

AFRICA TIME

Woody Roseland
Toluwanimi Obiwole
Alex Villar
Balwase Edward
Petit Iriho

2020

WoodyRoseland@gmail.com
303.917.0734

FRIED NECK BONES AND SOME HOME FRIES by WILLIE BOBO fades in as the opening credits appear on the screen

HARD CUT

TIGHT SHOT - EYES SHOOT OPEN

INT - UGANDA AIRLINES FLIGHT UR520

Awakened by the jolt of the plane hitting the tarmac, and disoriented by his surroundings we meet our lead, RICKY RILEY, late 20's, African American.

He blinks the sleep out of his eyes and glances out of the window taking his first look at UGANDA. The sun is low on the horizon, a UGANDAN AIRLINES flight taxis to the terminal.

INT - ENTEBBE AIRPORT PASSPORT CONTROL

Ricky Walks past a large UGANDAN FLAG and steps up to the bored looking CUSTOMS OFFICIAL, and hands over his US PASSPORT. His only luggage a large MILITARY STYLE BACKPACK WITH AN AMERICAN FLAG SEWN ON THE BACK.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL
Business or pleasure?

RICKY
(smiles)
Pleasure.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL
First time in Uganda?

Ricky leans in on counter trying to be smooth.

RICKY
Yeah, any place you recommend? Any place you might be?

Customs Official looks him up and down.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL
(deadpan)
Church.

Customs official emphatically stamps his PASSPORT.

EXT. ENTEBBE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DUSK

Ricky strolls out of the airport into the Ugandan evening. He

approaches a group of drivers holding signs for their prospective customers.

Ricky scans the signs, they read - HOPE VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH , DR. LITWAN , 李杨昊 , RICKY RILEY. Pan up to reveal NAVIO holding the sign.

RICKY
Yo, I'm Ricky.

The two shake hands

NAVIO
I'm Navio, Welcome to Uganda my friend, Natara's told me all about you!

RICKY
Oh did she? Natara talks a lot, so--

NAVIO
(leans in)
Don't worry, your secret's safe with me.

Navio pats Ricky's shoulder, walks out frame, Ricky's eyes wide.

INT. NAVIO'S CAR - EVENING

Title sequence continues as Ricky, wide eyed, takes his first look at the Ugandan Landscape.

NAVIO
You hungry?

RICKY
Oh man, I'm starving. Haven't eaten since somewhere over Egypt.

EXT. ROLEX STAND - EVENING

Navio's TOYOTA FOUR RUNNER pulls over to a ROLEX STAND, the men exit the car and walk towards it.

NAVIO
Have you ever tried a Rolex?

Gestures to the ROLEX STAND GUY for two.

RICKY
(shakes his head)
Rolex? No, they good?

NAVIO
In Uganda we don't wear the Rolex, we
eat them!

ROLEX STAND GUY
Two for you, big boss?

RICKY
Oh, you the boss?

NAVIO
(smiles)
I've got a couple things going.
(gesturing to the rolex)
Watch.

Montage of Rolex making, beating of the eggs, pouring mix
onto the iron, adding in the vegetables, finally rolling the
ROLEX

The ROLEX STAND MAN hands them 2 STEAMING HOT ROLEX's

Leaned up against the hood of Navio's car the two men enjoy
their rolex.

RICKY
(still chewing)
Chipati bread, and rolled eggs -
Rolex. it's simple but tight. What
else do I need to know about Uganda?

Navio thinks.

NAVIO
Don't be in such a hurry, we call it
Africa time. Things reveal when the
time is right.

RICKY
Rolex's and Africa Time. Got it. SO if
you the *boss*, what else you got going
on?

NAVIO
I own a couple Rolex stands, a car
service, I try to support the
community, you know, but I got big

dreams for this young country. What I
really want to do is---

Navio's voice fades and everything slows down as Ricky locks eyes with a BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN WOMAN on a MOTORCYCLE as it drives past.

RICKY

Whoa.

Navio snaps his fingers in Ricky's face.

NAVIO

Yeah, the Boda-Bodas. (laughs)

RICKY

Boda-Boda?

NAVIO

Motorcycle taxis, very fun, very cheap...very dangerous. If I could give you advice I would say, Stay away.

RICKY

(sly)

I'm ok with dangerous.

Looks over at Navio, pause for a beat. Both laugh.

NAVIO

Be careful what you're looking for, you just might find it out here.

RICKY

And lemme guess, you're the guy who could help me find it.

NAVIO

(coyly)

Well...

INT - NIGHTCLUB

Navio and Ricky roll through the front entrance of THE CLUB, music blasts, Ricky glances around at the BEAUTIFUL YOUNG UGANDANS dancing and enjoying themselves.

Navio seems to know everyone, dapping and handshaking with most people he passes.

Navio and Ricky disappear into a door at the back of the club.

INT - HAMURWA'S PRIVATE LOUNGE

They walk into a dimly lit smoke filled room. Navio shakes hands with the guy at the door who lets them through.

They sit down at HAMURWA's table in the center of the room. Hamurwa is ominously backlit, his features hard to make out, he puffs on an ENORMOUS CIGAR that sends clouds of smoke into the air.

NAVIO

This is Hamurwa, he's a good guy to know.

HAMURWA

My friend here tells me you're looking for something hard to find.

Ricky with a big smile nods and throws down a crisp 50,000 Ugandan Shillings on the Table.

A BAG OF WEED is placed on the table by Hamurwa and instantly grabbed up by Ricky. Ricky opens the bag and takes a huge sniff.

WARAGI GIN is poured into shot glasses. Ricky, Navio and Hamurwa shoot it, Ricky takes a puff of an ENORMOUS BLUNT.

INT - HAMURWA'S NIGHTCLUB - DANCEFLOOR

Ricky, feeling great, dances with the Ugandans. Good vibes are felt by all.

INT - HAMURWA'S NIGHTCLUB - BAR

Ricky stands at the bar in conversation with TANNER, a geeky white guy in a USAID T-shirt and cargo shorts. They're both drinking CLUB BEER, smoking CIGARETTE'S and practically screaming in each others ears.

TANNER

This place is the best man.

RICKY

WHAT?

TANNER

THIS PLACE IS THE BEST, MAN.

RICKY
YEA ITS DOPE.

TANNER
BACK HOME I WAS JUST SOME GUY, BUT
HERE IN UGANDA I'M IMPORTANT, I'M KING
MUZUNGU.

RICKY
WHAT'S MUZUNGU?

TANNER
IT MEANS WHITE WANDERER.

RICKY
HELL YEA BRUH.

TANNER
YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE I LOVE ABOUT
UGANDA?

RICKY
WHATS THAT?

INT - AMERICAN DINNER PARTY

A group of 4 well dressed Americans have an intimate dinner.

BECKY
Oh my god! Morocco was incredible.

TANNER
(grandiose)
Oh North-Africa, basically south-
Europe am I right? You ever been Sub-
Saharan?

Everyone gasps.

BECKY
You mean... like?

TANNER
Yea...Uganda baby.

BECKY
Wow, you're instantly way more
interesting than I first assumed,
based on how you look.

INT - HAMURWA'S NIGHTCLUB - BAR

RICKY
WAIT WAIT WAIT, IS THAT WHY YOU'RE
HERE?

TANNER
N-N-NO. WELL... NO. I'M HERE TO HELP.

RICKY
ARE YOU HELPING?

TANNER
(very unconvincingly)
YEA I MEAN I THINK SO, I'M HERE SO I
GOTTA BE RIGHT?

Awkward beat.

RICKY
(Gesturing to the cigarette)
These are terrible.

INT - HAMURWA'S PRIVATE LOUNGE

Ricky, Navio and TWO BEAUTIFUL WOMEN, sit down at Hamurwa's table.

Another crisp 50,000 Ugandan Shillings are thrown down on the table and this time Hamurwa places a bag of small white pills. Ricky reaches for the bag. Navio stops him and gives Hamurwa a look.

NAVIO
I don't think we're looking for that
kind of party.

Ricky moves Navio's hand aside

RICKY
It's cool fam, don't worry bout me!

Navio starts to argue with Hamruwa in Lugandan. Ricky pops some of the pills.

RICKY
I told you, I'm cool bro!

Navio backs off and looks on as Ricky gets more intoxicated.

INT - HAMURWA'S NIGHTCLUB - DANCEFLOOR

Ricky clearly hammered, dances wildly. He's bumping into people here and there drawing looks of frustration from the other dancers.

INT - HAMURWA'S PRIVATE LOUNGE

Knocking over drinks and slurring apologies, Ricky slides back into Hamurwa's booth.

Hamurwa looks over at Navio, chatting with a women in the corner.

Another 50 thousand shillings is thrown down on the table, except this time there isn't the instant response of the packet.

Pause for beat.

Ricky taps the 50,000 shillings.

HAMURWA

My friend, It is late, we are closed
for business.

Ricky slack jawed and glassy eyed doesn't take this news well.

Ricky throws down another 50 thousand shillings and stares Hamurwa down.

Hamurwa not one to take this kind of disrespect in his own club menacingly leans in.

HAMURWA

Perhaps you did not hear me, I said
we're closed for business.

Hamurwa gestures to get Ricky out of there, three of HAMURWAS MEN emerge from the shadows to remove Ricky. Like a caged animal Ricky violently shoves one of them.

Navio emerges deescalates the situation and gets Ricky out of there.

INT. NAVIO'S CAR - NIGHT

Ricky looks out the window of the car feeling dejected and worthless. He looks like shit. His shirt sweaty and unkept, and his eyes bloodshot.

All the sudden he can feel the ROLEX, BOOZE and everything else he ingested coming back up.

RICKY
Pull over, Pull over!

Ricky stumbles out the car and rushes to lean against a building.

SFX. PRE-ROLL - HOCKING A LOOGIE

INT. EARL'S RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

TIGHT SHOT - WAD OF SPIT WITH YELLOWY MUCUS DRIPS INTO A 23 AND ME COLLECTION TUBE.

NATARA
Oh my god no! Fuck are you doing you just gotta spit into it. Jesus that's nasty.

NATARA, 27 takes the test tube over to a sink and washes it out. Bringing it back to Ricky.

We're back in America where Ricky works as a kitchen manager at EARLS RESTAURANT, he has on a BUTTON UP SHIRT AND TIE. Natara, the Sous Chef has on a COLORFUL HEAD WRAP, WHITE CHEF'S COAT and is twirling some TWEEZERS.

RICKY
My bad Natara, I don't even know why you want me to do this.

Gestures to the 23 AND ME GENETIC TEST KIT sitting on the box next to them.

NATARA
Oh come on, I'm doing it too, it's not that bad! This is important to me. Plus, it tells you all sorts of interesting stuff about your self. They scan your genome, tell you where you're from--

RICKY
(interrupting)
I already know where I'm from...Texas baby.

NATARA
Where your ANCESTORS came from, what

you're allergic to, what weird ass diseases you'll develop later in life. Hell it might even explain why you're forehead is so big.

Natara hands the tube back to Ricky

RICKY
(skeptically)
Ok fine, I'll do it.

Ricky spits into the tube.

CHEF KURT, late 20s Army bro, slightly disheveled and tipsy enters the frame, saunters towards the dry storage where Ricky and Natara sit, the DNA kit catching his eye.

KURT
You know they're building a database with those things. You might bump into yourself in a dark alley soon.

NATARA
At least we know they'd never clone your raggedy ass, Kurt.

KURT
That's CHEF raggedy ass to you. Quit leaning, If you got time to lean, you got time to clean.

Natara and Ricky get up.

RICKY
(under his breath)
But is my forehead really that big?

NATARA
It's not small.

RICKY
Shut up, I'll fire your ass

NATARA
You wouldn't fire me, or you'd be left with them.

Ricky looks over and notices the youngest waiters HAYDEN, 18 and BRAYDEN, 19 scarfing down dinner rolls .

Ricky throws his hands up in exasperation.

RICKY
Yo! Cut that shit out!

HAYDEN
(chewing)
Just doin' some QC boss.

RICKY
Imma Quality Control your tips if
y'all keep at it.

Brayden stuffs one last roll in his pocket and they both take off through the kitchen doors.

RICKY
(under his breath to Natara)
That's right lil punk ass, I run this
shit.

NATARA
(laughs)
Oh yea, you a real bad man, Mr.
Special forces, Seal Team six, with ya
green beret ass.

RICKY
(awkwardly)
What those aren't even, like the same
thing...

Before Ricky can say anything else VINCE, the owner, 40's bursts through the back door, a flurry of energy. He's wearing an ill-fitting sport coat and thin gold chain.

VINCE
(leering with confidence)
Hello, hello. Natara my dear how are
you?

NATARA
(sarcastically sweet)
Feelin lovely Mr. Vince how are you
doing?

VINCE
Been up since the *crotch* of dawn,
runnin' things! Ricky lets chat.

Quick 'uh-oh' glance between Ricky and Natara.

RICKY

Yes sir.

As they exit Kurt bumps into Vince.

INT - EARL'S OFFICE - DAY

VINCE

(off handedly)

Is kurt Drunk already?

RICKY

No... he's just hungover a bit.
Probably needs a coffee.

VINCE

I know you guys are Army buddies, and
(sarcastically)
"Thank you for you service", But come
on it sets a bad example for the rest
of the staff if he's tanked all the
time.

RICKY

I'll talk to him.

VINCE

(rolls eyes)

Can't wait.

(changing the topic)

You've been managing since--

RICKY

You put me in charge right before the
holidays, so--

VINCE

And how do you think its going?

RICKY

(waffling)

I mean, it's been--

VINCE

It's lookin' pretty loose. The kitchen
staff is out of hand, and the waiters
are just...sloppy. Look you stepped up
when we were in a tough place after we
lost PK, but maybe now that--

RICKY
Whoa, whoa, whoa... I mean--

VINCE
Look. I met a guy, a real restaurant management genius. What if...we put you back on the line, you're a great cook and you love it! You can play grab-ass with Kurt and Natara all you want. And you'll learn from him while we right the ship.

Ricky clenches his jaw, agitated, takes a deep breath.

RICKY
Vince, I'm your guy. I think we're turning a corner here. Lets not rush into anything. I've been reading that book you recommended for me!

Vince waves his hand like he doesn't want to hear it.

VINCE
Just think about it. I gotta go, I'm talking to a guy about Franchising a weight watchers.

RICKY
(confused)
Right. Yes sir

And just as quickly as Vince rushed in, he's gone.

The camera lingers on Ricky as he sits with his thoughts.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ricky walks into his sad barely furnished 1 bedroom apartment. His cat runs up to him and rubs against his leg. He throws his mail on the desk next to his laptop.

Buried in the pile is the book *SETTING THE TABLE* BY DANNY MEYER, it's in immaculate condition, it clearly hasn't been read.

Ricky picks it up and looks at it.

RICKY
(To himself)
Might as well..

Ricky opens the book, behind the front cover is a handwritten

note from Vince.

VINCE (V.O)

Rick, From the day I hired you I knew
you had too much potential to keep
hiding you behind the line. welcome to
the front of the house. -Vince

Ricky sits down and starts reading the book in earnest.
Highlighting and taking notes.

RICKY

(Reading)

Hospitality is when something happens
FOR you, not when something happens TO
you.

(Internalizing it)

Hospitality is when something happens
For you.

Something clicks in Ricky's head.

CUT TO

INT - EARL'S DINING ROOM - EVENING

Montage of dinner service, Ricky welcoming guests, pulling
out a chair for a man while complimenting his Jacket.

Later, Ricky's behind the bar, helping out a bartender,
wiping off a table, diffusing a tense situation with a guest.

INT - EARL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Kurt looks both ways before offering Ricky a bump of COCAINE
on the edge of his JAPANESE CHEFS KNIFE. Ricky debates for a
second before happily accepting it. Natara watches
disapprovingly.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

Ricky walks into his apartment, he sits down at his coffee
table. In front of him sits the HOSPITALITY BOOK and a WEED
PIPE. Ricky debates for a second before picking up the pipe.

INT - EARL'S KITCHEN - EVENING

We find Ricky mid-dinner rush, trying to expedite the line, A
wall of tickets in front of him and the printer shooting out
more every second.

RICKY
 (exasperated)
 Chef how are we doing on 18,
 I need 2 strippers medium
 well and 1 Filet rare.
 Natara, I need a side of
 'Gus to sell 56.

BRAYDEN
 Hey Rick... Ummm.. rick.

KURT
 I just gave you the 2
 strippers!

NATARA
 'Gus in the window.

Ricky grabs the asparagus hands it to Brayden

RICKY
 (to Brayden)
 Take these and that wedge to
 56 at the bar. Yea its
 coming up.
 (to kurt)
 I had to sell those to 15,
 they'd been waiting 30 min.

BRAYDEN
 Table 20 really needs their
 soup.

KURT
 Jesus fucking christ, fine going on 2
 strippers now.

Hayden enters the kitchen completely flustered.

HAYDEN
 Chef, table 18 REALLY needs their
 order.

KURT
 TALK TO RICKY NOT ME
 FUCKFACE.

RICKY
 DON'T TALK TO CHEF I TALK TO
 CHEF, YOU TALK TO ME.

HAYDEN
 Ok, ok sorry they're just super
 pissed. Really need their food.

RICKY
 Yea, We're working on it.

Brayden trying to walk OUT the IN door smashes into a
 bartender rushing in, the wedge and the asparagus crash on
 the floor shattering everywhere.

RICKY
 (to no one in particular)
 God damnit are you kidding me, someone

clean that up!
 (To natara)
 Need another gus and wedge on the fly.

KURT
 Unfucking believable.

NATARA
 Gus and wedge on the fly,
 heard.

Ricky shakes his head in frustration.

INT - EARL'S DINING ROOM - POST DINNER RUSH

The rush is over, Ricky sits at the bar sipping on a WHISKY NEAT tipping out his wait staff.

Brayden hands Ricky his checkout sheet. Ricky eyes it skeptically. Starts punching numbers in his calculator.

BRAYDEN
 Big night for Brayden, That 6 top
 loved my ass.

RICKY
 (Murmurs)
 Only cause I comped them half their
 ticket.

Ricky pulls out some cash from the lockbox and starts counting it.

BRAYDEN
 Oh c'mon thats not my fault. That was
 the kitchen.

RICKY
 Don't! Not tonight.

With a fist full of money, Ricky begins to hand it to Brayden but pulls it back before giving it to him.

RICKY
 Pop quiz hot shot, What's in our
 Aviation signature cocktail?

HAYDEN
 (in background)
 Uh ohhh!

BRAYDEN
 Uhhh, Hendricks Gin, Lemon Juice,

RICKY

And?

BRAYDEN

(unsure)

Aaaand, Creme de violette?

Ricky gives him a hard look for a beat before smiling.

RICKY

Atta boy.

Ricky hands him his money. Brayden breathes a sigh of relief as he leaves with Hayden.

Ricky buries his face in his hands, after a beat he reaches for his Whiskey on the counter.

MUSIC BUILDS

MATCH CUT

INT. SHAG LOUNGE - NIGHT

Ricky slams back a shot of JAMESON and turns to Kurt. Ricky, looking more relaxed with his tie looser.

RICKY

And get this, he's thinking of bringing in some corporate suit to straiten things out.

KURT

Fuck Vince, dude's a pussy.

RICKY

I'm a good manager, right?

KURT

The best! And the cutest.

Kurt pretends to go in for a kiss.

RICKY

(pushing him away)
Get off me!

KURT

Whatever happened with you and that lil mamacita you were talking to the other night at Recess?

RICKY
Haha, Necia? We're just friends. She's cool though.

KURT
Whats up with you man? No girl good enough for Slick Rick? C'mon my best man tux is getting rusty.

RICKY
(laughing)
Shut up, man that's not true, Matter fact, I was with this girl last night, she was fine.

KURT
(leans in)
Get the hell outta here!

RICKY
Yea, yea yea... your momma didn't tell you?

INT - KURTS APARTMENT

The two pile into Kurts apartment, both drunk.

Kurt's living room is the classic single guy apartment, sparse and sad.

The one cool feature is that his ENTIRE BACK WALL IS COVERED IN FLAGS of the countries he spent time in while he was in the Military. Afghanistan, Yemen, and South Korea.

Kurt's COFFEE TABLE is covered in XBOX CONTROLLERS, NAPKINS, TAKEOUT MENUS and MARIJUANA ACCOUTERMENTS.

Kurt heads to the kitchen.

KURT
Whatcha drinkin?

RICKY
(in a British accent)
Well, ol boy, I'll have the usual.

Leans his head out of the kitchen.

KURT
(in a bad Australian accent)
Crikey!

Ricky laughing, shakes his head at how dumb they both are.

TEQUILA is poured into SHOT GLASSES, LIMES are cut, and Mexican Beers are slammed on the counter.

Kurt hands Ricky a JOINT as he sits down, rick takes a big ol' rip.

The two sit on the couch playing CALL OF DUTY.

Ricky begins to feel the substances. He starts to descend deeper into Call of Duty. The gun shots start to sound less tinny and become a little closer, realer.

Ricky's breathing quickens.

INT. BUILDING AFGHANISTAN

Ricky in full MILITARY BATTLE DRESS UNIFORM runs through a SEMI-DESTROYED BUILDING he turns a corner, down the hall stands an ROBED FIGURE with their back to him.

Beat as everything becomes calm, a soft wind is heard.

The UNKNOWN FIGURE whips around, It's Vince. With anger in his eyes Ricky takes aim and pulls the trigger.

The gunshots crack the silence and snap Ricky back into call of duty.

INT - KURTS APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Ricky a bit shook, and unsteady tosses his controller down. and gets up.

Kurt barely noticing keeps playing.

INT - KURTS APARTMENT -BATHROOM

Ricky flushes the toilet and goes to wash his hands. He takes a long look at himself in the mirror. He notices a pill bottle next to the sink.

He picks it up

Its OXYCONTIN.

INT - KURTS APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Ricky sits back down with a couple of fresh beers.

RICKY
Hey man, how's the back?

Kurt, preoccupied by getting his beer open.

KURT
Oh, you know, same ol.

Beat as Ricky ponders what to say next.

RICKY
You hear about Romero?

KURT
Nah, whats up with him?

RICKY
Shit...he uhh didn't make it man.

KURT
Jesus... Happen here or in the
sandbox?

RICKY
Here. They found him in the garage, he
ate a bullet.

They both pause for a moment.

KURT
(somber)
Well, fuck to Romero then

Kurt pours some TEQUILA into their shot glasses, The two
cheers, think for a second and shoot the liquor.

Somber beat.

Kurt downs another shot, Ricky uses his beer as a chaser.

CUT TO

Montage of Ricky and Kurt engaging in a bunch of weird super
bro-y ritualistic drinking games that can only be explained
by them spending way too much time together with way too
little to keep them occupied.

INT - KURTS BEDROOM - LATER

The boys sit at KURTS DESK, the room is only lit by his small
DESK LAMP. Kurt holds a lighter to the bottom of an EMPTY

LIGHT BULB, smoke trickles out of the mouth hole.

CAMERA PANS FROM THE LIGHTBULB TO RICKY'S SHOCKED FACE

RICKY

Hold up, hold up! You smoking out of light bulbs? What? Hell no man. This is some junkie shit, I aint doing this!

KURT

(unphased, and wasted)
Whatever pussy, I thought you wanted to party.

RICKY

Not like this Bro.

With a giant shit eating grin Kurt takes a hit out of the light bulb and blows the smoke into Ricky's face.

Already feeling wasted, and with the smoke blown in his face. Ricky gets up unsteady, and lays down on the couch.

MATCH CUT

INT - KURTS APARTMENT - DAY

Ricky startles awake, it's late. He gets up looks at his phone.

RICKY

Kurt, KURT! Wake up.

Ricky runs into Kurt's bedroom where he's passed out face down, *completely* naked.

Ricky recoils from the site.

RICKY

Oh Jesus.

Ricky see's a glass of water on his end table. Ricky picks it up.

RICKY

(to himself)
I've always wanted to do this.

Ricky douses Kurt with the water.

RICKY
Wake up motherfucker, we're late for
the brunch shift!

KURT
(slurring)
Oh shit...

INT - EARL'S KITCHEN - BRUNCH

Ricky and Kurt come rushing in to the kitchen, things are
already in motion.

Natara is running the line calling out orders. Vince is
expediting the food, handing plates to Brayden and Hayden.

Ricky passes Hayden and Brayden as he enters the kitchen.

HAYDEN
(super shitty)
Pop quiz, what time does work start.

RICKY
(under his breath)
Man shut up.

Ricky approaches Vince.

RICKY
(super awkward)
Hey ya Vince, thanks for getting
things started for us. I'll take it
from here.

VINCE
(pissed)
Mr. Hot shot. Thanks for joining us
today.

KURT
Sorry Vince, that's my bad.

VINCE
I heard last night was a disaster and
now this? I expect more out of my
Restaurant Manager.

Vince shakes his head at Ricky and walks back to the office.

RICKY
 (frustrated)
 fuck!

Timelapse montage of Ricky expediting the window, and running around the restaurant.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ricky enters and throws his mail on the table next to his laptop.

Buried in the pile is the book *SETTING THE TABLE* BY DANNY MEYER. Ricky picks it up and looks at it for a beat before setting it down.

He opens his fridge which contains an onion, some sad looking greens, and a pile of microwaveable meals. The fridge door closes revealing a PHOTO of a bunch of troops in Afghanistan.

The meals swirls for a few seconds then goes dark. Ricky looks up from his phone screen in his dark apartment.

His power is out.

A closet door opens and Ricky kicks aside boxes and shoves aside items to find the breaker. he trips over one of the boxes.

The box is labeled "DAD'S STUFF", Ricky glances at it briefly, double takes and sighs. Ricky shuts the closet.

THE OPENING PIANO FROM LIZZO'S SONG 'TRUTH HURTS' FADES IN
 LIZZO STARTS SINGING

LIZZO (O.S)
 I just took a DNA test turns out I'm
 100 percent ...

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

NATARA
 Ugandan!? I love Uganda! I did a peace corp trip there after high school.

RICKY
 Yea, well I'm not 100%, but I'm a lot Ugandan.

NATARA
 Damn, my results didn't even come back

that clean!

Ricky is holding his DNA results to Natara's face as she stirs and seasons pasta sauce.

RICKY

Yea, crazy right? Wait, where are you from?

Natara reaches into her pocket and pulls out a piece of paper that she quickly scans then tries to hide. Ricky reaches for the paper and Natara keeps shifting it out of reach.

NATARA

Just, you know, Mali, Nigeria, a lot of black---hey!

Ricky snatches the paper, it shows larger portions of Eastern Europe and South America than Africa.

RICKY

Europe! South America, holy...Your life is a lie!

NATARA

Shut up, I'm still Black! I spent two years in the Peace Corps in Uganda!
(awkwardly changing the subject)
Y- You know they call that place "The Pearl of Africa"?

RICKY

Don't change the subject!

Natara punches Ricky.

NATARA

Seriously! Wait, if you're
(Texas accent)
"from Texas" where is this coming from?

RICKY

Well, my mom died in a car accident when I was little and my dad, 'the major' wasn't much of a talker, I just know she liked to cook so...I guess it's gotta be her

Sad beat.

NATARA

So you gotta go right?

RICKY

Ok cool it...Go? Nah man.

Natara nods and smiles devilishly at him

NATARA

oh yeah, you gotta go dude

RICKY

Nah, I can't fuckin go to Uganda, I know nothing about it.

NATARA

(prepares for her speech)

Shhh Shhh ok, you know the majority of the population is under 30? *(sighs)* A nation full of gorgeous young Black people thriving in the motherland.

RICKY

The motherland? Really?

NATARA

You know what I mean, cradle of life, calling for us all to come home? So when are you going? I got some friends over there, that I...

(dreamy)

really, really miss

Natara drifts briefly into a memory, then returns to the conversation.

NATARA

Mmm! Yeah, I'll connect you.

RICKY

(rolling his eyes)

Cool, can't wait.

NATARA

You gotta go, Garvey would be so proud.

RICKY

(laughing)

Garvey! You wilin. But nah I got like, work, y'know. Vince is already giving

me enough shit.

Right then, Vince strolls into the kitchen with a well dressed NEW GUY. Vince is gesturing, showing him around.

NATARA

And the devil appears! With...someone new?

Vince and NEW GUY head over to them. NEW GUY is in his 40s beige suit, boring mouth-breather with darting eyes and limp hands. Vince clears his throat, but before he can speak,

NATARA

(excitedly)

Hey Vince, Ricky just found out he's from Africa and needs time off to go eat pray love

VINCE

(sighs uncomfortably)

Ricky...this is Dan, the guy I was telling you about. He's been through the best hospitality program in the nation and he's got his MBA.

Ricky and Dan awkwardly shake hands. Dan half-smiles and doesn't blink. Vince places his hand on Ricky's back and pulls him aside.

RICKY

(trying to stay calm but pleading)

Vince, what the hell man, You bringin' in some MBA nerd who's just good at school. I thought---

VINCE

Look, Ricky this is the direction we gotta go in. This ship needs a captain, and Dan...

RICKY

No, no no no Vince listen, I can do this! We can do this! C'mon you can't be serious! Vince, I'm your guy! I'm here in the trenches every day. This guy---

Cut to Dan carefully examining the knives like a serial killer.

VINCE

Dan is good for us. Ricky, listen, maybe I moved you up too quick...You can cook circles around Kurt. Why don't you hop back on the line, have some time to watch, and learn from Dan.

Ricky looks down, jaw clenched, dejected.

Vince smacks Ricky's shoulder, trying to cheer him up, and walks back towards Natara and Dan, excitedly guiding Dan to another part of the kitchen.

Kurt enters, as he's walking past Dan he pretends like he's gonna punch him in the gut but then pulls back, laughs and shakes his hand. Kurt approaches Ricky and places a hand on his shoulder.

KURT

Some bullshit man...(stretches, changes the subject) So, Africa?

DOLLY ZOOM ON RICKY AS HE CONTEMPLATES.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Ricky opens his closet door revealing the box with 'DADS STUFF' written along the top.

On the side of his bed, Ricky opens up the box.

The first thing he pulls out is the program from his dad's funeral, a picture of his dad from his military days and the headline *TRUIT RILEY 1952-2014*.

Ricky pauses to look at his dad for a second before setting it aside.

Beneath that is an old VIETNAM ERA MILITARY JACKET. Ricky pulls it out and takes a look at it. The name RILEY is sewn into the breast.

He sets the uniform down and digs deeper into the box. He finds a JOURNAL which he sets aside, underneath that are some OLD PICTURES,

The first photo: His dad in the 70's with a big afro and bell bottoms on.

The Second: his parents standing side by side in New York

City with the twin towers in the background, his dad has a bitchin' mustache. His mom is a total fox.

The final picture: His mom, standing in the kitchen, stirring a pot wearing an African Headwrap. Giving the photographer a look that says *"Put down the camera and give me a hand"*

Ricky smiles, deeper into the box he finds a small wooden container. He fiddles with it for a moment before it comes open.

RICKY

Oh hello, what do we have here?

Inside is an alphabetized Rolodex of small notebook cards. He lifts one out and examines it.

It's in an unknown language he can't make out. But he recognizes what the cards are

RICKY

No way.

He ponders for a moment.

INT - BAR NIGHT

Ricky sits across from Natara and Kurt in a booth at a local dive.

NATARA

So wait, are you fired or...

KURT

Nah, he's not fired, he's coming back home. He'll be back on grill

NATARA

Uhhh I'm on grill. Besides he's going to Africa, aren't you?

Ricky, unsure, doesn't respond.

NATARA

Ricky! Remember, the diaspora, your mom!

KURT

Nah. You should save your money and invest in gold like I do.

Ricky anxiously looks back and forth between the two.

RICKY

Actually I did find something from my mom the other day. I think they're recipes. But I can't read them.

NATARA

Ricky, RICKY! The universe is telling you to go. Look, I went, and it wasn't just beautiful, it changed my life. I feel like I didn't know where I belonged before then.

KURT

(shaking his head)
Gold bro.

Ricky fiddles with the label on his beer.

NATARA

This is your one life to live, are you just gonna spend it as an aspiring overworked line cook wondering "What if"? We're talking the opportunity of a lifetime here.

KURT

(talking mostly to himself)
They say that you shouldn't keep your gold in a safe because that's the first place someone would look in a home invasion, so you should actually bury it somewhere... somewhere secret.

Both Natara and Ricky give Kurt a 'wtf' look.

EXT - RICKY'S NEIGHBORHOOD DUSK

Ricky pensively walks down the street, hands in pocket contemplating his decision.

Ricky passes a house with 3 LITTLE GIRLS playing double dutch the front yard.

He continues on, across the street he see's a GROUP OF CARIBBEAN GUYS playing DOMINOES - laughing, talking shit in Spanish and Patois, having a good evening.

Later he stops in front of a MURAL - its a black, gold and maroon image of a proud black woman with the words POWER &

EQUALITY across the top.

Over by the Mural a couple of girlfriends take pictures of each other, posing and styling each other. Ricky smiles.

Off in the distance Ricky see's an airplane creating contrails through the sky.

He's made his decision.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ricky opens his LAPTOP

URL bar 'WWW.EXPEDIA.COM'

Destination 'Entebbe'

Passengers '1'

Scrolling through flight options.

Ricky's pencil falls from his mouth as he looks at the prices, He pulls out his wallet and takes a deep breath.

Ricky slides out his DEBIT CARD, thinks better of it and pulls out his CREDIT CARD.

Deep Breath

Fingers typing.

Cursor moves over the 'BOOK TICKETS' button.

Ricky almost clicks, but stops short.

He reconsiders.

Ricky leans back, next to him is the box of his Mom's recipes. He picks it up, smells the box. Shuts his eyes, and begins to shake his head. He's made up his mind.

Ricky triumphantly books his ticket.

For what seems like the first time, in a long time, Ricky pulls out some ingredients and pans, and begins cooking.

After eating, Ricky lays out his TRAVEL CLOTHES on his bed. He lays the RECIPE BOX, PHOTOS, and his dad's JOURNAL carefully next to them.

Ricky wearing his ARMY BACKPACK and BUCKET HAT hands the KEYS of his apartment to Natara who's holding his cat.

Ricky gives them both a big hug and walks out of frame. Natara proudly watches him go.

INT - UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Ricky startles awake, unsure of where he is, he sits up and immediately gets enveloped in the mosquito net. Confused and frantic Ricky fights the mosquito net until he finally frees himself.

Looking around the room, his luggage sits in the corner. He breathes a sigh of relief.

Ricky thinks back to the previous evening and the memories come trickling back.

INT - BUSY NIGHTCLUB - BAR

Ricky slamming shots

INT - HAMURWA'S PRIVATE LOUNGE

Ricky fighting Hamurwa's men

EXT - KAMPALA NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT

Ricky post-vomit on the side of the road.

An OLD UGANDAN MAN emerges from the building and starts shouting at him in Luganda.

Ricky starts yelling back, the old man has a small stick that he starts smacking Ricky with, Ricky stumbles and falls as he's retreating towards the vehicle.

INT - UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Yikes, Ricky cringes at his memories from last night.

RICKY
fuuuuuuuuuuuuuccckkkk

Ricky sits back and notices how quiet it is around him. Subtle nature sounds fill the air.

Ricky walks into the kitchen, he fumbles with an OLD COFFEE MACHINE. It doesn't seem to be working very well.

Returning to the bedroom, he takes a look at the mosquito net and notices a better way to hang it.

Reaching into his luggage he first pulls out his father's journal, turns it over in his hands before setting it down. Then he pulls out a small pocket size NOTEBOOK, Ricky writes...

TO DO: FRENCH PRESS, CLOTHES PINS, AVOCADOS, ROLEX - EGGS, CHAPATI

Ricky throws on a pair of running shoes, and running shorts, grabs his shopping list and a bundle of shillings.

EXT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Ricky steps out his front door, immediately he's taken aback by the beauty and lushness of his surroundings.

In awe Ricky walks through the gardens, he see's BANANAS, AVOCADOS, and JACK FRUIT. BIRDS fly over head loudly Kawwing and sqwaking. He stops to examine a PERFECT PALM TREE.

A smile appears on Ricky's face. With some pep he starts jogging.

EXT - KAMPALA NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Kampala is just waking up and starting its day. Women walk with loads on their head, kids in their uniforms run to school. Boda-boda's cruise down the rust colored roads.

Ricky takes it all in. He stops at a chain link fence next to a soccer field with a bunch of kids playing soccer, he looks on fondly.

Continuing his Jog, Ricky finds a market.

INT - KAMPALA MARKET

Ricky enters the market and begins to look up and down the aisles. He pulls his list out of his pocket, and begins gathering items.

First he finds some AVOCADOS, they're enormous. Next in homegoods he finds some CLIPS.

His basket begins to fill, he looks at the list and there is only one item remaining to be checked off - French Press.

Ricky can't seem to find it.

Down the aisle a WOMAN EMPLOYEE crouched with her back to him. He approaches her, list in hand. When he reaches her, he taps her on the shoulder.

She turns around and Wow, she's *beautiful*.

Ricky has to completely re-calibrate his brain. His microprocessors can't quite keep up at the moment. She gives him the once over.

AKIIKI

Yes... may I help you?

Ricky is speechless for a moment as he tries to find words.

RICKY

Umm hi, I'm looking for some... uhh coffee. I mean french press. sorry, ya french press.

AKIIKI

You want a french press?

RICKY

Ah, yup.

AKIIKI

This way.

She starts to lead him across the store. He silently curses himself for being such a doofus as he walks behind her.

She leads him to a couple types of FRENCH PRESS.

AKIIKI

(snarky)

French press. Maybe after having a coffee you won't have such a hard time speaking.

She laughs to herself and starts to walk off.

RICKY

W-wait!

She pauses and turns around. Ricky doesn't have anything planned but he's not ready to let her go yet.

RICKY

Umm, which uh, french press should I get.

Akiiki saunters back.

AKIIKI
This one is more expensive, you should
buy it, and then my parents will think
I'm a good sales woman.

She gestures to her parents down at the front at the store.
Her mother OKALLI and her father AMOOTI both sit at the
register with stern looks on their face.

Ricky looks, he gives a little wave. No visible response.
Ricky grabs the MORE EXPENSIVE FRENCH PRESS.

RICKY
Oh your Parents own the shop, that's
cool!

AKIIKI
(deadpan)
yes... Nothing cooler than owning a
supermarket.

RICKY
ummm, well.

AKIIKI
I'm just kidding with you.

seizing his opportunity

RICKY
I'm Ricky.

AKIIKI
(smirking)
British, American?

RICKY
(smiling)
Texan.

Ricky leans on a shelf and knocks a couple items over.

AKIIKI
(laughing)
Nice to meet you Ricky, I am Akiiki.

RICKY
Akiiki! Ok, cool, Yea. Nice to meet
you Akiiki.

RICKY (CONT'D)
 (showing off)
 Yea, Ricky like Slick Rick, Too mach
 grip to let it slip, ya boy Pretty
 Ricky, you don't gotta love but you
 gotta tip me... ayyy.

Awkward beat

AKIIKI
 Ohhh, Ricky like Ricky Martin

RICKY
 I mean, yea I guess. Anyways, I'm uh,
 gunna buy the nice French Press
 because I love how it has the feature
 of...

Reads packaging - all it says is "Makes Coffee"

RICKY (CONT'D)
 (awkwardly)
 ...Making coffee.

AKIIKI
 An excellent choice... Mr. Pretty
 Ricky Martin

Akiiki smiles and walks away. Ricky, unsure if things went well or not still feels exhilarated.

Feeling on top of the world Ricky heads towards Akiiki's mom at the register. He hands her the French Press.

RICKY
 (Mouthing the words)
 Its the nice one.

Okalli blankly looks at him. Ricky with a big ol smile on his face shrugs his shoulders in fake modesty like, *no big deal*. Okalli's face doesn't change one iota.

EXT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Ricky struts out of the market holding his BAGS OF GOODIES feeling himself.

INT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Arriving home Ricky places the french press in his kitchen, his food in his fridge, and works on the Mosquito net in his bedroom.

EXT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - LATER

Ricky reclines on a patio chair, cracks open a CLUB BEER, taking in the view, He picks up his FATHER'S JOURNAL He begins thumbing through it.

TRUIT (V.O.)

"Big sis delivered today, can't believe I'm gonna be an uncle! All I could think of was holding a son of my own one day. Part of me thinks of skipping town every time the letter comes for me to report to base. Every time I close my eyes I see Sylvia's smile, and I just don't know how I can leave again. She the sun man, with all the force of solar wind..."

RICKY (V.O.)

Wait, wait damn! Hardly seven sentences spoken since mom died and of course pops was a poet.

Ricky flips back and forth through to another page

TRUIT (V.O.)

"Sylvia made dinner last night, but her parents were so scared they didn't even let me in. I'm no rat or narc, shit I wouldn't even know who to call, but there was Sylvia, standing outside holding a covered plate, apologizing. Man, it hurt to see her do anything but smile. I don't care how she got here----"

RICKY (V.O.)

Must be some damn good food.

Ricky flips to another page.

TRUIT (V.O.)

"She knows war like me, you'd never know it though. I keep thinking the differences between Idi Amin and Nixon are pretty slim. Still a sea of Black folks dying for nothing they know about."

Suddenly, his phone Buzzes, it's a text message from Kurt.

KURT (TEXTING)
Hey man how's the Ebola??

RICKY (TEXTING)
I told you man, I don't have Ebola!
(next message)
I have malaria!

KURT (TEXTING)
Oh, right. My bad.

Ricky laughs.

KURT (TEXTING)
Don't forget to grab me a flag for my
collection!

RICKY (TEXTING)
I thought you only got flags from
places YOU went

KURT (TEXTING)
You're my Ugandan brother! Of course I
need a Ugandan flag!

RICKY (TEXTING)
Riiiiiiiggghhht, Gotchu bro *Fist bump
emoji*

Ricky smiles, sets his phone down, and picks the journal back
up.

EXT - WIDE BEAUTY SHOT OF KAMPALA

Beautiful landscape shot of the sun rising over Kampala. The
Gaddafi mosque is seen in the background.

INT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

SFX - ALARM CLOCK

Ricky shoots up wide awake, except this time, he doesn't have
a face full of mosquito net.

He glides into the kitchen. Makes coffee, and cooks breakfast
utilizing all of his goodies he purchased the previous day.

EXT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Ricky sits on his patio looking out at the gardens, enjoying his coffee and homemade Rolex, satisfied. Ricky has a notebook open by his side.

RICKY (V.O.)
The Ugandan Rolex, Chipatti Bread
lightly toasted, 2 eggs scrambled,
served piping hot and rolled up like a
burrito.

Ricky thinks for a second, takes a bite.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Would be real nice with a little
Cholula, maybe some tomatoes. Call it
the Rolex Supreme.

Laughs to himself.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Crazy the supreme version is just a
little love in the right places.

Introspective beat.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Been a minute since I've been the
Ricky Supreme. before I ever drew a
gun, I whipped eggs like a master. A
real cowboy chef. I made soul food
from Tabbouleh, they thought I was
crazy. At least I had a
fire...something. Been feelin' pretty
average these past few years, makes me
see why dad didn't want to leave mom.
Having to leave the kind of love that
kept that afro picked...The
military...man, it'll steal your soul,
shit, I was scared mine was gone until
the whisky, and now...is it possible
to retrieve a soul with a good ass
meal, or some real deep love? Lets
hope.

Thinks for a beat.

SFX PRE-ROLL Bell Ding

INT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Ricky rolls through the doors on a mission. He sees Mama Akiiki and Akiiki standing at the front counter. Ricky approaches.

RICKY
Hey! How's it going?

AKIIKI
Oli Otya, my friend

RICKY
(slowly, matching the
pronunciation)
Oli Otya

AKIIKI
Means how are you! Now what can I do
for you today.

RICKY
Do you happen to have a Ugandan flag.

AKIIKI
I'm sorry, we do not.

RICKY
(fake disappointed)
Oh really, shoot. Maybe you could show
me where one is?

AKIIKI
Mmmm, you want me to take you to find
a flag? And just drop everything I'm
doing.

RICKY
Yea, pretty much.

AKIIKI
I think you must be lost my friend the
tourist center is down the road.

RICKY
No no, I'm not a tourist. I'm...
Ugandan?
(correcting himself)
Part Ugandan.

AKIIKI
 Olimba, yesterday you said you from
 Texas. And today another story.

RICKY
 (rambling)
 No no...I mean my mother's from here.
 I just didn't know, and my friend Kurt
 wanted this flag and...I'm sorry, I'm
 rambling do you wanna take a
 walk...with me?

A devilish smirk appears on Akiiki's face. She thinks for a moment.

AKIIKI
 I don't like scatterbrains, get your
 story straight.

RICKY
 No more stories..I..yes

AKIIKI
 (smiling)
 Let me see what I can do.

Akiiki turns to her mother.

AKIIKI
 (In lugandan)
 The Muzungu needs some help, can I go
 with him?

Okalli ponders for a moment, and gives Ricky a dismissive look.

OKALLI
 (In lugandan)
 You can but you MUST be back before
 your father returns. He'll flip his
 lid if he finds out you've ran off
 with a boy.

AKIIKI
 (In lugandan)
 Of course mamma!

Akiiki turns back to Ricky.

AKIIKI
 Ok follow me!

EXT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

AKIIKI

Ok, so this flag, you're really on a journey for it.

RICKY

Yeah and no, my buddy, we were in the military together and every place we went he collected a flag.

AKIIKI

Sounds like conquest to me.

RICKY

(rambling)

No nothing like that, I don't have a lot of family, he's like a brother to me, And.. you gotta take care of what little family you got.

Introspective beat.

AKIIKI

So you're an orphan

RICKY

Damn girl, be direct won't you!

AKIIKI

(laughing)

I'm just joking.

RICKY

I mean you're not...wrong. But, it's my first time here. You know, coming home, be gentle with me

AKIIKI

OK ok, Mr. First Timer, I may have something to show you.

Ricky smiles, Akiiki without missing a beat flags down two BODA-BODAS. As she's haggling with them, she grabs the helmet sitting on the back and begins to put it on.

The other driver hands Ricky a HELMET. Remembering Navio's advice Ricky doesn't like the Idea of hopping on a Boda-boda.

Akiiki effortlessly hops on. She looks back at Ricky with her 10,000 watt smile.

They lock eyes, and everything slows down. He's holding the helmet but he's hesitant.

She can feel it. She looks at him. With her eyes and her smiles she tells him it's ok. She taps her Boda Boda driver and tells him to go. And she's off.

Ricky watches her go.

He snaps out of his daze and is catalyzed by her departure. He's going after her. All at once he's putting on the HELMET and hopping on the BODA-BODA.

RICKY
(under his breath)
What am I doing?

The BODABODA takes off, Ricky holds on as tight as he can.

EXT - KAMPALA TRAFFIC

The two BODABODAS dodge and weave through the Kampala gridlock. Ricky, terrified, tries to spot Akiiki. She's far off in the distance.

Akiiki looks back at Ricky and flashes a smile.

Ricky see's it and can't help but smile.

RICKY
(to himself)
You're in trouble bro, she's trouble.

Eventually they break through from the traffic and hit a long open straight away. The two BODAS pull up next to each other.

AKIIKI
You should see your face.

Ricky goes from smiling to making an over exaggerated fake terrified face.

Akiiki Laughs at his dumb face, her BODA pulls ahead. The two circle around MANDELA STADIUM, Kampala's 45,000 seat soccer arena.

EXT - DRUM BEAT BUILDING

Almost in the shadow of the stadium, The two BODAS pull up to a MEDIUM SIZE BUILDING, The sound of muffled AFRICAN DRUMS can be heard

Ricky and Akiiki hop off the BODAS and enter.

INT - DRUM BEAT BUILDING

Emerging from a dim corridor Ricky and Akiiki, walk into the main space.

Across the room sits DRUM BEAT UGANDA, a traditional Ugandan Drum line consisting of 15-20 Drummers, dancers, and singers.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

AKIIKI!

SAMUEL 20's, One of the drummers hops off his set and bounds towards Akiiki. Samuel embraces her warmly and kisses her on the cheek. They share a couple greetings in Lugandan while Ricky looks on.

AKIIKI

Samuel this is Ricky, my American Friend.

(taking on accent)

Texan Right?

Ricky nods. Samuel eyes Ricky skeptically.

SAMUEL

So tell me. Are you here to save Uganda, or just profit off of it?

Akiiki gives Samuel a 'come on' look.

RICKY

(laughs)

No No, I'm just exploring, tryna feel it out.

Samuel and Akiiki look unimpressed.

RICKY (CONT'D)

And AND...Turns out my mom's from here, and I feel

(channeling Natara)

it's important to connect back to my roots as a member of the African Diaspora.

Akiiki smiles and Samuel shrugs in approval.

SAMUEL

Well in that case, welcome to Kampala

my brother. I have heard much American music, But have you heard Ugandan music?

RICKY
Not like this.

HARD CUT

ZOOMING OUT FROM SAMUEL TO REVEAL THE ENTIRE BAND

Drum beat Uganda begins a new song, they start loud and they start fast.

Ricky and Akiiki stand off to the side observing.

The song starts with drums but after a couple measures dancers flow from each side of the stage flowing twisting and spinning into 4 lines of dancers moving in rhythm.

As the song progresses, Ricki and Akiiki start to move to the beat.

Eventually Akiiki feeling the music begins to dance.

Ricky looks at her in awe.

Unsatisfied dancing alone Akiiki brings Ricky into the mix.

Ricky picks it up pretty quickly, The pace quickens, Ricky and Akiiki begin to move as one. The dancers begin to close in around them, the intensity increases.

The music reaches a deafening crescendo.

EXT - KAMPALA STREETS - GOLDENHOUR

Ricky and Akiiki Exit the Drum Beat Uganda building and head towards the stadium.

RICKY
Ok, where did you learn to dance like that?

AKIIKI
In school at first, and then I was a member of Drum Beat Uganda for a time.

RICKY
Not anymore?

AKIIKI

No, my father said I had to concentrate on my studies.

RICKY

Ahhh, What did you study?

AKIIKI

It ok, thats where I got him back. He wanted me to be a Doctor, but I got my degree in Zoology.

RICKY

Your dad seems old school.

AKIIKI

He can't move without dragging his roots with him. He's very traditional, yes, but I can respect it as much as I challenge it.

RICKY

Right, so you got your degree in Zoology but you work at the shop?

AKIIKI

No, I'm just helping out. My aunt passed away recently so I'm giving them a hand. I work with the Gorillas in the Kabale forest.

RICKY

No way?

AKIIKI

Have you ever seen a Gorilla?

RICKY

Maybe at a zoo when I was little.

AKIIKI

I think they're the most beautiful creatures in the whole world. They are powerful, graceful, smart and when they look at you... they see you.

RICKY

Whoa.

beat as they both continue walking

AKIIKI

So why are you here now, Mr. Soldier?
America doesn't have a war for you to
fight?

Ricky laughs then takes a deep breath as he ponders.

RICKY

Whoa, again with the shots. Well, I'm
not a soldier anymore. I've...served.

Pause, he absorbs the impact of that statement.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I manage a restaurant..well, managed.
I suppose I cook at a restaurant now.

Akiiki raises one eyebrow, impressed.

AKIIKI

Well, there's dignity in all work

RICKY

Yeah, I love food, I love to cook, I
get that from my mom. My earliest
memory is watching her cook...but I
don't think I wanna be on a line the
rest of my life.

(beat)

Do you ever feel like you're waiting
for this thing to happen, but it's
never quite there...Now that I'm out
of the military, I know I can do
anything, but I just feel stuck.

AKIIKI

Hmmm, looks like you're waiting for a
sign, but you know in your heart what
you want?

RICKY

I don't know about all that, maybe
someday. I'll figure it out.

AKIIKI

We have a saying

(in lugandan)

Now is always a good time.

(in English)

Now is always a good time. You can't
do everything, but there's always a

place to start.

RICKY
(trying to be smooth)
And where do we start?

EXT - MANDELA SOCCER STADIUM GATE - GOLDEN HOUR

Akiiki leans in to him, as if to kiss him, At the last second she turns and see's a gate to the soccer stadium, she gets that devilish look.

Ricky see's the gate, his brain connects the dots and his face drops.

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| RICKY | AKIIKI |
| Oh, ahah. N-no-no. | (torturing him) |
| | Yess. NOW is a good time. |

Akiiki takes off towards the gate.

| | |
|---|--|
| RICKY | AKIIKI |
| Oh come on, we're not gonna do this are we? | Oh yea, that forehead isn't getting any smaller. |

RICKY
(to himself)
This goddamn forehead...again.

The two arrive at the gate, they do some quick on the spot problem solving and find the best route over. Ricky gives her a boost, he follows her over.

INT - MANDELA SOCCER STADIUM

The two find themselves in the under belly of the stadium. They scamper about, almost like two spies infiltrating an enemy base.

They poke their heads around a corner, and see a SECURITY GUARD. He's an old crusty Ugandan with a flashlight.

Surprised, Akiiki and Ricky stumble and attract the security guard's attention. They sneak back around the corner before the security guard spots them.

Akiiki shushes Ricky, who immediately starts silently pleading the case that it was in fact Akiiki who made the noise and should thusly be shushed.

Akiiki silently responds that the point is moot because the

security guard is fast approaching.

Ricky suggests they should take off the other way, she agrees. The two run out of frame right as the security guard turns the corner.

They find a tunnel to the field and take it.

EXT - MANDELA SOCCER PITCH

The two emerge from the tunnel and make it out into the open.

Holy shit! They're running onto the ACTUAL SOCCER FIELD. They both start ooh'in and Ahh'in at the sheer scale of the damn place.

Akiiki does a cart wheel, ricky starts to back peddle and slow down. He picks up a few blades of the grass and smells them.

Beat as everything slows down and Ricky takes a cleansing breath.

AKIIKI

Come on slow poke!

Akiiki jogs ahead, Ricky quickly catches up and wraps her up. The two spin together for a bit until they come to a stop. They're both a bit out of breath.

They lock eyes and just live in that moment for a couple of seconds. Their breathing steadies. Rick starts to smile and laugh at a thought.

AKIIKI

Whats so funny?

RICKY

Now is a good time.

AKIIKI

Oh yeah?

RICKY

Yea, I think now is a good time.

The music swells, The camera circles, Ricky leans in to kiss her, aaaaaand--

SHE SHUTS HIM DOWN.

Things instantly get super awkward.

AKIIKI
I'm sorry Ricky but...

RICKY
(waving his hands)
Oh no no, it's fine..it's cool I mean.

Ricky steps back and takes in the gorgeous sights and perfect set up once more.

RICKY (CONT'D)
No really, it's cool, still it's
all...so beautiful. Love
the...architecture.

Ricky scratches his head awkwardly. Akiiki steps forward and takes his hand reassuringly.

AKIIKI
Listen, it's just---

Suddenly the Security Guard discovers them on the field.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
Hey Hey! Get off the field!

AKIIKI
Lets get out of here.

The two scamper off together. right as the security guard arrives.

EXT - MANDELA SOCCER STADIUM ENTRY GATES - GOLDEN HOUR

Akiiki drops over the gate, shortly followed by Ricky. The two stop for a second to catch their breath. They exchange a quick glance.

AKIIKI
This way.

They run off.

EXT - MANDELA SOCCER STADIUM GROUNDS - GOLDEN HOUR

The two run together, At the edge of the field are a couple of BODABODA'S the two chat with them, hop on and drive out of frame.

EXT - AKIIKI'S MARKET - NIGHT

Ricky and Akiiki approach the market on BODABODAS, hop off hand a couple shillings over and walk towards the door.

RICKY

Hey, I think I got a little caught up back there. But today was great, and thank you so much for taking me around.

Akiiki's body language turns cold.

AKIIKI

(sad)

Ricky... Today has been very nice.

RICKY

Oh no.

Before Akiiki can finish her thought her dad Amooti comes storming out of the store.

AMOOTI

(In lugandan)

Where have you been? Running around with this boy. Your mother has been running the shop alone all day.

AKIIKI

(In lugandan)

Father, I'm sorry, I lost track of time.

AMOOTI

(In lugandan)

I don't want to hear it. get inside right now.

AKIIKI

(In lugandan)

father let me just...

AMOOTI

(In lugandan)

NOW!

Ricky looks on worried. Amooti grabs Akiiki's arm and starts pulling her inside, the vibrations are getting nasty. Amooti stops to SLAM the FLICKERING OPEN SIGN as he walks in the shop.

She's pulled in. Ricky stands alone outside. We see her eyes, we see his face, perplexed. The door slams.

SCREEN GOES BLACK

INT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - LATE MORNING

FADE IN.

We see the back of Akiiki's head, she's in Ricky's bed. She rolls over and smiles. Suddenly she's yanked from the bed. We hear Ricky breathe in sharply.

Ricky opens his eyes.

EXT. - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Ricky walks down the street, hands in his pockets. Across the street he see's AKIIKI'S MARKET, He's unsure if he should enter.

He takes a long look and there's too much strangeness in the air for him to enter. He shakes his head and walks off.

The shot lingers on the Market.

REMY (O.S.)
You didn't kiss him? Mr. American money?

AKIIKI (O.S.)
We barely know each other.

INT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Akiiki and her best friend Remy, 20's hang out in the store.

REMY
EH! You need a husband, a RICH ONE, so you can stop playing with the monkeys in the bush.

AKIIKI
Remy, You had plenty of fun with your Muzungu, where are they now?

REMY
don't worry about that. You said he's half Ugandan. Marry his Ugandan half and spend the American money.

AKIIKI
 Money? he's a cook
 (dismissively)
 a cook who doesn't know what he wants.
 I fear a man like that will eat from
 my plate and drink from my cup leaving
 me
 (in Lugandan)
 empty.

Beat as Akiiki solemnly stares off into the distance.

REMY
 (not reading the room)
 But is he cute though.

AKIIKI
 My sister, I need to be full.

REMY
 You deserve to have a little fun at
 least before rainy season.

AKIIKI
 Maybe I do, and he does seem to be
 adjusting to Kampala pretty well.

EXT - KAMPALA STREETS - AFTERNOON

Ricky and a Boda boda driver struggle to communicate.

RICKY
 Food, want food.

Ricky makes simple gestures towards his mouth. The boda boda driver ignores him and drives off.

RICKY (CONT'D)
 Awww come on man. I'm hungry.

Unsure of what to do. Ricky wanders down the street, taking in the smells of street vendors, he stops in front of a little restaurant. The sign says MAMA TESA'S.

INT - MAMA TESA'S - DAY

Ricky walks inside and slides into a table. A WAITER walks over smiles, and pours him some water.

The waiter then starts asking Ricky a string of questions in rapid Lugandan. Ricky quickly waves his hands for him to

stop.

RICKY
No no ,uh English, I'm not...I mean I
am, but..

The waiter laughs and shifts to broken English

WAITER
oh sorry sorry, menu?

Ricky nods apologetically, suddenly feeling very foreign.
Ricky takes in the clientele: a YOUNG UGANDAN COUPLE on a
date and one very lost looking WHITE TOURIST studying a
Lugandan-English dictionary.

The tourist pronounces the words aloud with a heavy French
accent. Ricky cringes.

The waiter returns with a menu. He doesn't recognize anything
on the menu.

RICKY
What's good here?

WAITER
Mama is making very good Luwombo
today. Chicken, steamed vegetable, G-
nut sauce. Very good, will make you
feel better, eh?

RICKY
Yes, please sounds delightful.

The waiter leaves. Ricky closes his eyes, his memories flash
back to Akiki's smile. Ricky takes out his notebook. He
starts writing...

RICKY (V.O.)
Half way across the world and my mouth
is still a skipping record. I can't
even front like I did back home.
Everyone here...even Akiiki knows I'm
stumbling across the globe with knives
in my hand pretending to juggle. If I
could just learn something this time.

Ricky looks around the restaurant.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Damn I wish I could talk to you mom. I

don't resent you for going away, not even for leaving me with the drill Sargent, with the emotional intelligence of a god damn rock ...for 25 years... I just miss the possibility of you. But here I am alone. completely alone.

Full of emotion Ricky buries his face in his hands.

A large steaming plate of food is set before him. Ricky lifts his head.

RICKY

Thanks.

Ricky takes his first bite and melts.

Ricky has a spiritual experience with his plate, interrupted only when a woman returns and stands over him.

MAMA

(laughing)

So you like it?

Ricky opens his eyes to see an elderly Ugandan woman smiling warmly at him.

MAMA

We call it Luwombo. I made it for today, special!

Ricky nods and smiles.

RICKY

Thank you, it's very good.

Mama smiles, expectantly.

MAMA

You have to say it...or you can't speak?

RICKY

(slowly)

Luwombo

MAMA

My son, where are you from?

RICKY
America, but my mother was from here.

MAMA
She never teach you the language?

RICKY
No. She didn't, never got the
chance...

Mama nods and sits down across from him.

Somber beat.

MAMA
(up beat)
...And now you're here!

RICKY
Yea, now I'm here...

MAMA
Well, I'm glad you're here. I hope
you're enjoying your dish!

RICKY
Yeah, I'm blown away. The chicken is
so tender, Are these veggies flame
broiled or flambeed?

MAMA
Oh So you cook then?
(leans in)
You looking for work?

RICKY
(laughing)
I mean, I can throw down...I cook in a
restaurant back home, but nothing like
this. You tryna teach me?

Mama laughs then considers him for a second.

MAMA
Son, you are home. Come back on a day
like today, not too busy, Maybe I'll
teach you something.

Ricky smiles, feeling uplifted and full. He takes some

leftover and pays Mama twice what the meal is worth, hugs her, and walks back out into the street.

He passes a couple elderly women laughing, grinding pepper and rolling chapati bread. Suddenly, he collides with someone. He looks down to see Akiiki looking up from a pair of sunglasses.

RICKY
Akiiki!

AKIIKI
Hi...

awkward beat.

RICKY
Hey so yesterday...

Another awkward beat.

RICKY
Sorry, I have this thing where I try and kiss all my tour guides. You should of seen the guy at the mosque today, he was also not into it.

AKIIKI
Tour guide? I'm not just a tour guide.

RICKY
Right... right.
(gestures to restaurant)
You ever been here? Place is great.

Ricky lifts up his bag of leftovers.

RICKY
Have you had lunch yet?

Akiiki gives him a long look and sighs. Ricky starts to smile, and despite her efforts, she does too.

INT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ricky pours the leftover food from a pan into a plate and he and Akiiki sit at the table of his guest house. He watches her as she takes a bite.

AKIIKI
Mmm, I don't eat out much, but I've

known Mama since I was young, her cooking is legendary. She really said she'd teach you something?

RICKY
Yeah, the food gods smiled on me today.

AKIIKI
So you've made Ugandan food before?

RICKY
Not at all but...

Ricky suddenly remembers the recipe cards in his luggage.

RICKY
that reminds me, I have something to show you...

Ricky walks to his bag and retrieves the recipe cards. Akiiki follows him to the room and carefully takes in the items scattered around. She walks to the bed and picks up his father's journal. Ricky finds the cards and notices her studying the journal.

RICKY
Now those are stories for another day.

Ricky clears the bed and they sit opposite each other. He hands her the cards.

RICKY
These are really all I've got left of my mom.

Akiiki studies the cards carefully, a big smile spreads over her face.

AKIIKI
Ricky... this is beautiful. This is our food!

RICKY
You can read it?

AKIIKI
Mmmm.

RICKY
(gets an idea)
You translate, I'll buy. You in?

She considers, smiles.

AKIIKI
Lets go.

EXT. OWINO MARKET - DUSK

Ricky and Akiiki wander through the stalls of the local market. Akiiki hands Ricky some fruits and vegetables pointing out specific aspects to keep in mind.

Ricky earnestly responds and interacts with Akiiki as well as the vendors.

They find some spices, Akiiki has Ricky smell them. Ricky takes notes in his notebook.

INT - GUEST HOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

Ricky expertly chops ingredients on a cutting board. Akiiki is translating the note card, Ricky takes notes as she explains things. Akiiki looks over his notes, makes minor corrections.

The dish is starting to come together, Ricky opens up a bottle of wine pours a glass. Ricky sprinkles some chopped green onions on the plate.

Ricky finds some lanterns, lights them, and sets up an outside dining area. Ricky sets the dish down in front of Akiiki who is bathed in the warm light of the lantern.

Music softly plays in the background on a Bluetooth speaker.

RICKY
(gestures to lantern)
I love these things! Reminds me of
camping with my dad.

AKIIKI
We only use them during blackouts.

Ricky flicks off the porch lights off.

RICKY
Well, Blackout!

Both laugh

RICKY
Foods dying, Bwen provecho, please
eat!

Akiiki, takes a bite, savors it. Gives ricky a LOOK. Ricky
smiles back and takes a bite.

AKIIKI
Chicken is tender and juicy. The sauce
is complex and rich, and the plantains
are light and crispy.

Ricky blushes.

AKIIKI
Your mother is quite the cook.

Ricky smiles and sits back.

RICKY
Yea she was. Most alive with a spoon
in one hand and a pot in the other.

Tender beat.

RICKY
Tell me about your family.

AKIIKI
My parents grew up in a village
outside Fort Portal in the west. When
My mother got pregnant with me, my dad
left for kampala. He turned loose dust
into cement and built a better life
for us.

RICKY
Your dad sacrificed a lot for you.

AKIIKI
With his bare hands he's carved a life
for me to live but... I don't fit. The
match that strikes the fire, can't
control what it burns.

RICKY
And where are blazing to?

AKIIKI

Well, Before me There were whole generations of ambitious men with bloody knuckles and dreams of what the country should be. They gave birth to a country as promising as they were, but tried to dress it in tradition that turned to pride and we saw what pride killed. Now we, are left with a path our fathers haven't taken, but want to tell us how to walk. I just want to take my road, not his, not yours. Mine.

RICKY

Whoa, Ok. You always talk like this after two glasses of wine?

AKIIKI

Shut. up.

RICKY

No really, I've been reading my dad's old notebook, and you kinda sound a lot like him. Know what you want, can't live without it.

This sounds dumb, I never got why my dad was so hollow, almost dead, after my mom died, but... meeting you, I can see how being without her was, impossible.

Ricky sheds a tear, slightly embarrassed he laughs, tries to act like he's not crying, but he is. Akiiki can tell, she grabs his hand. The two make eye contact, and she leans in.

The two kiss.

They pull back and stare at each other with dreamy eyes.

The song AFRICA by TOTO begins to play.

Ricky's eyes light up.

RICKY

This song!

AKIIKI

No.

RICKY
Yes, this is our song! Africa in
AFRICA! Amazing.

AKIIKI
Absolutely not.

The music swells, Ricky gets up and pulls Akiiki up and starts passionately singing to her while the two dance.

SFX PRE ROLL - Kitchen Sounds

INT. - MAMA TESA'S - AFTERNOON

Ricky with an apron on works in the kitchen butchering chickens, a giant vat of some kind of stew simmering next to him.

Mama approaches, dips a finger into the sauce and tastes it, she recoils from the flavor.

MAMA
Ricky, what is this? This is not
Luwombo?

RICKY
I call it, LuGUMBO! It's a delicate
balance of---

MAMA
Lu-what? It's too much salt, you
Americans and your salt, and what even
did you---

RICKY
Who whoa whoa, mama, this is
innovation! Folks back home used to
love when I got creative!

MAMA
Ricky, this is Uganda

RICKY
And Uganda isn't the only part of me
that matters. I'm trying here, and I
think I'm on to something.

Mama takes a deep breath and tastes Ricky's creation again. She pauses, Ricky smiles.

RICKY
It's good right? It's good, don't play
mama!

Mama slowly smiles.

RICKY
(feeling excited)
Man, next time I'll show you Imma-

MAMA
Next time???

Ricky pauses and give her a "Come on" look. She continues,
softer.

MAMA
Next time, less salt.

Begin montage of Ricky's Ugandan acclimation:

Africa by Toto fades back in.

Ricky surprises Akiiki at her parent's shop, bringing take
out boxes for them. Ricky and her parent's sit around a table
having a meal. Her parent's like it.

Ricky is back in Mama Tesa's kitchen. Akiiki sits on the
counter next to him discussing one of Ricky's recipe cards
with Mama Tesa. Ricky listens as the two debate. Akiiki gets
a call on her CELL PHONE and steps outside.

We can't hear what is said but her face tells the whole
story: not good news.

Ricky sits on the patio and reads his HOSPITALITY BOOK taking
notes.

Ricky and Samuel play soccer together during dusk.

We come out of the montage as Ricky is cleaning the kitchen
at Mama Tesa's, turning off the lights and walking out the
door.

EXT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ricky and Navio, sit in the patio chairs. A couple of empty
beers on the table, and a half smoked joint in the ash tray.

RICKY
Yeah man, Akiiki translated the cards,

and Mama Tesa's been boot campin me,
 gettin that wrist action correct
 (laughs)
 I showed her some fusion shit tho,
 called it LuGumbo and she flipped.
 Shoulda named it after myself.

NAVIO
 Sounds like a business waiting to
 happen man. I'm serious, I know a spot
 for sale, good price, great location.
 You could open a restaurant, call that
 RICKY'S!

RICKY
 Oh shit! You right, that could be it,
 Cook up some classic Texas barbecue
 and soul food with a Ugandan spin.

Ricky gets dreamy for a second, considering the real
 possibility.

NAVIO
 (Looking at his phone)
 Yo, you cool if I invite some friends
 over!

RICKY
 Yeah man, do ya thang! Matter fact--
 Knock on door, Ricky hops up its Akiiki and Remy.

RICKY
 Hey! You made it.

Ricky gives Akiiki a kiss on the cheek.

RICKY
 And you must be Remy. Nice to finally
 meet you. Come on in we got a lot to
 celebrate.

Ricky rushed and pours a healthy size shot of Waragi as
 Akiiki, Remy, and Navio all say their hellos. Ricky rushes
 back with the shots.

RICKY
 Alright my friends, cheers to U.G.

Akiiki and Remy share a look. Remy shrugs her shoulder like
 "why not"

RICKY
God damn, I love this stuff.

AKIIKI
Now I know you're crazy, because no
one loves Waragi.

The music rises, Ricky is in full party mode. He's smoking the joint. Taking another shot, all the while Akiiki and Remy are getting more uncomfortable.

AKIIKI
Excuse me Ricky.

Akiiki and Remy exit outside.

EXT - GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

REMY
When are you going to tell him.

AKIIKI
This doesn't seem like a good time.

REMY
Well there's no other time.

Ricky stumbles outside.

RICKY
(slurring)
There you two are! You're missing the party.

Remy gives Akiiki a look and walks back inside. Ricky approaches Akiiki gives her a kiss.

RICKY
Hey baby, how you feeling?

AKIIKI
(sad)
Ricky...

RICKY
(cutting her off)
Cause I'm feeling great. Navio and I were talking, I'm Gonna open a restaurant here, and baby I see you at the front raking in customers. I'd take care of everything! We'll be

UNSTOPPABLE we'll sell fried chicken
and luwombo to all of Uganda.

AKIIKI

(Mad)

Ricky! I don't want to work at a
restaruant, I have a job.

RICKY

Yea, but the food baby!

AKIIKI

I don't like you like this.

RICKY

Oh, come on, its been a big week. and
I'm having a big night!

AKIIKI

We need to talk.

RICKY

No, we need to dance.

AKIIKI

Ricky, I have to go soon.

RICKY

Don't leave, the party's just getting
started.

AKIIKI

No, I'm leaving, leaving. My work
called and they need me back in
Kabale.

RICKY

No-no-no no. Don't go.

AKIIKI

(somber)

I didn't want tonight to go like this.

(mad)

Ricky I'm not your accessory on some
stupid adventure, I have a life, I
have dreams

RICKY

But... I need you.

AKIIKI
(madder)
Thats the problem.

Tense beat.

Navio pokes his head out the door.

NAVIO
Hey Ricky the drugs have finished. Any
chance we can---

Akiiki blows up.

AKIIKI
Fuck this, Ricky. You're not serious!

Akiiki storms in as Navio walks out.

RICKY
Wait... fuck.

Remy and Akiiki come back outside and storm off.

RICKY
Akiiki, no. Don't go. God damnit.

Sad beat.

As Remy and Akiiki walk off, All the friends that Navio
invited show up.

Annoyed, Ricky throws his hat down, the guests brush past him
into the house, but Ricky stands looking forlorn after
Akiiki.

Cut to the living room where the guests party around a numb-
looking Ricky. A BEAUTIFUL GIRL WITH RED CURLY HAIR sits down
and pours him a shot. He looks up at her.

He slams the empty shot down angrily.

INT - RICKY'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING

Ricky's eyes open slowly, He's hungover and feels terrible.
Long beat as he slowly blinks the sleep out of his eyes.

we pan out to reveal red curly hair belonging to the woman
lying next to him. He slowly turns to look and once he
notices the woman, he snaps his head back, looking up at the
ceiling, stunned at what he's done.

RICKY (V.O.)

Fuck. fuck. fuck. Ricky what did you do, you were doing so well...cooking, shit, she's never gonna forgive you, she's gonna leave, SHIT, she's gonna leave...

He jumps out of bed out of bed, the apartment is a mess. Beer bottles everywhere.

INT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Ricky rushes in, looking up and down the aisles for Akiiki. She's no where to be seen.

Ricky rings the bell at the counter. Amooti is sitting, watching Ricky scramble with a small smile. He simply laughs and shakes his head. Ricky runs out into the street and nearly runs over Remy who's walking in.

EXT - AKIIKI'S MARKET - DAY

RICKY

(flustered)

Ahh Remy! Please tell me Akiiki---

REMY

Is gone, she left this morning.

RICKY

I fucked up Remy. It's a habit, I fucked up something real good this time.

REMY

Yeah, you did.

RICKY

How..how do I find her, please?

REMY

Find her? Find your head first!
Besides Kabale is dangerous right now.
It'll start raining soon.

RICKY

I don't care...please

REMY

If I were her, I wouldn't even look back. But...she really likes you... If

you're going to go, you better go now!

Frustrated, hungover, but determined, Ricky starts to leave.

INT - RICKY'S UGANDA GUEST HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ricky has his laptop set up, googles Kabale Gorillas. Navio quietly stands by him, sipping a beer. A few results come up. He opens google maps and requests directions from Kampala to Kabale, it says 8 hours.

A warning symbol appears on the screen. Ricky clicks on it. "Travel advisory, heavy rains, flooding, and in-climate weather condition"

Shit, Ricky doesn't like this news.

NAVIO

I don't think it's such a good idea to go that way during rainy season.

RICKY

I gotta go, I gotta find her,

NAVIO

My friend, She is not lost, and Kampala is the place to be! You want women, KAMPALA! You want fun KAMPALA. Why would you want to run off into the bush where there is only Mosquitoes?

Ricky is barely listening, pacing.

RICKY

Can you take me?

NAVIO

Me? No-no-no. I can take you to the Bus park, and there is a bus that would take you to Mbarara. From there you would need to find another bus. It would be a long, difficult journey.

Ricky weighs his options.

NAVIO

Also, You don't know where in Kibale she is, you're just going to wonder around the forest looking for your girl. Madness.

This resonates with Ricky.

RICKY
(resigned)
Ok man.

NAVIO
I think we could both use a drink my
friend.

RICKY
I don't know man.

Navio shrugs and picks up a joint, lighting it.

NAVIO
Anyway, let's talk business.

The smoke from Navio's joint fills the air. Ricky holds his head for a moment before looking up and noticing the French press on the counter. He looks back at Navio, who is now pouring a Club Beer, determined.

RICKY
I gotta go man.

NAVIO
My friend---

RICKY
Listen...I finally know the road is
under my feet. I've been drinking
thinking I had to fuckin swim, but
there's a road man, and I can finally
walk it.

NAVIO
And this road, leads to her?

Ricky throws his Clothes back into his bag. He throws in his LUGANDA LANGUAGE BOOK, and his FRENCH PRESS

Ricky pulls out his phone and opens his text message thread with kurt, he quickly types out.

RICKY (TEXTING)
Headed out of the city. Don't know
when I'll have service again. See you
on the other side ;)

EXT - KAMPALA BUS PARK

Navio leads Ricky through the absolute chaos of the Kampala Bus Park. Navio speaks with drivers in Lugandan.

After finding the right bus, Navio and Ricky stand next to the entrance.

The two men hug, and share a look that says, I might never see you again.

Ricky Boards the bus, the doors close and it pulls away.

Navio watches as the bus disappears over the horizon.

THE SONG 'NOT AQUATIC' BY SHEEP, DOG AND WOLF PLAYS FADES IN.

EXT - UGANDAN HIGHWAY - DAY

From impossibly far away the Bus crests over a hill. It rumbles down the road passing pedestrians, people, on bikes, and other vehicles.

INT - BUS - DAY

Wearing a weathered military BUCKET HAT Ricky looks out the window. He's grittier, and more rugged than the man that landed in Kampala just a few days ago.

Out the window he see's quick glimpses of life in rural Uganda.

A man pushes a BIKE down the road over loaded with YELLOW WATER JUGS.

A FIRE burns on the side of the road emitting an enormous amount of smoke.

The Bus drives stops through a town and is swarmed by vendors selling CHICKEN ON A STICK, and CHAPATI.

Ricky buys a CHICKEN ON A STICK, tentatively takes a bite. Enjoys it and takes a second bite.

Suddenly a RUGGED WHITE BRO runs up to the bus and knocks on the door. The door opens as the bus is moving and white bro jumps on.

Ricky looks on curious.

White bro goes to the driver, exchanges a few words, makes

him laugh, and shakes his hand.

Ricky notices his impressive BRACELET COLLECTION.

The guy starts looking for a seat. The one next to Ricky is open.

WHITE BRO
(In Lugandan)
Excuse me, may i sit?

RICKY
Yea go for it.

The guy settles in.

WHITE GUY
(Australian accent)
The name is Jeeves.

Jeeves extends his braceleted hand to Ricky. The two shake hands.

RICKY
like...

Jeeves starts rummaging through his BAG.

JEEVES
Yes, like AskJeeves. In 1996 those bastards decided to ruin a noble family name that has been passed down many generations.

RICKY
Shit man, I'm Ricky.

JEEVES
Nice to meet you Ricky. What are you doin' round these parts?

Ricky takes a moment to process how to answer that.

RICKY
I decided that now is a good time for me to figure out some things.

JEEVES
Yikes, That's cryptic. You must be real fucked in the head.

Awkward beat.

JEEVES

I'm just takin' the piss outta ya mate.

RICKY

Right, right, Well I guess more specifically I'm looking for a girl.

JEEVES

Ahh, there it is. So I take it you're about midway through act 2?

RICKY

What?

JEEVES

Of the movie you're living right now, run off to Africa, met a lady, the Reverse Coming to America? Very nice, mate.

RICKY

Pshhh, She works with the Gorillas at Kabale.

JEEVES

You're trying to get to Kabale during rainy season. You're more ambitious than I thought.

Ricky cringes.

RICKY

So I'm told.
(changing the subject)
Whats your story?

JEEVES

Oh, me? I'm just a dirty capitalist. I made it out here in '06 with a church group. Realized that the villages don't have good stoves to cook on. Came up with a design, Launched a gofundme, blah blah blah. To date we've sold or distributed 500 thousand cooking devices across 15 African countries.

RICKY
(legitimately impressed)
Holy shit.

JEEVES
Yea mate, this place is mental. It
gets it's claws in you and won't let
you go.

Ricky takes this information and really stews on it for a moment.

Finally Jeeves finds what he was looking for in his bag, it's a small VAPE PEN.

Jeeves takes a quick hit, coughs a bit on the exhale and hands it to Ricky.

RICKY
Is this?

Jeeves nods.

Ricky contemplates for second, thinks why not, and takes a hit.

He accidentally takes an ENORMOUS RIP, so much bigger than he expected. He blows out a giant plume of vape smoke and begins hacking and coughing really hard.

Jeeves laughing, pats him on the back.

JEEVES
Oh shit, be careful mate, you only got
to give it a little puff. You'll be
feeling proper fucked for the rest of
the bus ride.

Ricky recovers from his coughing fit, his eyes already squinty, feeling a bit giggly and out of it.

RICKY
Shit man, where did you get this.

JEEVES
Oh, I've got a guy for everything over
here.

Ricky settles back into his seat, getting nice and comfortable.

RICKY
Well, this bus ride has just taken a
turn for the better.

Ricky and Jeeves fist bump.

SFX - ENGINE CLANKING

SMOKE starts to pour out of the front of the bus. The bus
starts decelerating.

Ricky and Jeeves exchange nervous looks.

The bus pulls over and the driver gets out, opens the hood
and starts messing around with the engine.

Ricky starts hyperventilating.

The driver shuts the hood, and steps into the vehicle and
gives everyone the thumbs up. A few people clap. Ricky still
concerned, watches the driver intently.

The driver attempts to start the vehicle, it starts
flawlessly. He looks back and gives everyone a '*see I got
this shit*' look. Ricky starts to feel a bit more at ease.

The driver puts the Bus into gear and the TRANSMISSION
explodes, the ENGINE stalls, and a BUMPER falls off.

Ricky melts into his anxiety.

The driver gets off once again. He quickly returns.

BUS DRIVER
(in lugandan)
Everyone off, the bus is done.

People start gathering their things and filing off.

RICKY
What did he say.

JEEVES
He said we gotta get off. The bus is
done.

RICKY
The bus is DONE!?! WHY IS IT DONE?? Oh
no-no-no.

JEEVES

Don't worry we'll find another one.

Ricky in a full panic attack starts to get off. He's a mess,
He drops his hat and he leaves his phone on the seat.

He takes a second to steady himself and gets off the bus.

With his phone still on the bus.

EXT - ROADSIDE VILLAGE

Ricky steps into chaos, pure roadside chaos. He's way too
high for this.

A TRUCK rips past him and the dust gets in his eyes. Roadside
vendors of CHICKEN ON A STICK and CHAPATI invade his personal
space trying to sell him chicken.

Jeeves emerges from the bus, and hands Ricky his hat. Ricky
gives him the 'I'm fucking overwhelmed' look. Jeeves pats him
on the shoulder and smiles.

JEEVES

Don't worry mate, I've got your back
we'll figure this out.

Assured by this, Ricky takes a deep breath.

RICKY

(laughs to himself)
You know man...

Aaaand he's **gone**. Jeeves is **gone**.

No where to be seen. Ricky whips around looking for him,
scanning the crowds of people. No Jeeves.

Ricky is alone.

EVERYTHING GOES FROM REAL TIME TO SLO MO AS KID CUDI'S SONG -
ALIVE (NIGHTMARE) PLAYS.

The vendors surround and overwhelm him shouting prices and
trying to get his attention while pushing product in his
face.

Ricky barely has room to breathe. He pushes past them and
starts walking down the sidewalk in front of the road side
shops.

RICKY
Jeeeeeeves! Jeeeeeeves??

Ricky hears something behind him and turns to look while still walking, he ends up plowing into a LADY HOLDING A BABY nearly knocking her over.

THE SONG CUTS OUT AND THE SLO MO STOPS. NOW EVERYTHING IS FILMED IN HIGH SHUTTER SPEED, WITH THE ROAD SIDE NOISES AND RICKY'S BREATHING HEARD VERY LOUD.

RICKY
I'm so sorry!

BABY LADY
(shouts at him in lugandan)

Ricky apologizes and keeps going, feeling his pockets for his phone. It's no where to be found.

RICKY
Phone, phone? No,no,no,no.

His vibrations turn nasty. This is not the place to lose your phone.

He starts breathing, hyperventilating.

Ricky ducks down an ally, kneels down and starts tearing through his bag. He's sweating like a pig.

The sounds begin to consume his mental space. A BODABODA back fires. Ricky Flinches and shuts his eyes.

INT - BUILDING AFGANISTAN

Ricky opens his eyes.

Again, Ricky in full MILITARY BATTLE DRESS UNIFORM stands in a SEMI-DESTROYED BUILDING he turns a corner, down the hall stands an ROBED FIGURE with their back to him.

Quicker this time the UNKNOWN FIGURE whips around and Ricky pulls the trigger.

This time we linger in the hallway.

Ricky watches the body lying on the ground face down.

He approaches.

Pauses for a beat as he stands over the body.

Ricky reaches to turn the body over.

He touches the shoulder to turn it over.

INT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

As Ricky turns the figure over, he reveals Akiiki's bloodied face.

RICKY
Fuck, fuck, fuck.

Ricky slams his eyes shut.

EXT - ROADSIDE VILLAGE

Ricky Opens his eyes, sweaty and out of breath. He takes a moment to recover from his episode.

He takes in his surroundings and starts to put his stuff away.

He pulls out his WATER BOTTLE, takes a huge drink and sprays his face with water. he rubs his eyes.

RICKY
(to himself)
Improvise, adapt, overcome. Improvise,
adapt, overcome.

Ricky takes another big drink of water.

He starts looking around.

Scanning the horizon he see's a couple of busses. He puts away his water bottle and takes off toward the busses.

Ricky begins poking around at different busses-

First vehicle up BUS #1: No luck, going back to Kampala. Ricky considers this but decides against it.

Second vehicle bus #2: It's going in the right direction but it has no room.

Third Vehicle: A comically TINY TRUCK with an INDIAN MAN standing next to it. Ricky barely even considers it at first. but after passing it stops, thinks for a second and walks back and approaches the man.

RICKY
(Speaks simply, in case he doesn't
speak good english)
Hello my friend, my bus has broken
down. Any chance you're headed to
Kabale?

RANJITH
(In perfect english)
Oh shit, you trying to get to Kabale?
You outta your mind. Yea I'm headed
that direction, I can take you part of
the way. But you gotta have some
shillings, I ain't running a charity
out here.

Ricky is taken back by how articulate and western he sounds.

RICKY
Man, where you from?

RANJITH
Yo, I'm from Kolkuta. My parents owned
a business here in the 60's but Idi
Amin who was *Kiiiiind* of a dick kicked
them out. So after college I decided
to roll the dice and give it a try.
Now I'm making that Africa money son!

RICKY
Whoa.

RANJITH
But I'm not kidding about those
shillings.

Ricky laughs

RICKY
Alright bro. I'm Ricky

RANJITH
I'm Ranjith!

Ricky digs in his pockets.

INT. TINY TRUCK

Ricky and Ranjith huddle together in the tiny truck cab as it
rumbles down the highway.

RANJITH

Bro, then you almost kissed her on the soccer field. that's a BALLER MOVE. Mad respect.

RICKY

Yea, and now she's gone.

RANJITH

But that's because you got all drunk and stupid and DIDN'T LISTEN. She's probably gonna be pissed when she see's you.

RICKY

Yea... I'm hoping that the grand gesture of me making the trek out to her makes her feel a bit differently about me.

RANJITH

I don't know man. It sounds like you were on the come-up and then you decided it wasn't enough and wanted to get turnt.

RICKY

Is that a question?

RANJITH

No, just an observation that you've got some toxic habits.

RICKY

Whoa bro.

RANITH

You ever realize how in life there is the gentle messenger telling you to work on your shit, and when you don't listen to the gentle messenger you get the harsh messenger.

RICKY

What do you mean?

RANJITH

Ok...So you like to party.

RICKY

Correct.

RANITH
Hang overs are worse now that you're
getting a little older right?

RICKY
Right.

RANJITH
That's the universe gently telling you
to slow down.

RICKY
and the harsh messenger?

RANJITH
Thats you blowing your opportunity
with the girl of your dreams because
you're a drunk idiot.

RICKY
Damn.

This lands with Ricky and he takes a moment to stew on it.

RANJITH
Oh shit, here we are.

Ranjith pulls his tiny truck off of the highway onto a DIRT
ROAD.

RICKY
End of the road?

RANJITH
End of the road. You'll want to find a
ride through there. Kabale Forrest is
on the other side of this pass. About
25 km.

Ricky looks out the window where Ranjith was pointing.

RANJITH
Good luck dude. I hope you get your
girl.

RICKY
Thanks man, I appreciate your wisdom.

RANJITH
yea... Just don't be a fucking idiot.

RICKY
...right. See ya.

EXT - DIRT ROAD.

Ricky exits the vehicle. Before him is nothing but tangled vegetation framing a beaten path. There's no one around, and everything is quiet. At first, Ricky feels strangely assured as he begins to walk. The jungle clearing is beautiful and Ricky smiles up at the sky.

RICKY
Alright mom, I better not be eaten by
a tiger or some shit.

Ricky laughs to himself and keeps walking. He takes in the beautiful views, and even pauses for a snack.

But after a few miles, it begins to rain, hard. He tries to walk as close to the trees as he can, but still is soaked. He walks through ankle deep water, and stops at a worn mile marker. He's still 20 km away from the forest.

He looks up and takes a deep breath.

RICKY
(to himself)
I don't know who else to call on, and
yeah, this probably wasn't the best
decision, but mom, I think I'm crazy
about this girl or this country, maybe
both, and I could really use some
help.

Ricky continues walking until he reaches a clearing which is right above a volcanic lake. The rain begins to clear as he approaches a clearing.

EXT - JUNGLE CLEARING - GOLDEN HOUR

The lake snakes and spreads as far as the eye can see. A small 2 person canoe leaves a small wake in the glass still water down below.

RICKY
Whoa.

Even further on a distant shoreline a small village sits. People move among their daily activities, gathering water, cleaning clothes. Kids play and chase one another.

There's so much to see, so much to take in. Ricky, exhausted, dirty, can't help but stand in awe.

INT - MOUNTAIN SIDE VILLAGE - LATER

Ricky stumbles into a small village. It's dusk and boda-bodas and lanterns light his way. He looks around, most of the vendors are selling chicken on a stick, but he sees one woman selling Makote. He walks over and points to the pot.

RICKY

Makote?

The woman smiles and looks carefully at Ricky.

NAMAZZI

Yes, good price, you want?

RICKY

Yes, I could use some good cooking right now.

The woman examines Ricky's clothes, and she fills a small bowl.

NAMAZZI

You traveling?

RICKY

Yeah, I'm walking to Kabale

The woman stops spooning at looks at Ricky dead in the eye.

NAMAZZI

Walking? By yourself? Oh no child.

RICKY

Yeah... I'm actually looking for a hostel or something, it's getting pretty dark.

VENDOR

And you have no place to stay?

She shakes her head, gives Ricky the once over again.

NAMAZZI

Ok, you stay with me tonight, with my family. What is your name?

RICKY
Whoa, whoa, that's too kind of you.

NAMAZZI
No, no I'm Namazzi. You come stay with me tonight.

RICKY
I'm Ricky.

NAMAZZI
Good. You wait, I close in 1 hour.

RICKY
I really, really appreciate you.

INT - NAMAZZI HOUSE - NIGHT

Bringing Ricky into her home, She begins heating the matoke.

NAMAZZI
You can clean yourself up outside.

Ricky, walks outside, there is a sink attached to the wall of the structure with a smudged mirror attached. Ricky removes his shirt and begins washing it in the sink.

The sink turns dark as the mud and grime comes washing out. Ricky rings out the shirt and tosses it onto a nearby clothes line.

Ricky begins washing himself off eventually taking a look at himself, He looks pretty haggard. Ricky pauses for a contemplative beat as he takes in his appearance.

He grabs a spare shirt out of his bag, puts it on and walks inside. Namazzi continues to prepare dinner. Ricky sits at the table, his backpack next to him, he pulls out his fathers journal and begins to look through it.

TRUITT (V.O.)
They're finally asleep. I still can't believe I'm a father. 7 lbs. 5oz and Patrick Riley is perfect. Ricky for short. Man, I look at them and I'd do anything for them. Matter fact, I had to fight her parents earlier. They're so scared, they don't trust me to protect her. They talk about citizenship like it's a vengeful god. But, no one's taking her. She belongs

to a good man. I haven't slept I'm so
happy. I haven't had a drink in a
minute either.

Ricky flips down a few pages and stops at what looks to be a
poem. He begins reading,

TRUITT (V.0.)

To Ricky,

I hope to be the kind of father you do
not have to forgive. I'm in a room
with two universes You and your mother
in the same skin. Black, soft, like
pillows wrapped in night sky. You,
swaddled in a thousand questions. I am
only sure of your fist around my
finger. The fall and rise of your
chest. An alchemy of cells and love.
The star you came from, Parts her lips
as she sleeps. She's put her heartbeat
and smile, In a pot we have stirred,
And fought over. If anything, let me
kneel. With these planets on my back.
Let me be some dumbstruck house. Ready
to be filled with light.

Ricky notices the next few words are smudged. He feels tears
falling, smearing the page further. He tries to catch
himself, closing the book. He can't stop though, and begins
sobbing. We watch him for a moment, broken, surprised at his
own vulnerability.

The lovely scene of Namazzi cooking with her little boy is
interrupted and they both look at him, stunned.

NAMAZZI

You hurt yourself? You need someth---

RICKY

No no, I, I just miss my dad.

Namazzi gives Ricky a small smile.

NAMAZZI

Don't cry, You'll get home soon, eh?
In the morning, we'll help you find
your way.

Ricky sits back and watches Namazzi cook. He studies her face
and all the sudden it's his mother's face. Then Namazzi once

more.

EXT - MOUNTAIN SIDE VILLAGE - MORNING

Ricky looking a little bit better than he did the night before stands on the roadside. She's negotiating with the driver of a VERY LARGE BANANA TRUCK.

She finally turns to Ricky.

NAMAZZI

This man is going through Kabale. He has room on his truck.

RICKY

ON his truck?

EXT - UGANDAN HIGHWAY - DAY

Ricky with a few other Ugandans rides through the countryside on top of the truck surrounded by the largest bales of BANANA's you've ever seen.

EXT - KABALE TOWN

The BANANA TRUCK pulls over in the quaint mountainside town of Kabale. Terraced farms and tall mountains surround it.

Ricky gets off and shakes the Driver's hand, digs in his pocket for some money and hands him some shillings.

Ricky uncertain where to begin starts to walk the main street. He passes a BOOKSTORE, AIRTEL MOBILE MONEY, A SMALL MARKET, and finally he walks past GORILLA TREKKING. He walks in.

INT - GORILLA TREKKING SHOP

Ricky approaches the counter where a YOUNG WOMAN sits next to a computer and a couple notebooks.

RICKY

Hi!

YOUNG WOMAN

Hello.

With that classic Ricky smile.

RICKY

I'm hoping you can help me!

EXT - KABALE TOWN

Ricky throws his BACKPACK into the bed of a truck.

He hops in and slams the door. It reads KABALE GORILLA
TREKKING

The truck peels out onto the road.

Ricky intently looks out the windshield of the truck as it
makes its way down a dirt road.

They stop at a clearing and park. There are 4 other OFFICIAL
vehicles there.

EXT - KIBALE FORREST

Ricky follows the GUIDE, who's hacking away the brush with a
MACHETE.

The two cross a giant meadow, with breathtaking views.

Up ahead they see a gathering of people.

The GUIDE gets Ricky's attention and points at the group
ahead. Ricky smiles, and pushes on.

As they approach the group. Ricky sees Akiiki.

She's in a very professional looking safari outfit. Akiiki
sits near a group of Tourists.

RICKY
Akiiki!!

Everyone instantly Shushes Ricky and gives him dirty looks.

Akiiki turns to look at Ricky. She's composed, professional.
He looks like a mess, shirt half unbuttoned, sweaty,
incredible dirty. A smile comes to her face and she brings
her finger up to her mouth.

AKIIKI
Shhhhhh.

Very gently, she goes from shushing him to pointing down the
mountain.

Embarrassed Ricky looks to see a TROOP of GORILLAS enjoying
themselves in a meadow. He's blown away.

He looks back to Akiiki, she's looking at him with those big dark eyes. She gestures for him to come over.

Huge smile on his face, Ricky makes his way over to her, careful not to make too much noise.

Ricky joins the group, he quietly introduces himself to the group of people there. Before turning to Akiiki.

RICKY
(whispering)
Hi!

AKIIKI
(whispering)
You're the last person I expected to see here.

RICKY
Yea, I came.

AKIIKI
I'm glad you did.

The two look at each other and smile.

One of the GORILLAS moves, making a noise. Ricky and Akiiki turn their attention to the Gorillas. They're beautiful, and majestic.

Ricky watches in awe of them. Occasionally Akiiki will turn to him and give him a small bit of information about them, pointing out a group dynamic of some sort.

Eventually the Gorillas pack it up and head further into the mountain.

Seeing as it's getting a little late it's time for the group to head back. They gather their things and begin the trek back.

They arrive back at the clearing. One of the vehicles is Akiiki's, Ricky brings his BACKPACK into her car and they take off.

EXT - ENTUSSI - LATE DAY

The two arrive at the shore of Entussi via BOAT TAXI

AKIIKI
This is Entussi, where I stay during

my time here.

RICKY
It's beautiful.

AKIIKI
Yes, talk to Raymond I'm sure they
have a room you can stay in. They have
hot showers over there, you need one.
Meet me on the dock when you're
cleaned up a bit.

RICKY
perfect thanks.

Akiiki heads to her room, Ricky heads to the desk.

INT - ENTUSSI ROOM - LATE DAY

Ricky strolls into the room feeling great. He drops his bag,
hops in the shower. He shaves for the first time in a 4 days.
He puts on a fresh shirt.

EXT - ENTUSSI DOCK - GOLDEN HOUR

Barefoot, Ricky jogs over to the dock. He stops at one point
to admire a garden set up by the staff. Takes a deep breath
then continues to the dock.

There stands Akiiki, the great Akiiki. Beautiful, and serene
looking out at LAKE BUNYONI.

Ricky comes from behind and envelopes her into his arms. He
pulls her close and goes for the kiss.

She turns her head. Ricky ends up kissing her cheek. Ricky
can feel the tension.

RICKY
Hey.

AKIIKI
So why did you come?

RICKY
You know I thought about that while
waist deep in flood water looking like
a mosquito snack. I wondered if I came
to see you or if I was really just
prove something to myself.

Akiiki gives him a "wtf" look.

RICKY

Listen, I feel like I've been half living in my body, filling the rest with anything to keep me warm at night. But here I feel whole. I feel a light coming back that I haven't felt in years...maybe it's the food, maybe it's you. You're not just some accessory to my story, you're the inspiration, you're...home. I just need to know that I can hold on to something good...like you. Akiiki, I love you.

AKIIKI

Ricky you still don't get it. You don't love me, you're on vacation! You can't make home out of another person. It has to be in you. I'm glad you feel at home in Uganda, I'm glad you see me, but Ricky...do you see yourself?

Long beat.

RICKY

I.. I don't know what to say, I feel like I messed this up.

AKIIKI

You keep saying that you just fuck things up and you don't know why...you keep reaching for the good outside of yourself and trying to hold on to it, so tightly that you strangle it...But Ricky, have you looked inside to see that the light never left? It's you Ricky...you're the good thing for you.

RICKY

I want to see it, I really do.

AKIIKI

We'll find each other when you do...I don't wait, Ricky, but I believe in you.

Akiiki gives him a last kiss and walks away, leaving Ricky crushed, but acknowledging the truth.

SFX - CRACKILY VOICEMAIL NOISES

NATARA (O.S)
(Voicemail)
Hey Ricky, its Natara. I tried texting
you but they weren't going through.

INT - ENTUSSI ROOM - NIGHT

Ricky sits on the edge of his bed. He pulls out his IPAD and connects to the WIFI.

Instantly the screen is flooded with TEXT MESSAGES.

Ricks sits in the corner and weeps.

NATARA (O.S)
It's Kurt. He uhh, he had an accident.

Ricky packs his BACKPACK once again.

He's back on the boat taxi, it's dawn, the sun sits low on the horizon.

Ricky sits on crowded bus going over bumpy roads.

NATARA (O.S)
The doctors said they think it was
accidental. they called it 'The
perfect storm of bad decisions'

Ricky sits at the terminal at ENTEBBE AIRPORT.

NATARA (O.S)
The service is on wednesday, I talked
to Kurt's mom, diane, and I know it
would mean a lot to have you there.

Ricky places his WEATHERED BACKPACK into the over head compartment and sits down.

The plane takes off and Ricky looks out of the window, Uganda fades away as the plane rises into the clouds.

FADE TO BLACK

INT - RICKYS APARTMENT - MORNING

FADE IN - OVERHEAD SHOT

Ricky lays in Bed. It's clear he had a tumultuous night of sleep due to the complete disarray of the sheets. Next to his bed is his partially unpacked BACKPACK. His Uganda goodies are scattered around, his clothes in a pile.

Ricky is awake. But he's not doing anything. He's just laying there. Stewing.

CUT TO

Ricky takes a long hot shower.

CUT TO

Ricky heads into his kitchen, he pulls a TIN OF COFFEE BEANS out of his cabinet.

AKIIKI'S FRENCH PRESS sits on his counter next to his OLD COFFEE MAKER. He takes a look at booth debating which to use. He touches the FRENCH PRESS.

FLASH TO

INT - AKIIKI'S MARKET

Akiiki looks at Ricky, smiling, holding the FRENCH PRESS

INT RICKYS APARTMENT - MORNING

Ricky pulls his hand away, takes a deep breath and puts the FRENCH PRESS in a cabinet under the counter.

EXT - MILITARY CEMETERY - DAY

In a BLACK SUIT AND TIE Ricky sits among fellow friends and loved ones of Kurt.

In front of them sits a CASKET and a large FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of KURT in his MILITARY DRESS UNIFORM.

At the front of the church Kurt's mom DIANE weeps.

Ricky having a hard time watching Diane, looks away. He glances down his row and spots his old friend CAPTAIN RUSS SHEPHERD.

The two catch eyes, RUSS gives Ricky a little nod. Ricky returns the nod. Both look away.

The MILITARY HONOR GUARD at the front of the ceremony raise their rifles to fire a THREE-RIFLE-VOLLEY.

Note: The 21-gun salute is reserved for heads of state and dignitaries, US Military service members receive a Three Round Volley.

Tight shot on Ricky.

****CRACK** The rifles start firing in a strict cadence.**

INT - AFGHANISTAN BUILDING

The gun shots snap Ricky into his memories. He stands in the blown out building, but instead of wearing his military Uniform. He's wearing his funeral attire, he looks dazed and tired.

****CRACK****

Ricky becomes aware of his surroundings, his weapon is in his hands. The hooded figure is in front of him. Sounds of war can be heard in the background.

****CRACK****

The gears begin to turn in Ricky's head, he's been here before he knows this. He raises his rifle.

The chaos of war and inner turmoil reach a deafening climax. The figure turns and Ricky places his finger on the trigger.

Breaking the rhythm, Ricky **doesn't** fire. The chaos surrounding him instantly subsides.

Long beat.

He drops his rifle and buries his face in his hands.

MATCH CUT

EXT - MILITARY CEMETERY - DAY

Ricky pulls his hands away from his face and he's back in the cemetery, still shook up. Ricky excuses himself from the ceremony and starts wandering the grounds, holding his dad's notebook for comfort.

He finds himself in front of his father's gravestone which reads "*Truit Riley*" "*WAR HERO, HE CARRIED ALL THAT HE COULD BEAR AND THEN SOME*".

The grave is covered by some old leaves, Ricky dusts them off and sits down. He opens his father's journal and begins

reading.

TRUIT (O.S)

"Fuck fuck, I fucked up. She's gone, she's gone and I can't see tomorrow. I'm a goddam fuckin shithead and she's dead. The road was right in front of me. That car came out of nowhere I swear, it was...nowhere. I was good to drive, I knew I was. Corner of 15th, that goddam stop sign wasn't there, I should've looked. I always look. What the fuck do I do?"

As the camera dolly's we reveal the apparition of TRUIT RILEY sitting next to Ricky, finishing the sentence. He is barefoot, dressed in an old denim work jacket Truit looks Ricky dead in the eye.

TRUIT

I didn't know what to do with you kid.
I was fucked up.

RICKY

Was it your fault, did you kill her?

TRUIT

No. But I might as well have.

(beat)

I guess, I loved the idea of her. I was in love with this beautiful, free African woman. After her family got sent back, and you were born, there was the real picture. We were broke, in a new city. One undocumented immigrant and an alcoholic writer. You do the math.

Truit pauses and laughs bitterly

TRUIT

I was runnin' off a 20 hour security shift that night...You know, she escaped Idi fuckin Amin, but not a relationship with me.

Ricky sits with this information for a second.

RICKY

But, you were a poet, you had a brilliant mind. That doesn't just go

away.... even after all this, I was there. I needed you. where was that dad?

TRUIT

what dad?

Ricky flips through the journal, reading for his father's poetic words.

RICKY

(frantically flipping) This dad! The dad who knew we had the same smile, solar wind, skin like night sky dad!

TRUIT

Poetry...Son, the slickest poem wouldn't bring her back. My poems...weren't enough. But, military time sure is reliable.

RICKY

No, I met my dad in a poem and he was a good man. He was enough. Why couldn't you see that you were...the good thing.

Flash to Akiki looking up and smiling.

TRUIT

Ok Ricky, you want a poem, here's one for ya. Quit talking to ghosts, you have skilled hands and an unbroken heart. Don't haunt your own life.

Ricky looks back down at his journal. Camera dolly's to reveal Natara. Truit is gone.

NATARA

Hey dude, we were looking for you. You ready to go?

Ricky nods and stands up, He takes a long look at his father's grave. He sets his dad's notebook down on top of it.

RICKY

See ya dad.

Ricky and Natara leave the frame.

INT - KURTS CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Ricky and Natara step into Kurt's childhood home. At the table by the door is an impromptu SHRINE erected in Kurt's honor. Photos people have dropped off. Cards they've left. Ricky lingers looking over all the photos.

Kurt with his big dumb smile in most of them. Ricky finds one of his Unit in Afghanistan. He picks it up.

Kurt and Ricky stand side by side, arms over each others shoulders. big stupid smiles on their faces. Crusty, muddy, happy.

It's a lot for Ricky to take in. He takes a heavy breath and sets it down.

Ricky pulls A CARD out of his pocket that he sets down at the table.

Ricky makes his way further into the house tries to find a recognizable face. He see's Captain Russ deep in conversation with someone.

Ricky looks elsewhere. Approaching him is DIANE, she's got a big smile on her face.

DIANE

Oh Ricky. I'm so glad you could make it. Natara told me you were in Africa?!

Diane gives Ricky a big hug.

RICKY

Yea. Pretty crazy right. I wish I could of been here. Might of....

DIANE

Ricky no! it's not your fault. Kurt was... Wild.

RICKY

Yea, one of god's own prototypes.

BOTH

Too weird to live, too rare to die.

RICKY

He loved that book.

Both laugh. Awkward beat as the laughter fades and neither has anything to say.

DIANE

Oh! I was going through Kurt's things and I found something I knew he would have wanted you to have, I'll be right back.

Diane exits, right as THREE ARMY BROS approach Ricky. Handshakes are exchanged, and bro hugs are given.

TOMMY

Ricky!

ROD

There he is.

PHIL

Mr. Slick Rick. I heard you were taking down gazelles on the Serengeti!

RICKY

Fellas! I knew I'd see you
(under his breath)
fucking dirt bags here.

All four of them laugh.

TOMMY

So whats your story?

RICKY

Ahhh...it's a long one.

ROD

Come on, we'll talk over a couple beers.

RICKY

There aren't enough beers in the world, my friend, but I'll catch up with y'all in a second.

Diane re-enters holding one of Kurt's flags. It's a medium sized weathered AMERICAN FLAG.

DIANE

You know how I feel about these things, but, I know he would have wanted you to have this. he always

looked up to you so much.

Ricky takes the flag.

RICKY

Oh man, I was supposed to get him a flag on my trip. I can't believe I forgot.

DIANE

Ehh flags, imperialist rags if you ask me.

Diane gives a small laugh, Ricky tries to smile, but the mood dampens again

DIANE

He was just happy that you were out following your dreams.

RICKY

yea... But if I'd just been around then.. maybe.

DIANE

Ricky, you gotta stop beating yourself up. You two were inseparable, but you..you always had a sense of self, a strength that Kurt really admired and tried to embody. You were a good influence on him, and now it's really time for you to live your life.

RICKY

You know I used to think the exact opposite, but maybe you're right. Maybe you've been right all along.

As Ricky is pondering this, a new group comes through the door causing a commotion.

DIANE

Debbie! Come on in.

Turning her attention to Ricky one last time.

DIANE

Take care of yourself Ricky.

She gives him a big hug followed by a kiss on the cheek and walks off.

Ricky watches her go, and then looks at the flag feeling the texture.

INT - SULLY'S BAR - NIGHT

At a local dive bar, Ricky sits at the bar with a MOSTLY FULL BEER sitting in front of him.

Off in the corner the THE ARMY BROS play pool together, downing beers, talking shit. Tommy detaches from the group, and heads to the bar.

He sits next to Ricky. He gestures to the bartender for another round.

TOMMY
We'll take 3 more Colorado Cool Aids
and
(looks at Ricky)
two shots of wild turkey.

Ricky winces.

RICKY
Alright its like that?

TOMMY
Yea its like that!

The beers land on the counter and Ricky winces as two healthy sized shots are poured.

The bartender sets one in front of each of them.

Tommy picks his up.

TOMMY
To Kurt! That crazy son of a bitch. A
damn good soldier, and a damn good
friend.

The two clink their glasses. Tommy shoots his back. But Ricky hesitates.

He's conflicted. he goes to take a sip but stops. Shakes his head and sets it down.

Ricky looks at Tommy, not really sure what to say.

Tommy can see his struggle, he picks up the shot, shoots it backs, slams it down, pats Ricky on the back, grabs the beers

and walks away.

SFX - BAR DOOR OPENS

Ricky rubs his eyes. What is he he even doing here. He has no idea.

Cap Russ sits next to him.

RUSS

Rick.

Rick turns to see the captain.

RICKY

Cap! Good to see you.

RUSS

How you holdin' up.

Ricky blows a deep breath out, not sure how to answer.

The bartender approaches.

RUSS

I'll take a seltzer water with Lime.

RICKY

Seltzer water?

RUSS

Yea... Had to cool it on the drinking.
Figured it was time....Also Charlie
said she'd leave me.

RICKY

Ahh...there it is. (laughing) You
know, when you know where you're
going, cutting the bullshit
just..makes sense.

RUSS

Sure does.

(beat)

Ricky I don't mean to pry, so feel
free to tell me to fuck RIGHT off...At
the funeral, I recognized your pain,
And I've been there. I've got a guy I
talk to, former vet, no bullshit.
Might be worth giving him a call.

Russ pulls out a business card from his wallet and slides it over to Ricky.

RICKY
Therapy?

Russ shrugs.

RUSS
(correcting him)
Coaching, and don't worry he won't
make you drink kombucha or open up
your third eye or anything.

RICKY
(sarcastically)
Oh, good. The last thing I wanna do is
drink kombucha.

Russ playfully punches Ricky, they laugh. Bartender approaches with SELTZER WATER for Russ. Ricky holds up his hand to order one as well.

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER NIGHT

Natara sits in Ricky's kitchen as he prepares a meal for the two of them. he's going back and forth between a few pots on the stove and some vegetables on the counter.

NATARA
Now, I feel bad for making you take
the 23 and me test.

RICKY
No, it's ok. None of this is your
fault.

NATARA
Well...how WAS IT?

RICKY
It was incredible. The people, the
music, the country. It's all
beautiful.

NATARA
well...would you ever go back?

RICKY
I just got home! I got a lot to
process. I mean, Maybe. If the

situation was right. There's definitely something about it though.

(imitating Jeeves accent)

The place is mental, it gets its claws in you and won't let you go.

NATARA

Well it's good to have you back. Work has been a fucking mess, Dan, Vince's new guy was caught skimming money so he got kicked to the curb and then everything with Kurt happened. We've been in free fall honestly. Vince was wasted the other night and was talking about closing the restaurant.

RICKY

Closing the restaurant? Damn I never thought I'd see the day. Where would you go if the restaurant goes under?

NATARA

Man I don't know, I could use a change of scenery. Too many Vinces in this town...really too many Vince's in this whole damn country! I been thinking a lot about next moves, and I really don't see myself here. It's a big Black question of where and what, but maybe I'm starting to see some answers.

RICKY

Yea... A change of scenery.

INT - EARL'S RESTAURANT - PRE-SHIFT

Ricky ducks his head in the office.

RICKY

Big Vince! heard you have a check for me?

Vince looks more haggard than usual.

VINCE

Ricky!! My boy, have a seat.

RICKY

It's ok I'll just grab my check.

VINCE

SIT!

Ricky walks in and sits down

VINCE

(Overly Friendly)

It is SO good to have you back. I'm really sorry about Kurt. That was a big blow for all of us, how are you taking it.

RICKY

Thanks Vince, yea the whole thing is really shitty.

Vince nods. Gives the moment the somberness it deserves. Then moves on.

VINCE

So! Don't know if you heard, but Things with Dan, didn't quite work out.

RICKY

Riiight.

VINCE

So I know we talked about putting you on the line, but we really need you running the floor. I'm gonna move Natara to Executive Chef and---

RICKY

Vince, vince, vince, slow down.

VINCE

Ricky, Come on, I need you here.

RICKY

You know Vince, I've been doing some thinking

(Laughs)

Maybe too much thinking.

Vince leans in curious.

RICKY (CONT'D)

And I've got some big ideas. That I think could be a game changer.

THE SONG SENEGAL FAST FOOD BY AMADOU AND MARIAM STARTS PLAYING AND WE LAUNCH INTO A MONTAGE

INT - RICKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sitting at his desk, Ricky pulls out his NOTEBOOK and writes on the top of it "MENU"

He stars furiously scribbling notes down.

CUT TO

Ricky and Natara experimenting with recipes. Now Natara is taking notes as well, Ricky is adding ingredients in and explaining the finer points of some food techniques.

Back at Ricky's House he's working at his desk, under some papers he see's the BUSINESS CARD that captain Russ gave him. Ricky picks it up, pulls out his phone and starts dialing.

CUT TO

Ricky sits in a smartly decorated sitting room talking to a THERAPIST. The two are getting along well, with a good give and take between the two.

CUT TO

At home Ricky stretches out on his couch reading his restaurant book "*SETTING THE TABLE*", his apartment is surprisingly clean. Ricky gets a call on his phone, it's Vince. Ricky ignores the call and goes back to reading his book.

CUT TO

Ricky puts on a suit and tie, and goes to a bank to meet with some GUYS IN SUITS. He shows slides titled "**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats**" The guys in suits look impressed.

Ricky and the bankers shake hands and Ricky walks out of the building to Natara waiting outside. Ricky gives her the good news and both of them go crazy celebrating together.

Natara, pulls out a WRAPPED GIFT for Ricky.

Ricky tears it open, its a UGANDAN FLAG.

MATCH CUT

INT - RICKY'S RESTAURANT

Ricky turns with the flag and pins it up on the wall, next to KURT'S AMERICAN FLAG.

Ricky seeing that he's not needed here lets his staff take over, he starts to walk to the front of his store.

Ricky opens the door and walks out.

EXT - KAMPALA CITY STREET - GOLDEN HOUR

A BODABODA scoots by and a woman with Bananas on her head walk past.

BANANA LADY
Oli Otya, Sebo

RICKY
Oli Otya, Nyabo.

Ricky takes a good look at the world he inhabits.

After a deep breath, Ricky squats down and takes a handful of the RED UGANDAN TOPSOIL. He takes a moment to savor it's texture before bringing it to his nose and breathing in it's scent.

Ricky turns and there Navio is.

RICKY
Navio! My brother, we've done it.

The two embrace and start walking inside

NAVIO
No you did it, I'm proud of you.
(beat)
Now, where's my queen.

INT - RICKY'S RESTAURANT

Ricky looks across the shop until he sees UGANDAN HAYDEN and UGANDAN BRAYDEN slouched eating CHAPATI.

RICKY
(under his breath)
Oh god damn, it never ends.

He gets ready to say something but before he can NATARA swoops in and scolds them.

Rick proudly watches them cower in fear and scuttle away.

Natara sees Navio, and her eyes light up as she approaches.

NATARA

Baby!

Natara and Navio kiss.

RICKY

(smiling)

You two.

UNKNOWN VOICE

Excuse me

Ricky turns to see who called him. It's Akiiki. Beautiful, flawless, smiling.

The biggest smile appears on Ricky's face. Savoring the moment. Both of them looking at each other with big dumb smiles. He moves in close.

RICKY

Hi, welcome to Ricky's!

AKIIKI

I heard some Muzungu was trying to cook Ugandan food.

RICKY

(fake offended)

Muzungu? You wilin, I'm Ugandan.

Akiiki laughs, He pulls her in close.

Beat as they live in this perfect moment together.

The song AFRICA by TOTO begins to play.

Ricky's eyes light up.

AKIIKI

Nope. no. Definitely not.

RICKY

YES!

ROLL CREDITS

EXT - SMALL VILLAGE - DAY TIME

Jeeves stands next to the bus holding Ricky's phone.

JEEVES
Ricky? Ricky?

Jeeves throws up his hands exasperated.

JEEVES
That fuckin' yank left me!

THE END