van Wyk. *(Beat)* ID. 600603 6233 07 7. *(Half-beat)* 23 November 2011.

SEPTEMBER: Now keep digging.

Lights fade on Van Wyk. Lights remain focused on September who looks straight at the audience and speaking into the camera.

SEPTEMBER: Professional Removals CC. Order number Two Eight Three. Hannes van Wyk. 23 November 2011.

Lights fade to black.

Scene 2: Supply and Demand

Lights fade on September. Lights come up on Mabuso. This scene takes place in Van Wyk's office. Mabuso is sitting, drinking from a beer bottle. Another beer bottle stands on the table. Van Wyk is off stage.

MABUSO: You need to get more black girls.

VAN WYK: (*Off-stage*) I thought you preferred the Bulgarians.

MABUSO: Not for me...(*laughs*) I can get a black girl any time....

Van Wyk enters with a large briefcase chained to his wrist. It is full of banknotes.

VAN WYK: Then who...?

MABUSO: Your foreign clients.

Van Wyk puts the briefcase on the table, and sits.

VAN WYK: They seem pretty happy with the Bulgarian pole dancers too....

MABUSO: Men from Europe can get white girls at home. When they come to Africa, they want black pussy....

VAN WYK: And you know this...from what?

Van Wyk opens the briefcase, the lid facing Mabuso, so that he can't see inside.

MABUSO: From talking to them.

VAN WYK: (*disbelievingly*) They speak to you...about what they want....

MABUSO: They see me at the bar, and they ask...do I know where they can get black women?

VAN WYK: Yeah, right.

MABUSO: They come here because of what the name promises. "African Delights". And then what they get is European Recession Refugees.

VAN WYK: We *have* black girls.

MABUSO: Not enough.

VAN WYK: Our clients are scared of AIDS.

MABUSO: Hannes, you're not just catering for the Afrikaans market anymore. And you have monthly compulsory testing, right?

VAN WYK: The girls don't like it, but...

MABUSO: Then it's about marketing...put up a sign saying "This is an AIDS-free zone".

VAN WYK: (*sarcastically*) And then they'll just come streaming in....

MABUSO: Foreigners like that. It's like being reassured the Kruger Park is malaria free....

VAN WYK: (*little laugh*) That's funny...there are man-eating animals, but they want to know they're safe from a little insect. (*laughs*)

Van Wyk takes out a wad of notes and starts counting the money. Mabusu drinks and watches Van Wyk counting the money.

MABUSO: You should get more Chinese girls too.

VAN WYK: (*little laugh*) And then what sign shall I put up, Johnny? "Come to African Delights for something sweet, something sour?"

MABUSO: There are millions of Chinese in Africa. It's good business to cater for that market.

VAN WYK: So let me get this straight...the Europeans don't want what they can get at home, but the Chinese do.

MABUSO: Exactly. Europeans want the full exotic African experience. The Chinese...the Chinese just want copper takeaways.

VAN WYK: (*laughs*) And since when have you become a marketing expert?

MABUSO: Hanky Spanky's doing it.

Van Wyk's attitude suddenly changes. He stops counting money.

VAN WYK: (*firmly*) Are you still doing work for them?

MABUSO: (*caught off guard, unsure of himself*) No.

VAN WYK: Mabusoso...!

MABUSO: I'm...scaling down.

VAN WYK: I told you...you can't work for me *and* the competition!

MABUSO: I'm just trying to make an honest living, Hannes!

VAN WYK: Those fuckers want to close me down.

MABUSO: That's business, Hannes. Shut the competition down, and your profits go up.

VAN WYK: *They* got the drug squad to raid this place.

MABUSO: So get the Vice Squad to raid *them!*

VAN WYK: I still say they had something to do with Johnny's murder.

MABUSO: (*knowingly*) Johnny had a lot of enemies.

VAN WYK: (*edgy, Mabusoso's touched a nerve*) What are you saying?

MABUSO: I'm saying Johnny had a lot of enemies...

VAN WYK: I would *never* have hurt Johnny...

MABUSO: I'm not saying....

VAN WYK: Johnny was like a brother to me....

MABUSO: But a bother to others...

VAN WYK: Like Hanky Spanky...

MABUSO: Not only.

VAN WYK: They said *he* started the rumours....

In the next sequence, the laughter builds up to a crescendo

MABUSO: (*beginning to laugh*)...about the Minister's weekly visits...

VAN WYK: (*upping the laughter*)...the Minister said he was doing research on human trafficking...(with a few pelvic thrusts)

MABUSO: (*joining in the laughter*)...then he said he was doing constituency work...(doing pelvic thrusts too)

VAN WYK: ...till the party put out a statement...

BOTH: (*laughing*)...he was only collecting donations...(both doing pelvic thrusts)

MABUSO: ...laughing all the way...to the *bonk*.

VAN WYK: Now the minister's been promoted...!

MABUSO: (*thrusting in one direction*) From local affairs (*thrusts in opposite direction*) to foreign affairs...Hey, Hannes, maybe he can give you your old job back!

Van Wyk suddenly stops laughing.

VAN WYK: You promised to stop doing work for them.

MABUSO: Second Secretary: Communication

VAN WYK: You said you wouldn't do any more work...

MABUSO: And I could run this place...

VAN WYK: (*raising his voice*) Johnny, you promised....

MABUSO: (*firmly*) You promised to make me a partner....

VAN WYK: I didn't.

MABUSO: You said....

VAN WYK: I said I wouldn't mind, but Johnny wouldn't approve it.

MABUSO: And Johnny was the main guy.

VAN WYK: We set this up mostly with his money.

MABUSO: And now Johnny's dead.

VAN WYK: I still say Hanky Spanky did it.

MABUSO: And now *you're* the main guy.

VAN WYK: Sure...

MABUSO: You're the *only* guy!

VAN WYK: (*coyly*) I suppose.

MABUSO: And I'm still not a partner.

VAN WYK: It's too early...Johnny's only been dead for...

MABUSO: Five months.

Half-beat.

VAN WYK: And the police are still nowhere near making an arrest. I'm telling you, they know who it is...but they've been paid off. Corrupt fucking bastards!

MABUSO: How much longer...?

VAN WYK: (*counting money again, not getting Mabusos drift*) I'm nearly done.

MABUSO: (*insistent*) How much longer do you have to respect Johnny's wishes? Come on Hannes, one Johnny for another.

VAN WYK: Look, Mabusos, I like you. And you do great work.

MABUSO: But....

VAN WYK: No buts. You do great work, period! That's why I pay you good money.

MABUSO: (*insistent*) But...?

Beat.

VAN WYK: Johnny, I think we have a good thing going here. You do facilitation work for me, and I pay you well. You can have any of the girls for free during the week...

MABUSO: (*unhappily*) And discounted on weekends.

VAN WYK: Supply and demand, Mabusu....

MABUSO: Hanky Spanky lets me have it free on weekends too.

Beat.

VAN WYK: Can I tell you what Johnny used to say when I brought up the subject? He asked what value would you add as a partner? We're an adult club! It's not like we're going to tender for government business! We host politicians from *all* parties here anyway! And that B.E.E., employment equity shit doesn't apply to us.

MABUSO: Nearly all my friends...either have their own businesses or are directors in companies.

VAN WYK: With all due respect, Johnny, you don't have *any* business experience.

MABUSO: Two of my friends knew nothing about building. They started a construction company...and now they're millionaires. Someone who finished matric with me supplies bed pans to government hospitals. She didn't even know what a bed pan was before she put in the tender. She's just bought a holiday home in France.

VAN WYK: *You* could also use your blackness....

MABUSO: I *do* use my blackness, Hannes. That's how I do *this* job!

Moment of tension. Van Wyk takes picks up a wad of cash.

VAN WYK: There's 35k for you. Plus twenty thousand for expenses. That should cover flights, hotels and car hire for the month. And 20k for facilitation fees.

MABUSO: That's not enough.

VAN WYK: 35 000? Tax free?

MABUSO: Facilitation fees. They're tightening up at Home Affairs.

VAN WYK: You're ripping me off, Johnny...

MABUSO: *(offended)* You think...?

VAN WYK: How would I know?

MABUSO: Read the papers, Hannes! They're cracking down on corruption.

VAN WYK: *(dismissively)* Propaganda....!

MABUSO: Maybe...but they need a few fall guys for even better propaganda. There's more risk now, so officials want to get paid more...

VAN WYK: Fucking hell! This is worse than in our time!

MABUSO: You were in Foreign Affairs, Hannes, selling apartheid to German tourists. What could be worse than that?

VAN WYK: *(defensively)* I didn't sell apartheid...!

MABUSO: Do you want the work permits or not?

Van Wyk takes out another wad of notes and gives it to Mabusu.

VAN WYK: I didn't sell apartheid, Johnny....

MABUSO: *(picking up the wad, smiles)* I'll ask those corrupt black bastards for receipts....

Mabusu takes another swig from his beer bottle as the lights fade.

Scene 3: Corporate Responsibility

Same as for Scene 1. Van Wyk is in the grave; September is standing by. The scene starts with a spotlight on September.

SEPTEMBER: Someone has oil. Somebody else wants it. So they go to war. People get killed, right? But is that murder? No! It's just...business! A hostile takeover. That's how the big guys do it. But when the little guys do it, everyone screams blue murder! That kind of thing...makes me sick! The problem in this country isn't 47 murders a day...the problem is that life has no value. Here you can get killed for a cellphone. Or for taking someone's parking. Or because you looked at somebody's girlfriend. It's crazy! Just imagine if no-one

could be killed for less than R5 000 - because that's the minimum price set by the market - there'd be fewer killings . The more valuable the person, the higher the price. If it were left to the market, life would be more respected. But life has no value here. None. What I'm doing, Mr Van Wyk...I'm making life valuable. (*Spotlight comes up on Van Wyk, digging*). Every life has a price! So you see, I don't do murder, I do business.

VAN WYK: I'm...not sure how that's supposed to make me feel better.

SEPTEMBER: It's not. (*Beat*) I'm just having my little whinge about crime in the New South Africa. Pisses me off.

VAN WYK: What's my price?

September considers Van Wyk momentarily.

SEPTEMBER: (*wry smile*) Your "market value"? (*cooly*)

VAN WYK: How much?

SEPTEMBER: Let's just say...you're top rate.

VAN WYK: (*with irony*) That makes me feel better.

SEPTEMBER: (*returning the irony*) Good. So maybe you can dig a little faster.

Van Wyk is about to start digging again when he turns to September....

VAN WYK: Can I ask you something?

SEPTEMBER: I don't mind shooting the breeze...it's Wednesday...there's only shit on TV tonight.

VAN WYK: Two-eight-three...

SEPTEMBER: But don't get your hopes up.

VAN WYK: *Order* two-eight-three.

SEPTEMBER: It happens all the time...people think that by talking...

VAN WYK: Does that mean *two-hundred-and-eighty-three*?

SEPTEMBER: We're not going to become friends.

VAN WYK: Is that how many you've...

SEPTEMBER: I have a job to do. I *will* do it.

VAN WYK: That's a lot...

SEPTEMBER: There's a big demand, Mr Van Wyk. Which is why I've been able to create jobs. Government thinks *they* can create jobs. Maybe they do. Indirectly. They create demand. And demand creates jobs...in my line of work. Please...keep digging. (*Beat, as Van Wyk starts to dig again*). Yesterday, there was an order on a whistleblower. The day before, some tenderpreneur wanted to get rid of her competition. Tomorrow, a leadership faction will put out a hit on another faction. The day after, I may have to whack an artist. Keeps my bank manager very happy.

VAN WYK: Tell me you're joking...

SEPTEMBER: Okay...I'm joking...(Beat) About the bank. Keeps my mattress happy. I don't trust banks.

VAN WYK: I thought you didn't ask....

SEPTEMBER: What?

VAN WYK: About your...orders.

SEPTEMBER: I don't.

VAN WYK: Then how do you know?

SEPTEMBER: Know what?

VAN WYK: Who's a whistleblower or a tenderpreneur...

SEPTEMBER: I find out later. I read about it in the newspapers. I hear people speaking about it at the club.

VAN WYK: You have a club?

SEPTEMBER: Every profession has a club.

VAN WYK: What do you do...

SEPTEMBER: (*firmly*) Just keep digging, Mr Van Wyk. Let's not forget why we're here.

Van Wyk digs reluctantly.

SEPTEMBER: We get speakers. My favourite was this guy from the States. Ex-CIA. They're the leaders in cool removal ideas. Them and the Israelis. That's what we do. We exchange removal strategies. We set industry rates.

VAN WYK: There are different rates?

SEPTEMBER: The lowest rate is for taxi drivers. And then politicians. We also debate standards for the industry...

VAN WYK: Like?

SEPTEMBER: Like...we don't do children. Or people over 75.

VAN WYK: I'm a child...

SEPTEMBER: (*ignoring him*) Unless they're taxi drivers or politicians.

VAN WYK: My mom's alive so...I'm a child.

SEPTEMBER: (*still ignoring him*) And we do charity work.

VAN WYK: Charity?

SEPTEMBER: We don't give money...no handouts. We donate our time and our skills.

VAN WYK: You shoot people...for free.

SEPTEMBER: (*snorts*) We don't always shoot. We arrange...accidents. Put a little something in someone's drink. *Encourage* someone to commit suicide. There's a *hundred* things you can do.

Van Wyk stops digging.

VAN WYK: How does one get to benefit...from such charity?

SEPTEMBER: (*drawing his gun, threateningly*) If I have to tell you one more time to keep digging....

Van Wyk starts digging again. From this point he continues to dig, even slowly, aware that he shouldn't upset September.

SEPTEMBER: There are thousands of people...hundreds of thousands...who are victims. Babies are raped. Women get beaten up. And they get no justice. The people who do it...get off on some technicality. Or pay the cops to lose the docket. Or are released on bail, only to do it again. So, as an act of charity...we whack them. And everyone's happy. (*Beat*) It's important to give something back....

VAN WYK: And you've never been caught?

SEPTEMBER: By the police? (*snorts*) I used to be a cop. I couldn't take it any more...when they started appointing every corrupt Tom, Dick and Jackie to senior management, and then *they* appointed every sister, cousin and mistress as generals...I knew it was time to make like a duck and flock out of there. There are thousands of cops who are...entrepreneurs...on the inside. That's just wrong! I'm not saying all cops are bad. We work with the good ones. If they need some gangster taken out or some habitual criminal is released...we do our job, so they don't have to do theirs...again!

VAN WYK: You must be busy....

SEPTEMBER: For the entrepreneurially-minded, this is a land of opportunity. (*Beat*) My company's developing a new line aimed at the international market...spouse removal tourism.

VAN WYK: Spouse removal tourism?

SEPTEMBER: We're not going to call it that...we'll think of a way to market it...but that's basically what it is. Things are going bad in Europe and the States...so you don't have money to get divorced, or it's against your religion or whatever, so you decide to take a holiday in sunny South Africa, and...4 or 5 days into your vacation, bang, bang...and your spouse's life policy makes five, ten, fifteen years of boring marriage a worthwhile investment!

VAN WYK: That's an interesting idea...

SEPTEMBER: My wife thought of it.

VAN WYK: What do the tourism people think?

SEPTEMBER: It's much more sustainable than World Cup tourism. People will keep on coming. And you won't have empty stadiums. *(Beat)* I'm piloting the idea with my wife.

Van Wyk looks at him incredulously.

VAN WYK: Your first wife?

SEPTEMBER: My *only* wife. When I say I do, I mean it!

VAN WYK: Till...death do you part...

September looks at Van Wyk and "gets" what he's saying.

SEPTEMBER: It's not what you're thinking! We've put in an offer for a guest house...but there'll be no spouse removal there. We don't want it to become a ghost house. *(laughs)*

Scene 4: The Entrepreneur

Mabuso is in his home. He engages in conversation with a white blow up doll - standing - and that is skimpily dressed with a broad smile.

MABUSO: I'm telling you, Suzy, I'm finished with black women! The sisters are shallow! If they're not being empowered by some gender tender or chasing some golden hand-job, they're flitting from one sugar daddy to the next. So, I'm done with them! Kaput! Klaar! *(Beat)* For now. *(Beat)* You may be white on the outside...but inside, deep down, I know you're black. Suzy on the outside, Lerato inside. You have a good heart. You're loyal. You stand by your man. You're not going to leave me for some small dick with a big house! You won't run off with a friend who traded his Jetta for a Jeep. I won't find you in bed with my cousin because he bought you a designer dress!

One day Suzy, soon, Lerato, we'll show them! I won't just buy you designer dresses; I'll own a whole boutique! Forget about one little Jeep...I'll have a fleet...a different car for every day of the week. And how about *this* for a dream house *(reading an ad)*: "Triple storey with eight en-suite *(pronounces it "en-suit")* bedrooms, triple garage with

carport, mini-Olympic pool, large entertainment area, outside cottage and ultra-modern security including fully-stocked bunker”.

Maybe my parents can stay in the cottage. On the other hand, they're simple people. They won't understand my lifestyle. And anyway, what did they give me? They didn't have money. They weren't in the struggle. All they gave me was my name. Mabusu. And what's that worth in today's auctions?

(adopting the manner of an auctioneer) First up, I have Sexwale...first name, Tokyo. History includes Robben Island, friend of Chris Hani, premier of Gauteng, ANC Committee, possible President. What am I offered for this asset? Political protection for you to do business as usual? A company directorship? *Seven* company directorships... Eight! Chairman of one...Deputy chair of another...hold on, hold on...I've got other assets too.

Next up is Ramaphosa, first name Cyril. Former champion of the workers. Confidant of Madiba. Co-architect of our glorious Constitution...what bids do I have for this symbol of transformation? *(pointing)* I see Board member...*(points to another)* Chairman...Chairman...Chairman Cyril...

And now ladies and gentlemen...I give you, Mabusu, Johnny Mabusu. Charming. Entrepreneurial. Willing to work a little. Too young to be involved in the struggle, but...black. And he has a matric. With a “B” for woodwork. What offers do I have? *(looks at “the crowd” with much less excitement than before)* Anything? Anything at all? Going once, going twice, going...nowhere.

(turns to the doll) I'll show them, Suzy. I'll be a self-made man. No transformation hand-outs. They'll see...

Lights fade and come up on the veld scene with September and Van Wyk.

Scene 5: Adding Value

September is lighting a cigarette, Van Wyk is in the shallow grave.

VAN WYK: Please...may I have a cigarette?

SEPTEMBER: You smoke?

VAN WYK: Gave up 15 years ago...

Beat. Van Wyk sits on the side of the grave with the spade between his legs. September takes out a second cigarette and lights it. He hands it to Van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: I have to warn you about something.

Van Wyk looks at September quizzically.

SEPTEMBER: Smoking can kill you.

September laughs. Van Wyk takes a drag, but coughs as he takes too big a drag.

SEPTEMBER: Don't say I didn't warn you....

Van Wyk smokes more easily. There is silence for a few beats.

SEPTEMBER: Do you have a last wish?

VAN WYK: To live.

SEPTEMBER: Don't get cute...

VAN WYK: Please...

SEPTEMBER: That's not going to happen. You're going to the other side, and I'm offering you a last wish. That can be done here. Now.

Beat.

VAN WYK: I'd like to sing something.

SEPTEMBER: *(smiles)* This isn't fucking *Idols*...

VAN WYK: It's my wish...

SEPTEMBER: As long as it's not that hip hop crap.

VAN WYK: I hate hip hop....

SEPTEMBER: And no opera...

VAN WYK: Okay...you don't like opera.

SEPTEMBER: Soap opera's okay. (*Beat*) Why do they call it soap opera? They don't sing on Egoli...

VAN WYK: I don't watch Egoli.

SEPTEMBER: Okay, sing.

VAN WYK: Now?

SEPTEMBER: You wanted to sing....

VAN WYK: (*clears his throat, sings*) One trillion, trillion, trillion green bottles....

SEPTEMBER: (*joining in*)hanging on the wall....

VAN WYK: One trillion, trillion, trillion green bottles...

SEPTEMBER: (*joins in again*)...hanging on the wall.

BOTH: And if one green bottle
Should accidentally fall.
There'll be...

VAN WYK: One trillion, trillion, nine hundred-and-ninety-nine million...

SEPTEMBER: There's no such song.

VAN WYK: Nine-hundred and ninety thousand...

SEPTEMBER: There's no such fucking song.

VAN WYK: But you just sang it...

SEPTEMBER: Ten...it's ten fucking bottles...

VAN WYK: It's my last wish...

Van Wyk sits, defeated.

SEPTEMBER: Mr Van Wyk...I know this must be tough for you. One moment, you're full of the joys of life, planning for the future; the next moment, you're facing death. Permanent removal from society. And then...you don't even know why. You

have every right to be angry. You're probably desperate, thinking...looking for a way out of this. But, take it from me, from someone who's personally separated 78 souls from their bodies, the best thing for you at this stage, is to accept it. It's going to happen. That's what I'm paid to do, that's what I have to do. To pay the rent. Put bread on the table. Send my kids to decent schools. Pay for my mother's medical bills. I'm a professional. But I'm human. I understand your predicament. I get a contract on you and that's straight up and down. Deposit. Remove. Submit proof. Collect the balance. The deal's done. Next! That's the clinical stuff. But my company can offer a few humane value-adds....(*has a thought*) You do do electronic banking, right?

VAN WYK: Why?

SEPTEMBER: (*angrily*) Just yes or fucking no...!

VAN WYK: Okay, okay...yes.

SEPTEMBER: (*charmingly*) Good. Otherwise there'd be no point in offering you these value-adds....

VAN WYK: Like?

SEPTEMBER: Like...maybe you'd like to send a farewell message to someone. I can do the video, and send it to the address you give me. Five thousand bucks for a message up to five minutes.

VAN WYK: Five thousand?

SEPTEMBER: And I don't charge VAT.

Van Wyk gets an idea; he plays on September's emotions. Beat.

VAN WYK: Maybe for my mother...

SEPTEMBER: Your mother?

VAN WYK: She lives with me since my dad died two years ago.

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry for your loss.

VAN WYK: My siblings wanted to put her in an old age home...frail care...but I said no. They all live in Australia. She's my mother.

SEPTEMBER: (*approvingly*) Honour your father and your mother....

VAN WYK: She's got terminal cancer...

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry to hear that.

VAN WYK: I'm all she has.

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: (*as an expression of sympathy*) I'll give you a discount.

VAN WYK: Getting this video...it will kill her.

SEPTEMBER: (*Beat, under his breath*) Two for the price of one....

VAN WYK: (*trying to get September's sympathy*) She's in a lot of pain.

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: Did I mention that I also do assisted suicides?

Van Wyk looks at September, not knowing where he's going with this.

SEPTEMBER: You know, people who want to die but need to do it in a way that their families benefit. Like Brett Kebble. Or terminally ill people.

VAN WYK: Are you offering to kill my mother?

SEPTEMBER: Just a bit of...direct marketing.

Van Wyk shakes his head.

SEPTEMBER: Oh, don't be so holier-than-thou...I'm sure you've often thought... "I wish the old bag would die already!"

VAN WYK: Is that what you think? About *your* mother?

SEPTEMBER: I've worked it out with my mom. Where, when, how...it's amazingly empowering. She now lives happily every day, knowing when it's her last.

VAN WYK: Really?

SEPTEMBER: *(wry smile, aside)* My wife's mother on the other hand...she wasn't so lucky... *(snorts at the thought)*

VAN WYK: *(ironically)* Honour your father and your mother...

SEPTEMBER: It's what my mother wants...she doesn't want to go through three years of suffering like my dad.

Van Wyk realises that this course of emotional sympathy is unlikely to work. He starts suddenly.

VAN WYK: Did you hear that?

September jumps up, draws his gun, alert.

SEPTEMBER: What?

VAN WYK: There's someone out there.

SEPTEMBER: Where?

VAN WYK: Behind that tree...

September picks up the flashlight and points it in the direction of the tree, walking slowly towards it.

SEPTEMBER: You're fucking joking!

VAN WYK: There!

September walks slowly in the direction of where Van Wyk has pointed. Van Wyk gets up and comes up behind September slowly. He raises the spade as if to hit September. There is a shot. Van Wyk falls to the ground. September turns around, laughs.

VAN WYK: What the hell?

SEPTEMBER: That should have scared them off...and just in case you had any funny ideas...there are real bullets in this gun!

Van Wyk stands up. His pants is wet in the groin area.

SEPTEMBER: *(snorts)* You've pissed in your pants! Sis, man! *(Beat)* And I was going to give your clothes to charity. *(Has a thought)*

VAN WYK: Please...

SEPTEMBER: Just don't start begging. It's very...unmanly! What do you want me to do with the Merc? Does your mother have a car?

Van Wyk shakes his head.

VAN WYK: She doesn't drive.

SEPTEMBER: You're fucking lying. All white women drive. I bet you don't even have a mother...Or if you do, she doesn't live with you. Or if she does, she's not terminally ill. *(points the gun at Van Wyk)* Am I right? You're trying to play me...but you don't know who you're dealing with, you little shit! *(kicks Van Wyk)*. That beautiful Merc...I'm going to burn it.

VAN WYK: I need to get something out of the car.

September is taken aback.

SEPTEMBER: *(laughs, holds up the key)* Sure...be my guest. And why don't you go for a little drive while you're at it...

VAN WYK: Please...

SEPTEMBER: No fucking way!

VAN WYK: It's my last wish.

SEPTEMBER: Ten green bottles...that's your last wish.

VAN WYK: It's important to me.

SEPTEMBER: What is it?

VAN WYK: I want it buried with me.

SEPTEMBER: I disabled the tracker system...so...

VAN WYK: I won't do anything funny.

SEPTEMBER: Tell me what it is.

VAN WYK: It's a case....

SEPTEMBER: A case?

VAN WYK: It has my personal documents...

SEPTEMBER: So fucking what?

VAN WYK: When they find me...they'll know who I am.

SEPTEMBER: When they find you, they won't want to know you.

VAN WYK: Please, Mister...

SEPTEMBER: I didn't see any case.

VAN WYK: It's in the boot.

September thinks for a while.

SEPTEMBER: It's going to cost you...

VAN WYK: How much?

SEPTEMBER: With a DVD, five thousand. Without a DVD, five thousand.

VAN WYK: I don't want a DVD.

SEPTEMBER: Then it's just...five thousand.

September takes out an iPad, hands it to Van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: You can make an electronic payment. Log in...I'll give you my bank account.

VAN WYK: I'll give you cash.

SEPTEMBER: Even better.

VAN WYK: It's in the case.

September picks up the flashlight and trains his gun on Van Wyk. He gestures to him to stand up and head towards the car.

SEPTEMBER: If you try *anything*...

Lights fade as Van Wyk heads to the car with September following close behind, his gun close to Van Wyk's head.

Scene 6: Black Empowerment

Lights up on Mabuso at home. The blow up doll is wearing only a thong and is lying on a table. There are a few pieces of sushi placed on her chest and abdomen. Mabuso has a pair of chopsticks and is practising to eat sushi. He is not very accomplished with the chopsticks and becomes increasingly frustrated.

MABUSO: *(as he drops a piece of sushi)* Bloody hell! What's wrong with braaied meat? How did raw fish get to be the symbol of having arrived? But I'll show them! If former convicts can do it...*(he struggles to lift a piece of sushi)* Come on Suzy, help me out her.

Mabuso bends down and eats a piece of sushi off the doll's chest without using the chopsticks. His face reveals that he is not enjoying the taste. He makes as if he wants to vomit. Then, he recovers his poise. Reading from a book on sushi, to get the pronunciation right.

Ngiri...maki...Tamaki. *(in a fake, posh English accent)* I'll have some ngiri...with the sashimi...yes, with the teriyaki roll. And, I'll have it with some kung fu *(laughs)* with the Yamaha *(laughs louder)* and a little dollop of karaoke *(guffaws)*.

This is going to take a bit of time, Lerato, but I'll get there.

As he practices to pick up sushi off the doll with his chopsticks, Mabuso recites a list of wines, practising to pronounce them properly. He stresses each syllable in an exaggerated way, not always getting the pronunciation right.

Chardonnay. Chenin blanc. Cabernet Sauvignon.

In an exaggerated English accent...

Yes, I'll have some of that sashimi with a glass of Cabernet Sauvignon. Thank you!

Then, reciting more wine names:

Merlot. Pinot Noir.

He picks up a beer bottle and shows it to the doll.

Castle...! (*grins*)

Lights fade.

Scene 7: Outpricing the Market

Veld. September and Van Wyk are sitting on opposite sides of the open case which is stashed with money (the same case from which Van Wyk paid Mabuso).

VAN WYK: There's your five thousand....

SEPTEMBER: (*in awe*) Wow!

VAN WYK: And here's a bonus...another ten thousand.

SEPTEMBER: (*he can hardly speak*) How much is in there?

VAN WYK: About two million...

SEPTEMBER: Two million...!

VAN WYK: This is nothing.

SEPTEMBER: I knew white people were rich. But.....

Van Wyk laughs, still not sure which way September is going to go.

VAN WYK: I can make you rich.

SEPTEMBER: Mr Van Wyk....

VAN WYK: I know, I know...don't mess with the market. What about the people who work for you? You're worried about reputational issues in your line of work...I know. But listen to what I have to say (*offering September a wad of notes*)...please.

September is tempted but does not accept the wad of notes just yet.

SEPTEMBER: I'm listening.

VAN WYK: I don't know what they're paying you...but let's say it's 500 thousand...

September snorts.

VAN WYK: Too little? *(No response from September)* Too much?

SEPTEMBER: I'm listening.

VAN WYK: I can pay you four times that...right here, right now.

September looks like he's going to respond, having taken offence.

VAN WYK: You're in this for business reasons, to make money. This is a business deal.

SEPTEMBER: What about the contract?

VAN WYK: What about it?

SEPTEMBER: I've already spent the deposit.

VAN WYK: You can pay it back. With 100% interest and you'll still be a millionaire!

SEPTEMBER: I'll never get this kind of work again...

VAN WYK: You won't have to! I'll pay you a monthly retainer...for as long as I live.

SEPTEMBER: What about...

VAN WYK: Your employees? I'll give them each a one-off amount of R100 000.

September paces up and down, thinking. Then he turns on Van Wyk.

SEPTEMBER: What's the catch?

VAN WYK: There's no catch. The money's yours.

SEPTEMBER: How do I know that once we're back in the city, you're not going to report me to the police?

VAN WYK: If anything happens to you...one of your club, or any of your current employees, can take me out.

SEPTEMBER: Why shouldn't I just whack you now, collect on the contract and take the money anyway?

VAN WYK: Of course you can...but you seem like an honourable man. You respect me...you call me Mr Van Wyk. You care about your employees, not just about yourself. You're not greedy...you want enough to be comfortable, not excessive.

SEPTEMBER: You noticed all that....

VAN WYK: You're a good man.

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry. I can't accept your money.

VAN WYK: You can repay the contractor double....!

SEPTEMBER: It's not that...

VAN WYK: Then what?

SEPTEMBER: It's the way you make your money....

VAN WYK: The club?

SEPTEMBER: It's immoral!

VAN WYK: It's...just business.

SEPTEMBER: Selling women?

VAN WYK: I sell fantasies.

SEPTEMBER: It's not right.

VAN WYK: With all due respect...*my* business is legal.

SEPTEMBER: Just because something is legal, doesn't make it right.

Beat. Moment of tension.

SEPTEMBER: And just because something is illegal, doesn't mean it's wrong! Take those poor people who sell their kidneys, livers, hearts...they're desperate. It's not legal, but they are able to live!

VAN WYK: *That's* sick!

SEPTEMBER: So...it's okay to sell women's bodies, just not parts of bodies?

VAN WYK: I couldn't do it.

SEPTEMBER suddenly changes his attitude. Throughout the next sequence, SEPTEMBER trains his revolver on VAN WYK.

SEPTEMBER: Get in the grave!

Van Wyk doesn't move.

SEPTEMBER: Get in the fucking grave!

VAN WYK: Please...

SEPTEMBER: (*firmly*) Turn around!

VAN WYK: What do you want?

SEPTEMBER: I said turn around!

Van Wyk turns so that he stands with his back to September.

SEPTEMBER: On your knees.

Van Wyk takes longer than what September would like so September pushes him down)

VAN WYK: I don't want to die. Please!

SEPTEMBER: Shut the fuck up...I'm thinking.

September picks up the case. He paces around.

SEPTEMBER: Okay, so here's how this is going to go down. I'm going to shoot you.

Van Wyk turns to face September.

VAN WYK: I beg you...

SEPTEMBER: Stop whining and listen! I'm going to shoot. You're going to fall. We're going to draw some blood from you and cover your face. I'm going to video you lying in the grave, covered

in blood. Then we're going to clean you up, collect your passport, take you to the airport and you're going to leave. Never to return. And for that, I get to keep this (*holding up the case*), okay?

VAN WYK: Thank you...thank you.

Lights fade.

Scene 8: Doing it for Africa

Mabusos home. He is wearing a gawdy purple or yellow suit, smart shoes and a hat. He is doing a waltz with the doll. As he dances, he talks to her.

MABUSO: We've got to be ready, Lerato. When the invitation comes, we've got to be ready. Sifiso's getting married in Mauritius. (*excited*) He's chartering a plane for 300 guests. For five whole days. The invitation was supposed to be here already. But the post office...they can be slow sometimes. Gugu's got hers. Thulas and Kgomotso got theirs three weeks ago. (*Beat*) Some people think Sifiso's showing off...but this is how we contribute to Africa's development, Lerato. He's got enough government work to have his wedding in Paris, New York or London. But he's doing it for Africa. It's important that we show our fellow Africans what they can achieve. This will be my first African country...I'm glad it's not Zimbabwe or Cameroon or Sudan. Scary....!

As he dances with the doll.

One, two, three, one, two, three....

Lights fade

Scene 9: Hostile Takeover

Veld. Van Wyk has blood all over his head and on his shirt. He has a bandage on his left arm from where they've drawn the blood. September is looking at the video. September's gun is on the case.

SEPTEMBER: I think this looks pretty convincing.

VAN WYK: (*holding his arm*) That was a lot of blood...

SEPTEMBER: You're alive, aren't you?

VAN WYK: I suppose.

SEPTEMBER: You want to see it?

VAN WYK: *(getting up, walks towards the case)* No thanks. I prefer to see myself alive.

SEPTEMBER: Yeah, you look pretty awful dead.

Van Wyk walks nonchalantly to the case and picks up the gun. His attitude changes; becoming bolder, more cocky.

VAN WYK: *(picks up the gun)* The last time I saw one of these was in the army.

SEPTEMBER: You must have been doing your military service at the same time I was in the police force. *(Beat)* Those were the days, hey? When there was still some law and order in this country....!

VAN WYK: I was quite a good shot....

SEPTEMBER: *(snorts)* You?

VAN WYK: Ask my wife...

SEPTEMBER: She'll say anything...she's your wife.

VAN WYK: Ex-wife.

SEPTEMBER: She couldn't deal with the strip club...

VAN WYK: I couldn't deal with her cheating.

SEPTEMBER: And you never cheated on her...with all those girls at the club?

Beat

VAN WYK: I found her in bed with Johnny...

SEPTEMBER: Mabusso?

VAN WYK: Visser....

SEPTEMBER: The dead one.

VAN WYK: He was alive at the time.

SEPTEMBER: So...*you* did Johnny.

VAN WYK: Johnny was like a brother to me...

SEPTEMBER: But she was your wife.

VAN WYK: She seduced him.

SEPTEMBER: But he...

VAN WYK: Johnny would never do that to me.

SEPTEMBER: But he did.

VAN WYK: It was her...

SEPTEMBER: So...*you* shot him.

VAN WYK: I would never hurt Johnny...

SEPTEMBER: Bullet in the back of his head.

VAN WYK: No...

SEPTEMBER: Then...what?

VAN WYK: I shot her.

SEPTEMBER: Fuck!

VAN WYK: (*pointing the gun*) One in the chest, bang! One in the head! Boom! And in the stomach...just to make sure.

SEPTEMBER: Fuck!

VAN WYK: Blood everywhere...it was beautiful.

SEPTEMBER: You shot your wife?

VAN WYK: In self-defence!

SEPTEMBER: *(wry smile...jerking his right hand)* She had Johnny's weapon...?

VAN WYK: That's what I told the judge.

SEPTEMBER: And...he believed you...

VAN WYK: Johnny was the star witness.

SEPTEMBER: He said...self-defence?

VAN WYK: Johnny was relieved...she used to force herself on him.

SEPTEMBER: You saved Johnny....

VAN WYK: He saved me...

SEPTEMBER: *(under his breath, shakes his head)* White people....

Beat.

VAN WYK: So how much were they going to pay you?

SEPTEMBER: It doesn't matter.

Van Wyk is a little bolder because he believes he is safe and because he has the gun.

VAN WYK: I want to know!

SEPTEMBER: Leave it!

Beat.

VAN WYK: Every man has his price.

SEPTEMBER: Yours was the top price.

VAN WYK: I was talking about you.

SEPTEMBER: Don't say that man.

VAN WYK: I'll fucking say what I want.

SEPTEMBER: Hannes...

VAN WYK: (*firmly*) It's Mr Van Wyk!

SEPTEMBER: (*disturbed*) Why are you doing this?

VAN WYK: You think you're a man of principle, but at the end of the day, you're just like everyone else. Willing to sell your principles, your reputation....

SEPTEMBER: Mr Van Wyk, I think we've reached a good deal here...everyone's happy. So let's cool it, pack up and go.

VAN WYK: Go where?

SEPTEMBER: To get your passport...take you to the airport. That was the deal.

VAN WYK: Oh that! That was twenty minutes ago.

SEPTEMBER: (*with a tinge of anger*) You're beginning to piss me off Mr Van Wyk.

VAN WYK: And what are you going to do about it?

SEPTEMBER: Oh...I get it. You have the gun.

VAN WYK: (*with exaggerated irony*) Oh, wow! Yes, look at that! I have the gun.

SEPTEMBER: And so you feel like *you're* in charge now.

VAN WYK: What do you think?

SEPTEMBER: I'm thinking...is this for real? Am I *really* a millionaire?

VAN WYK: That's it?

SEPTEMBER: I'm also thinking...it would be nice to have a beer right now.

VAN WYK: You're thinking happy thoughts.

SEPTEMBER: You sound disappointed.

VAN WYK: (*emotionally, shouts*) You were going to kill me!

SEPTEMBER: Hey, cool it Mr Van Wyk. I don't like the sound of this.

VAN WYK: (*sarcastically*) I'm really sorry to hear that.

SEPTEMBER: We have a deal.

VAN WYK: That was then!

SEPTEMBER: When?

VAN WYK: When you had the gun!

SEPTEMBER: But we came to an agreement.

VAN WYK: What could I do?

SEPTEMBER: I had the gun.

VAN WYK: Exactly. You had the gun.

SEPTEMBER: Now you're changing your mind.

VAN WYK: I have the gun.

SEPTEMBER: So...you'd like to renegotiate?

VAN WYK: (*snorts*) Re-negotiate?

SEPTEMBER: What do you want?

VAN WYK: I want you to feel like I did. The fear, the terror...I want to see you cry.

SEPTEMBER: The last time I cried...was when the Springboks won the World Cup.

VAN WYK: I want you to wet yourself.

SEPTEMBER: So...you're not going to give me the money.

VAN WYK: Do I look like Father Christmas?

SEPTEMBER: You're making a mistake.

VAN WYK: (*going up to September and pointing the gun at him threateningly*) You think you're so cool...

SEPTEMBER: If I said I'm sorry....

VAN WYK: Words are cheap.

SEPTEMBER: If I (*goes down onto his knees*) go onto my knees...

VAN WYK: Don't beg...it's so...un-manly!

SEPTEMBER: I was just doing my job.

VAN WYK: So you keep telling me!

SEPTEMBER: They'll come after you again.

VAN WYK: I'm not staying.

SEPTEMBER: You'll leave the country?

VAN WYK: Why would I stay?

SEPTEMBER: So you're going to shoot me?

VAN WYK: Unless you want to shoot yourself? (*laughs*) Suicide? Like Johnny Visser.

SEPTEMBER: You shot Johnny, didn't you?

VAN WYK: (*picks up the spade, hands it to September*) Start digging.

SEPTEMBER: Like you shot your wife.

VAN WYK: Get in the grave!

SEPTEMBER: (*taking the spade*) You don't want to do this....

VAN WYK: (*imitating September earlier*) Look, I'd like to shoot the breeze with you. But I'm missing my mother's cooking...she lives in Perth (*laughs*).

SEPTEMBER: (*slowly getting up*) You're making a mistake, Mr Van Wyk.

VAN WYK: You're a mistake, you...you piece of brown shit!

Beat. They stare at each other. September is hurt. Van Wyk points the gun at him.

VAN WYK: I'll be happy to get away from this turd world!

Beat. September stands with the spade in hand. September begins to walk towards Van Wyk threateningly, spade in hand. Van Wyk walks backwards pointing the gun at September. All through the next sequence, September advances on Van Wyk who backs away.

VAN WYK: I'll fucking shoot you!

SEPTEMBER: *(imitating him)* I'll fucking shoot you!

VAN WYK: I'm counting to three!

SEPTEMBER: You have a problem, Hannes.

VAN WYK: I'm warning you!

SEPTEMBER: *(imitating him)* I'm warning you!

VAN WYK: One!

SEPTEMBER: You have the gun!

VAN WYK: Two!

September reaches Van Wyk who puts the gun to September's forehead.

SEPTEMBER: *(reaching into his pocket)* But I have the bullets!

Van Wyk is thrown.

VAN WYK: You're lying!

SEPTEMBER: So pull the fucking trigger!

VAN WYK: I will...

SEPTEMBER: *(shouting)* Shoot, you impotent fool! Shoot!

There is a shot. Van Wyk drops the gun and clutches behind his right leg, and swivels around. Johnny Mabusu emerges from the shadows, gun in hand. Van Wyk drops to the ground, clutches the case to his chest.

VAN WYK: Johnny Mabusu?

MABUSO: Hello Hannes.

September and Mabusos look at each other. Mabusos looks at September with disdain. September is awkward, sums up the situation and realises he has to be cool.

SEPTEMBER: Good evening brother. *(stretching out his hand)*
September's the name.

MABUSO: *(coldly, not shaking his hand)* You're having a good evening?

VAN WYK: September? How original...!

SEPTEMBER: Good to meet you, brother.

VAN WYK: Johnny, don't tell me you set this up.

Mabusos goes up to Van Wyk, puts out his left hand while holding the gun in his right hand, but not pointing it at Van Wyk

MABUSO: I'll have that, thank you.

VAN WYK: *(clutches the case more tightly)* How could you do this Johnny? After all I've done for you.

September comes up behind Van Wyk, and hits him on the back of his head with his hand.

SEPTEMBER: You heard Mr Mabusos. Give him the case.

September grabs the case and he and Van Wyk have a bit of a tug-of-war.

MABUSO: Hannes, let's just get this over with, shall we?

VAN WYK: Johnny, I was thinking about our conversation the other day. I want you to be my partner.

Mabusos snorts.

SEPTEMBER: This bastard will make a deal now and five minutes later he'll shoot you in the back.

VAN WYK: Hanky Spanky's behind this, aren't they Johnny?

SEPTEMBER: Thanks for the work, brother.

MABUSO: What work, September?

SEPTEMBER: Sorry, brother. I shouldn't have said that. That was very unprofessional.

VAN WYK: You put out the contract, Johnny?

September hits Van Wyk on the back of his head again.

SEPTEMBER: Don't go jumping to conclusions, Hannes! Give me the case. (*Van Wyk hangs on to the case. September hits him again*) Give me the case, dammit. (*He wrestles the case from Van Wyk*).

SEPTEMBER: (*giving the case to MABUSO*) I think you wanted this, brother.

VAN WYK: Johnny...please...

SEPTEMBER: It's Mr Mabuso to you, Hannes.

VAN WYK: Fuck off.

SEPTEMBER: (*to Mabuso with a smile*) He's getting angry.

VAN WYK: Just fuck off. Johnny and I go back a long way.

SEPTEMBER: (*to MABUSO*) What would you like me to do with him, Mr Mabuso?

MABUSO: (*he's opened the case, and has begun to count the money*) Whatever you like.

(September grips Van Wyk under his arms, and drags him towards the hole).

VAN WYK: What are you doing?

SEPTEMBER: What I should've done long ago!

VAN WYK: (*screams in pain*) My leg! My leg!

September stops dragging Van Wyk, stands over him and puts his foot on the bullet wound. Van Wyk screams in agony.

VAN WYK: Ooooooooooooooooooooo!!! Johnny...Johnny please...don't let him do this. (*MABUSO simply ignores what's going on*)

SEPTEMBER: You were going to shoot me! *(he picks up the spade)*

VAN WYK: You were going to shoot me!

SEPTEMBER: I left out the gun to see if I could trust you....

VAN WYK: Johnny...Johnny please man.

SEPTEMBER: But, just as I thought....

He starts digging sand over Van Wyk and covers him throughout the next sequence.

VAN WYK: Mr September...please!

SEPTEMBER: So now you have some respect! *(lifts the spade to hit him)*

VAN WYK: No, September, no!

SEPTEMBER: So I'm a piece of brown shit? You piece of white trash!
(spits on him)

VAN WYK: September...

SEPTEMBER: I should've known I couldn't trust you!

VAN WYK: Wait...please...Johnny!

SEPTEMBER: Selfish bastard!

VAN WYK: Why don't we three go into business together?

SEPTEMBER: Cunt!

VAN WYK: Johnny...you have the political connections.

SEPTEMBER: Prick!

By now most of Van Wyk's body is covered, with only his head sticking out.

VAN WYK: I've got the business skills.

SEPTEMBER: Asshole!

VAN WYK: And September, you've got...you can do security.

By this time, Mabuso has counted the money, closed the case, put away his gun. He turns to face September and Van Wyk.

MABUSO: Good-bye.

SEPTEMBER: Say goodbye to Mr Mabuso, Hannes.

VAN WYK: Johnny...you can't leave me like this.

MABUSO: I'm sure September will make you more comfortable.

VAN WYK: Johnny...please...

SEPTEMBER: Stop begging! You unmanly fucker!

MABUSO: (*pointedly*) I'm sure September will do what he got paid to do.

SEPTEMBER: I will, brother. You can be sure of that.

MABUSO: I must say...I was disappointed to hear you having a change of plan.

SEPTEMBER: You heard everything.

VAN WYK: I told you I saw someone....

SEPTEMBER: You followed us here.

MABUSO: This was my investment!

VAN WYK: He set the whole thing up.

MABUSO: It hasn't worked out *exactly* as I had planned...

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry about that, brother.

MABUSO: I was hoping that you would have done your job. I could collect the case...I know he always has it with him... I could have paid you the balance, perhaps with a handsome bonus.

VAN WYK: (*laughs*) So, no bonus for Mr September?

MABUSO: (*to Van Wyk*) September will get his fee as contracted.

SEPTEMBER: (*to Van Wyk*) Mr Mabuso's right....

MABUSO: That's, of course, if he fulfils the contract.

SEPTEMBER: (*going to Van Wyk pointing gun*) I'll do it okay? I said I'll do it.

MABUSO: I hope so. Or word will get around.

SEPTEMBER: What do you mean?

MABUSO: You were going to break a contract. You were prepared to make a deal to reverse a contract.

SEPTEMBER: I was going to pay it all back. With interest.

MABUSO: The point is...you broke a contract.

SEPTEMBER: You're right, brother.

MABUSO: That's not good business.

SEPTEMBER: You're right.

MABUSO: But that's not all...

VAN WYK: Sounds like an infomercial.

SEPTEMBER: Shurrup, Hannes!

MABUSO: Fact is...you may just have closed your business!

SEPTEMBER: What are you saying, brother?

MABUSO: You made a deal that would wreck the investment of the person who took out the contract. That was a fifteen thousand rand investment.

VAN WYK: (*shocked*) Fifteen thousand?

SEPTEMBER: To make two million.

VAN WYK: Is that all you think I'm worth?

MABUSO: You were going to deny me my investment!

VAN WYK: Fifteen thousand...that's taxi driver rates!

MABUSO: The point of an investment is to make a return!

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry, brother. I didn't know...

MABUSO: You're not paid to know. You're paid to do a job!

SEPTEMBER: So...what happens now?

MABUSO: What do you think?

SEPTEMBER: I finish the job?

VAN WYK: What's the point, September? You heard the man. He'll shut your business anyway.

SEPTEMBER: Not if I do the job, hey brother?

MABUSO: Stop calling me brother.

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry...Mr Mabuso

MABUSO: You don't even know me.

SEPTEMBER: I'm sorry...

MABUSO: Show some respect.

VAN WYK: Tell him, Johnny!

SEPTEMBER: (*taking offence*) This piece of trash can call you Johnny...

MABUSO: This piece of trash has money.

VAN WYK: I can make you even more Johnny!

SEPTEMBER: You wanted to go into a partnership with him. Why shouldn't I have done the same?

MABUSO: You were paid to get rid of him.

SEPTEMBER: So you could walk away with two million.

MABUSO: Not bad for a Mabuso.

SEPTEMBER: There's more than enough for all of us.

MABUSO: I'm an entrepreneur. You want charity? Go to the Lotto.

Beat.

SEPTEMBER: You want him dead? Do it yourself!

Beat.

MABUSO: This isn't good business, September.

SEPTEMBER: You don't want to get your hands dirty.

VAN WYK: Johnny takes the cash. September takes the rap.

SEPTEMBER: Just another greedy bastard.

MABUSO: Stay cool brother.

SEPTEMBER: Don't call me brother!

VAN WYK: Hey, Johnny....

MABUSO: I'm busy, Hannes.

VAN WYK: Keep the two million.

MABUSO: That's the plan, Hannes.

VAN WYK: I'm looking for a business partner.

Mabusos stands near Van Wyk with the case in hand. September watches from a distance.

MABUSO: Too late...

VAN WYK: I see the sense of a partnership.

MABUSO: It's too late, Hannes.

VAN WYK: This is a one-off, Johnny. You can make millions more...

Mabusos goes up to Van Wyk.

MABUSO: Speak to me.

VAN WYK: Seventy-Thirty. That's the split.

MABUSO: Seventy for me...

VAN WYK: No, well...

MABUSO: Speak again.

VAN WYK: Sixty, forty?

MABUSO: Fifty-fifty.

VAN WYK: And you don't do any more work for Hanky Spanky.

MABUSO: And the girls are free on weekends.

VAN WYK: You still deal with Home Affairs.

Mabusos stretches his hand towards Van Wyk. They shake hands.

MABUSO/VAN WYK: Deal!

(MABUSO pulls VAN WYK out of the hole. VAN WYK stands up, shakes the sand off him and limps, still clutching his leg)

VAN WYK: You've ruined my leg...

MABUSO: You've got another one...

Van Wyk puts his arm around Mabusos and they begin to exit together with Mabusos carrying the case. In the meantime, September has picked up his gun and has re-inserted the cartridge of bullets into it. As Van Wyk and Mabusos limp off together, September assumes centre-stage and points his gun at them.

SEPTEMBER: Mabusos!

Mabusos and Van Wyk turn around to face him.

MABUSO: What?

SEPTEMBER: Tell me why I shouldn't kill you right now.

Mabusos puts down the case, steps slowly towards September, then with a smirk on his face turns on him.

MABUSO: You would kill a brother?

SEPTEMBER: You represent everything that I hate right now.

MABUSO: That's the problem with some people. They can't stand it when black people do well.

SEPTEMBER: What about me?

MABUSO: What about you?

SEPTEMBER: Why shouldn't I get something...I was also a victim...

MABUSO: You're not going to lay *that* trip, are you...brother?

SEPTEMBER: What...trip?

MABUSO: That...not white enough under apartheid and not black enough now...crap!

SEPTEMBER: It's true, isn't it?

MABUSO: You want a piece of advice?

SEPTEMBER: No....but you're going to give it anyway....

MABUSO: Stop playing the victim, brother...That entitlement shit? It's so...yesterday. *Do something...take risks. Big risk, big reward.*

September raises his gun which he has lowered during the course of the conversation.

Hannes has surreptitiously taken the case and exited.

SEPTEMBER: You're right...so give me one good reason why I shouldn't put a bullet through your head and walk off with two million...(sarcastically) Mr Mabuso.

MABUSO: I'm feeling generous...so I'll give you *four* reasons. If I'm not back at my place within the next half-hour, unharmed, there's a team on standby to make sure that your wife will be shot. Your three daughters raped. And then shot. One by fucking one.

Mabusos and September stare at each other. September is pointing his gun at Mabuso, quivering in rage.

MABUSO: Now, if you'll excuse me. Hannes and I have to print some money.

Mabusos turns around. He sees that Hannes has gone.

MABUSO: Hannes! Shit! *(he draws his gun, runs off into the dark in search of Stanley)* Hannes...Hannes you white shit!

There is a sound of car starting and pulling off. There are two shots. Off stage a scream: "Hannes...!"

September sits down. Lights fade to black as September breaks into uncontrolled laughter.

Mabusos enters, gun drawn, angrily pointed at September. September jumps up, gun drawn, pointed at Mabusos. They circle, pointing their guns at each other first clockwise, then anticlockwise.

MABUSO: This is *your* fault!

SEPTEMBER: You let him get away!

MABUSO: I paid you to shoot him!

SEPTEMBER: I had him in the grave, but you wanted to print money with him.

MABUSO: You broke the contract.

SEPTEMBER: You made a deal with him.

MABUSO: You spent my deposit!

SEPTEMBER: Times are tough.

They circle in silence for a moment.

SEPTEMBER: So let's shoot each other...and Van Wyk will still have the two million.

MABUSO: *(lowering and holstering his gun)* You have twenty four hours to make this right.

Mabusos turns to go.

SEPTEMBER: Mr Mabuso....

Johnny turns to face him.

SEPTEMBER: I need a lift.

Scene 10: Closing the Deal

At Van Wyk's office. Van Wyk has a crutch. September is with him pouring drink from a bottle into two glasses.

VAN WYK: *(laughs)* So you did Johnny!

SEPTEMBER: *(laughing too)* I did Johnny!

VAN WYK: Bullet in the back of his head.

SEPTEMBER: Suicide!

VAN WYK: Just business.

SEPTEMBER: Exactly! Just business.

VAN WYK: *(lifting a glass)* So what's this?

SEPTEMBER: A peace offering.

VAN WYK: You didn't have to....

SEPTEMBER: *(lifting his glass)* No hard feelings?

VAN WYK: Hey! You shot Johnny! What's there to have hard feelings about?

Van Wyk drinks big. September watches, but does not drink.

VAN WYK: This is good stuff!

September pours more as Van Wyk offers him his glass.

SEPTEMBER: I thought you'd be mad.

VAN WYK: I've never been happier!

SEPTEMBER: I thought *you* did Johnny.

VAN WYK: If you hadn't done it, I would have ordered it.

SEPTEMBER: But Johnny did.

VAN WYK: Johnny did what?

SEPTEMBER: Johnny ordered the hit.

VAN WYK: Johnny ordered his own hit?

SEPTEMBER: No! The hit on Johnny.

VAN WYK: You're confusing me...

SEPTEMBER: Johnny ordered the hit on Johnny.

VAN WYK: You're saying....

SEPTEMBER: Mabusso ordered the hit on Visser.

VAN WYK: Johnny...

SEPTEMBER: I thought *you* did Visser.

VAN WYK: How do you know?

SEPTEMBER: He told me.

VAN WYK: Visser told you?

SEPTEMBER: Mabusso.

VAN WYK: Why?

SEPTEMBER: Something about Visser not wanting him to be partner.

VAN WYK: That was Mabusso?

SEPTEMBER: You thought it was Hanky Spanky.

VAN WYK: I thought...

SEPTEMBER: I thought it was *you*...after he did your wife.

VAN WYK: I would never hurt Johnny

SEPTEMBER: Mabuso said I did a good job on Visser. That's why he hired me to do you.

VAN WYK: I'm glad you shot him!

SEPTEMBER: Visser?

VAN WYK: Not Visser, Mabuso! I'm glad you shot that bastard!

SEPTEMBER: I didn't.

VAN WYK: You said you shot him.

SEPTEMBER: I said I shot Johnny.

VAN WYK: Johnny....

SEPTEMBER: That's what I said.

VAN WYK: You didn't shoot Mabuso...

SEPTEMBER: I meant Visser...

VAN WYK: So where's Mabuso?

SEPTEMBER: You thought it was Hanky Spanky.

VAN WYK: Where's Mabuso?

SEPTEMBER: If I shot him, I wouldn't be here.

VAN WYK: So...why are you here?

SEPTEMBER: Are you serious?

VAN WYK: I thought...you want the two million.

SEPTEMBER: No.

VAN WYK: You want to be a partner.

SEPTEMBER: No.

VAN WYK: You just wanted to tell me...

SEPTEMBER: Tell you what?

VAN WYK: That you shot Johnny...Johnny Visser.

SEPTEMBER: Yes. No. Yes...and...

VAN WYK: And....?

SEPTEMBER: Order 283...it's still outstanding.

Van Wyk sits down. He clutches his throat and struggles to breathe. September looks at him, raises the bottle.

SEPTEMBER: Cheers.

Van Wyk, still struggle to breathe, realises he's been poisoned, throws the remnants of his drink in September's face.

Lights fade to black.