

LIVING WITHIN STORIES

BLANK SCREEN WITH VOICE OVER

VOICE (V.O.)

In a way this movie is inspired by
my life story and true events,
except those which were born in the
fertile imagination of the author.

(beat)

The names of real people still
living or dead have been changed to
protect their identities.

(beat)

Which is fiction and which is fact?
You decide.

MOVIE SCRIPT - LIVING IN STORIES

EPISODE 1 TWO ASPIRINS FOR CHINA

INTRO

1950 SOUTH AFRICA

EXT. EVERS FARM - DAY

Green lawn under shady trees, next to an immature citrus
orchard. Beyond that wild grass sways delicately in a gentle
breeze underneath scattered thorn and other wild trees. Only
the joyful chorus of bird song breaks the silence, absolute
peace and tranquility.

In a shady spot a cheap plastic table with a colorful
tablecloth invites diners.

Two dogs, Lady, a medium sized black pavement special, and
Goliath, a small brown Jackie, bask in the warm sun on a
cement patio.

A large window opens onto the patio, we move through window
into a study and we see the back of two computer screens.

INT. STUDY - DAY

WESLEY, 70+, types very fast with two fingers on a keyboard with faded letters, swinging from side to side, looking like he jives to music only he can hear.

OLDER JOLENE, 70, behind the second computer, types with all fingers. Her cell phone rings, she answers.

OLDER JOLENE
(absent-minded)
Hello.

MALE VOICE (ON PHONE)
Jolene, we're here,

OLDER JOLENE
Where?

MALE VOICE ON PHONE
(chuckle)
Your front door.

OLDER JOLENE
Oh, we didn't hear the car --
(short beat)
-- coming Lucas.

EXT. TABLE UNDER THE TREES - DAY

LUCAS, 50, and GRANT, 50, at lunch with Wesley and Jolene.

LUCAS
Wesley, how's it you, the grand father of the South African thriller, lives in such isolation, alone with just each other?

OLDER WESLEY
We have Lady and Goliath.

LUCAS
I haven't seen any new books in a while.

OLDER WESLEY
I know.

LUCAS
You're still writing are you?

Wesley nods, distracted, eats heartily, unaware of the questioning looks.

LATER

Empty lunch plates. Jolene gets up.

 OLDER JOLENE
I'm going to make coffee.

 GRANT
I'll help.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Grant and Jolene make coffee.

 GRANT
What's it like for you living with
a preoccupied author alone on a
little farm, cut off from the rest
of humanity?

 OLDER JOLENE
 (smiles)
We're not ever alone. Wesley's
characters are with us all the
time. Always, every day and
everywhere--
 (short beat)
-- I sometimes even have to stop
myself from setting places at the
table for them... it feels almost
crowded at times.

 GRANT
You do all his proofreading and
editing, ever thought of telling
your own story... writing it?

END OF INTRO

INT. EVERS FARM - LOUNGE - DAY

Older Jolene, on a weathered lazy boy in a modestly furnished lounge, speaks directly into a video recorder.

 OLDER JOLENE
Grant suggested that I tell my
story. You know, away from people,
living with only Wesley and his
characters.

 (MORE)

OLDER JOLENE (CONT'D)

(beat)

How real they are, how alive.

(beat, chuckles)

Telling my story... Where do I begin?

Frowning, she notices...

... pieces of a chewed up tissue box scattered on the floor.

Goliath lazing in the winter sun on his favorite chair, the picture of innocence.

OLDER JOLENE (CONT'D)

(to Goliath)

You did this, didn't you.

She picks up the pieces, waves them in front of Goliath, he squirms, turns his belly towards her, tail knock, knock against the backrest.

OLDER JOLENE (CONT'D)

(back to recorder)

Tell my story?--

(beat)

-- My story?... There's two of us you know.

I was such a happy kid at first, had some wonderful times on my dad's farm.

Silent beat, as face and voice fades into flash back.

BEGIN FLASH BACK

EXT. THERON FARM, BUSH - DAY

Jolene's Childhood farm. Early morning. JOLENE, 6, FULLY CLOTHED but barefoot, walks down a muddy footpath between trees and bushes, watching the mud curling up between her toes and hums Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star out of tune.

A small hedgehog crosses her path, she picks it up, it rolls into a spiky little ball on her hand. Transfixed, she watches as a tiny black nose slowly appears, followed by a little face. She touches the nose, the head pulls back and it rolls up into the spiky little ball. She chuckles in delight and puts it down, she lies down next to it and waits for its next move.

Whispered children's voices off screen, Jolene, startled, sits up.

Through the branches of a low bush two black girls, STALKY 7, and NGOMI, 5, both STARK NAKED, on their bellies on the wet ground.

Stalky holds a long string connected to a stick stuck into the sand, with an up-side-down handleless woven basket precariously balanced on top of it. A line of bird seed leads to underneath the basket.

A pigeon descends from a tree, eats his way closer to the basket trap.

Jolene takes a few steps closer, the bird flies away,

Stalky, Annieoyed, jumps up, they eyeball each other.

MONTAGE OF CHILDREN'S HAPPY DAYS

EXT. THERON FARM, BUSH - DAY

-- JOLENE, 7, Stalky, 9 and Ngomi, 7, ALL STARKERS on their backs under a large tree, watching...

... a bird on a low branch, a row of insects in her beak. In the background the desperate chirping of hungry baby birds. Happy innocence.

-- The three girls, STARKERS, in a small natural stream between trees and bushes. Stalky runs water through her fingers.

STALKY

Metsi, metsi.
(Water, water.)

JOLENE

(nods)
Metsi, Water.

STALKY AND NGOMI

(chuckles)
Water.

Shouting and laughing with delight they chase and splash each other.

END OF MONTAGE

CONTINUE WITH FLASH BACK