

"AN INTERESTING FAMILY"

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EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD, SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

Bright day light.

Singing birds.

Stems of sugar cane.

The clinging sound of machetes and sugar cane breaking, and falling to the ground.

A male voice, singing a native African song, to the general rhythm of the machetes.

A row of BLACK FARMHANDS slowly progressing through the sugarcane.

The sound of an approaching small plane.

The sounds gets louder.

The plane circles around the sugar cane field, at a low altitude.

All farmhands look up.

The plane keeps on circling.

An angry male voice shouting something ("*back to work* ")

The farmhands start chopping sugar cane again.

The rhythm of the chopping becomes regular.

A farmhand sees something fluttering to the ground, right before him.

He picks it up.

It is an OLD DUTCH ONE THOUSAND GUILDER BILL.

The farmhand looks up.

Hundreds of banknotes fall from the sky.

EXT. WIERINGERMEER, HOLLAND - DAY

The Wieringermeerpolder. Wide-open landscape. Refracted light. Open space. Empty.

A dead SWALLOW lies on the side of the road. Its wings flap up for a moment as a CAR speeds past.

Then: another CAR. This one stops.

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CONTINUED:

ANTON, a white man in his forties, gets out, surveys the landscape. His right hand is wrapped in a PLASTIC BAG.

He leans down and tenderly picks up the dead bird. He checks its condition: it is fresh and complete. He smiles, folding the bag around the dead swallow.

INT. CAR ANTON - DAY

Anton puts the bagged swallow into the glove compartment.

On the passenger seat there is a CARDBOARD BOX full of groceries.

He starts up and drives off.

EXT. WIERINGERMEER, HOLLAND - DAY

Anton's car hurtles through the flatlands.

CUT TO:

INT. POTATO FARM, WIERINGERMEER, HOLLAND - DAY

A potato farm dating from the thirties.

Daylight falls weakly onto a table full of empty vegetable jars. Stained plates, forks and knives. Old papers, including the *Reformatorisch Dagblad*, a Dutch Christian newspaper. Signs of neglect.

Only the sound of houseflies breaks the silence.

A corner from the table as been emptied, there the litter has been pushed aside.

A heap of ashes, more than one kilo, rests on a opened-out *Reformatorisch Dagblad*.

An old HAND piles up 1000- and 100-Guilder bills (used and over 30 years old).

A banknote flutters onto the ground.

An OLD MAN, 80s, owner of the hand we've just seen, sits in a chair next to the table. He doesn't notice the fallen banknote.

With difficulty he folds the piled up bills into a roll. Sticks it into a ceramic pot shaped like a potato. Its screw lid lies next to it. With a spoon the old man puts the ashes back into the urn.

A nearby phone, fixed line, RINGS.

The Old Man curses under his breath, his concentration broken.

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CONTINUED:

The phone rings on.

The man rises from his chair, totters into the room.

More ringing.

The man lifts up the arm of an old RECORD PLAYER. A old record starts turning.

The needle bumps into the grooves as loud organ music fills the room.

The old man totters back to the table, seats himself. The phone finally stops ringing. The music plays on.

EXT. POTATO FARM, WIERINGERMEER, HOLLAND - DAY

Anton puts his cellphone back in his jacket pocket. He approaches a mailbox shaped like a potato. A shield on it says: '137, fam. J. F. Blokhuis',

Anton opens the mailbox. It contains six copies of the Dutch daily paper *Reformatorsch Dagblad* along with some junk mail.

Anton bundles the papers and sticks them, upright, between the purchases.

ANGLE ON: the cardboard box. Inside - jars with vegetables, half a loaf of brown bread, half a loaf of white bread, seven 30cl bottles of beer: what an old man eats in a week.

Anton, carrying the box, approaches the farmhouse, in a state of disrepair. Blistering paint. Yellowed net curtains and heavier drapes behind all windows.

Anton arrives at the front door. There a similar box is awaiting him, empty, but for seven empty beer bottles.

Anton puts down the box, takes out his CELLPHONE and dials. The ringtone sounds.

No answer again.

Anton lets his mobile ring five more times, and disconnects.

Anton pushes his ear onto a window, and to his relief hears organ music, from inside.

Anton picks up the empty box and leaves.

EXT. MPUMALANGA, SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

A rural South African scene: the road to Barberton on the Escarpment in the province of Mpumalanga, about 60 km from the Kruger National Park. Undulating hills, patchy scrub, the scars of human intervention everywhere.

A black AFRICAN MAN, 20s, walks along the side of the road.

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CONTINUED:

He hears a car approaching from behind. He turns, sticks a thumb out, waves frantically.

The BAKKIE (utility vehicle) passes him then abruptly stops.

The Man, surprised at first, doesn't move. He notices a huge, stuffed KUDU HEAD in the back of the truck. Then: a WHISTLE from the driver.

The man notices the driver, a large man in his early 60s, is gesturing him to get on.

Piet watches in his mirror as the Man begins to approach.

He honks once to speed him up. It works: the Black Man begins to run.

EXT. BAKKIE (LOAD AREA) - DAY

The Black Man jumps into the back of the car, sitting next to the Kudu head.

The car lurches forward, forcing the Black Man to hold on for dear life.

The car speeds off.

INT. BAKKIE (DRIVING) - DAY

Sitting at the wheel of the car is Piet, Afrikaner, 62. On the radio: Afrikaans pop singer Karen Zoid belts out a melancholy number about disappointed love.

Piet hums along with the song. It's reached a sentimental chorus.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK MIDDLECLASS NEIGHBOURHOOD, SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

Piet's pickup cruises down an inauspicious suburban street.

He passes several facebrick houses of various modern designs.

At last, he stops in front of a house.

Engine off. Radio off. Door open.

EXT. BLACK MIDDLE CLASS NEIGHBOURHOOD, SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

In the rears of the bakkie sits a large KUDU-head.

Piet lifts the Kudu head out of the rear of the bakkie.

It lands with a thwack.

From the cabin he honks twice.

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