

Copper Bullets

Based on a True Story

by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. AIRFORCE PLANE, AIRPORT. LIBREVILLE, GABON. NIGHT. 1993 1

SUPERIMPOSE: Libreville, Gabon. Tuesday, 27th April 1993.

A STEWARD walks from the back of a De Havilland Canada DHC-5D Buffalo plane toward the cockpit door. He wears a smart, impeccable Zambian Army corporal uniform.

He passes 25 lively, talkative passengers, all part of the Football Association of Zambia, and many empty seats.

The passengers include the young players DAVID CHABALA and KELVIN MUTALE (both early 20s), the journalist JOSEPH SALIM, coaches, assistants, and civil servants. Some sleep, some talk, some read.

The steward passes two passengers in the front two seats: GODFREY CHITALU (coach, mid 60s) in the window and ALEX CHOLA (assistant coach, late 50s) in the aisle.

The steward faces the passengers. He reaches for the cabin PA, which he uses to make an announcement.

STEWARD

(on PA to passengers)

I wanted to update you all on our short delay. We're still waiting to get clearance. I'll serve more refreshments in the mean time. Thank you.

The steward puts the interphone back and starts to walk to the back of the plane. A wave of irritation moves through the cabin - hands up, heads shaking.

Godfrey shakes his head and looks out the window.

2 EXT. TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

2

The Buffalo plane sits under harsh floodlights - squat, old, sweating in the humid night.

Beneath the belly: FOUR MECHANICS in greasy overalls. Hands working fast, practiced but not relaxed.

A PANEL is open. Wires. A dark cavity.

Up above, in the front row window, GODFREY CHITALU's face is a pale shape watching them.

One mechanic holds Godfrey's stare, for too long. Then back to work.

3 INT. AIRFORCE PLANE - CONTINUOUS

3

The cabin steward passes out drinks to Godfrey and Alex in the first row.

GODFREY
(To the steward)
Thank you.

Godfrey turns to speak to Alex.

GODFREY CONT'D
Lusaka. Kinshasa. Libreville.
Abidjan. Dakar. We're touring
airports now.

ALEX CHOLA
We'll get there.

GODFREY
Are you sure about that?

Godfrey looks out the window and sees the mechanics again.

GODFREY CONT'D
Ten hours we will never get back.

At the back of the plane the steward is still handing out drinks. The players are impatient.

The steward offers David a drink and he takes one.

The steward finishes serving drinks and goes to the back of the plane.

One of the passengers, JOSEPH SALIM (journalist, wearing reporter's jacket, late 30s), has been quietly observing, taking notes on a small notepad.

He spots an empty seat next to David Chabala. He gets up and walks toward the seat.

JOSEPH
David. Got time for some questions?

DAVID
Sure.

Joseph sits down next to David.

Kelvin, a few rows ahead, overhears this and makes his way over to join their discussion. He sits on an arm rest nearby, casually playing with a football.

JOSEPH
So David. Are you the best
goalkeeper in Zambia?

DAVID
Ask Klinsman. He scored three times
against me in Seoul!

JOSEPH
 What do you tell the kids who want
 to be you one day?

DAVID
 Kuiposafye.

KELVIN
 THROW YOURSELF!

They all laugh at this.

As he says this, there is an audible ping from the front of the plane and a light goes on.

The steward spots it and walks quickly to the front of the plane. The group pause their chat to watch the steward as he passes them.

At the front of the plane, the steward picks up the cabin PA and has a brief inaudible conversation.

The steward puts the phone down and walks to the back of the plane; he passes the group again.

Joseph looks toward the front of the plane and then returns to the conversation.

KELVIN CONT'D
 Joseph. Do you want to know David's
 real trick?

JOSEPH
 Sure.

KELVIN
 Witchcraft!

DAVID
 (giggling)
 My juju!

They all laugh in response. They are interrupted by the pilot and the SOUNDS of the engines.

PILOT
 This is the captain. We've got
 clearance. Take your seats and
 fasten your seat belts. We'll be
 moving soon.

The players cheer and clap loudly.

Kelvin returns to his seat, tossing the football into an empty seat.

The players get ready for take off, Joseph returns to his seat. They fasten their seat belts.

A vibration.

For too long.

David glances at Kelvin.

KELVIN

You feel that?

DAVID

It's fine.

The steward takes his seat at the front of the plane near the door and puts on his seatbelt.

4 EXT. DUSTY PRACTICE FIELD. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

4

A ragged patch of grass. Faded goals.

A GROUP OF BOYS - 12 to 16 - chase an old football across the dirt with the type of fury that only boys who have something to prove can muster.

Shirts vs skins. Bare feet. Dust rising with every touch.

The ball breaks loose down the right flank.

One player chases it. Faster than the rest. Sharper. Low center of gravity. Moving like the ball belongs to them and the others just haven't accepted it yet.

They dummy past the first defender. Clean. Then the second. Cleaner.

The player doesn't hesitate. Shoots. It curls. Upper corner. In.

The teammates erupt. From the edge of the pitch, one voice cuts through all the others.

SAMSON

(grinning)

That's my sister.

The player turns. This is NELLIE, 15. Catching her breath, sweat on her face, dust on her knees - and completely unsurprised by the goal she just scored.

SAMSON, 19, Nellie's brother, stocky and easy with his joy, is already jogging toward her. The boys around him make space - they always do for him.

NELLIE

(catching her breath)

You're late.

SAMSON

Not too late to see your curl. Ku chalo.

NELLIE

Ku chalo.

Nellie and Samson fist bump hard - the way they always have. They briefly hug. The kind of hug that has a whole childhood in it.

SAMSON

Mum's been cooking all day.

NELLIE

She always does. Especially before a big game. Tiyeni.

Nellie fist bumps the other players as she turns to leave with her brother.

SAMSON

They're already on their way.

NELLIE

Already?

SAMSON

Charles Junior saw them take off at the airport.

NELLIE

Come on. She'll be tired.

Nellie and Samson walk off the pitch together. He puts his arm around her neck, the way siblings show love without thinking.

5 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 5

A small house holding more than it was built for. Furniture that was once new and elegant. A television in the corner, loud and flickering.

CHARLES JR, 17, is cross-legged on the floor six inches from the screen, close enough that the light from it moves across his face. He hasn't blinked in two minutes.

Nellie and Samson enter. Nellie still in her football clothes, dusty at the knees. She drops her ball by the door - exactly where she always drops it - and looks at the screen.

Charles Jr does not turn from the TV.

CHARLES JR

I saw them from airport road.

Nobody answers. He doesn't need them to.

On screen: news footage of the Chipolopolo squad boarding the buffalo plane at Lusaka International Airport. Supporters waving flags. Players grinning at cameras. Kelvin

playing with a football in his hands. A reporter speaks over the noise.

DENNIS (ON TV)

And there they go. Our Chipolopolo.
Our Copper Bullets. Who left
earlier today, on their way to
Senegal, and, God willing, on their
way to the World Cup.

CHARLES JR

That's Kelvin. That's him right
there.

Nellie and Samson slouch onto the sofas.

CHARLES JR

Kelvin waved.
(beat)
Like he saw us.

The reporter is now talking about the qualifier. Senegal.
What would it mean. The whole nation holding its breath.

6 EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

6

The Buffalo's PROPELLERS cough into motion - then CATCH -
becoming a blur that chews the air.

The ground crew move with practiced efficiency. One kneels,
checks a wheel. Another tugs a cable, gives a nod.

Then, they peel away from the aircraft, efficient, quick.

A MARSHALL raises glowing batons, guiding the plane.

The plane begins to move toward the runway and gain speed.

The mechanics watch it go. Quiet. Fixed.

The plane's lights flash in streaks as the aircraft gains
momentum.

The runway lights stretch ahead like beads on a wire. Ocean
beyond: pure black.

7 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

7

From the kitchen, the sound of pots. Rhythmic, vigorous. The
kind of cooking that is also something else.

Nellie gets up and leaves the room.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Supper's ready!

Samson and Charles Jr don't move. Nellie returns with plates
and glasses.

CHARLES JR
 (to Nellie)
 Will they win?

Nellie places the plates and glasses on the table.

NELLIE
 Yes.

CHARLES JR
 You always say that.

NELLIE
 Then don't ask.

SAMSON
 Ask me. Future captain of Zambia.

Nellie and Charles Jr ignore this. They turn toward the door, toward the SOUND of a car engine.

CHARLES JR
 Dad's home.

ELIZABETH (40s, tired, gray) enters carrying a pot of nshima. She moves carefully and slowly. She places the food on the table. Her left hand leans on the table longer than it needs to.

Nellie notices. She doesn't say anything.

CHARLES (40s, gray) enters through the front door. His suit was once sharp, once new, his briefcase also fading with age. Charles loosens his tie and makes his way to his favorite chair.

The family greets him almost in unison.

Elizabeth looks at him with impatience.

DENNIS (ON TV)
 And we wish them God's speed.
 Zambia is on their way.

8 EXT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

8

Inside the cockpit - the PILOTS glow green from the instrument light. Calm hands. A checklist page is torn away and clipped.

ATC (V.O.)
 (Crackling over the
 radio)
 Libreville Tower, you're cleared
 for takeoff.

PILOT
 Loud and clear. Good for takeoff.

The throttles push forward. The engines BITE.

9 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

9

CHARLES

There they go.

NELLIE

They'll be back soon.

ELIZABETH

Let's pray they win.

Elizabeth and Nellie leave the room.

CHARLES CONT'D

Samson. Take your feet off the coffee table. Bring me a beer.

Samson does as he is told. Nellie and Elizabeth return with food and water for washing hands and drinking. Samson returns with the beer.

Elizabeth starts serving the food, helped by Nellie.

ELIZABETH

(to Nellie)

How did you play today?

CHARLES

She always plays well.

The family eat in the particular silence of people who love each other and are also, in ways none of them have words for yet, already losing each other.

On the television, the reporter wraps up the coverage. The camera follows the plane as it taxis toward the runway. It becomes smaller. Then smaller still.

CHARLES JR

(Under his breath)

Zambia ku chalo.

Nobody else looks up from their food.

10 EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

10

The BUFFALO surges. The runway lights smear into streaks.

Fifty knots. Ninety.

The wheels leave the ground.

And the aircraft climbs into the ink-black sky over the coast.

Then -

A tiny, ugly stutter in the aircraft's rhythm.
 Not loud. Worse - subtle.

11 EXT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS 11
 A NEEDLE twitches. A light FLUTTERS.
 The nose dips slightly. Then more.

12 INT. AIRFORCE PLANE - CONTINUOUS 12
 The passengers glance at each other. They feel the plane lurch down. They notice vibrations.
 Some clutch onto the seats in front of them.

13 EXT. NIGHT SKY - CONTINUOUS 13
 The aircraft banks sharply.
 Lights carve across cloud.

14 EXT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS 14
 Alarms begin to SHRIEK from within.
 The plane drops lower.
 A WARNING ALARM SCREAMS.

15 EXT. NIGHT SKY - CONTINUOUS 15
 Blinking lights reflect on the black water of the Atlantic.
 The wing CLIPS the water.
 WHITE.
 SMASH CUT TO:

16 INT. TV STUDIO. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 16
 Silence.
 DENNIS LIWEWE, balding, mid-50s, sits frozen at the desk.
 He opens his mouth.
 Nothing.
 Looks down.
 Blinks.

17 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012 17
 A loud gray metal door OPENS loudly. KALUSHA BWALYA, mid-50s and still fit from a lifetime in the game, strides through.

SUPERIMPOSE: Libreville, Gabon. Sunday, 12th February 2012.

Behind him, DERBY MAKINKA (also mid-50s) follows, equally fit and equally sharp in his dark suit.

The ECHO of their polished shoes ricochet through the tunnel - the only sound in the silence.

Kalusha wears a lanyard: Kalusha Bwalya. President, Football Association of Zambia. Orange "CHIPOLOPOLO" rubber bracelets circle their wrists, a quiet symbol of unity and pride.

They reach the end of the tunnel and climb the stairs, emerging onto a vast football pitch - a modern stadium rising around them.

Hands in their pockets, they walk to the edge of the grass.

They stop at the white line, taking it all in.

For a moment, Kalusha hears it - the ROAR of a full stadium: vuvuzelas, drums, whistles, a sea of Zambian and Ivorian flags waving in rhythm. The SOUNDS of the match to come.

They crouch. Pinch a tuft of grass.

Kalusha rubs the blades of grass between his fingers, lost in thought. Then quietly slips them into his pocket. Derby tosses his handful into the air, letting the breeze take it.

DERBY

One more game.

KALUSHA

One more game.

They bump fists. They stand in silence, soaking in the weight of the empty stadium.

Derby turns and starts back toward the tunnel. Kalusha lingers, taking one last look around.

Overhead, a plane cuts across the blue sky, its engines ROARING.

Kalusha looks up, follows its flight for a moment - he stiffens. A flicker of pain crosses his face.

The distant sound of a guitar begins. A single chord. Then another. A song from a long time ago. A song that remains current.

Kalusha turns and walks toward the tunnel, disappearing into its shadow, followed by the song.

A young BUSKER sits on an overturned beer crate, his back against the wall of a clothes shop. He plays a battered guitar; strumming the chords of "Tiyende Pamodzi". The same melody that began in the dark.

His flip flops dusty, trousers rolled at the ankles, a worn old white singlet tucked in. An old hat shades his eyes.

SUPERIMPOSE: Mufulira, Zambia. 1978.

As the melody takes shape, the world around him slowly unfolds: A bustling small-town street.

One-story stores - a butcher, a tailor, a bookstore - line the dusty road.

Smartly dressed shoppers exit with shopping bags in hand.

He starts singing.

BUSKER (O.S.)
(Singing)
Tiyende Pamodzi ndim'tima umo,
Tiyende Pamodzi ndim'tima umo...
(Let's go together, with our team)

Across the street, parked cars bake in the sun.

A man reads a newspaper from the driver's seat, legs hanging casually out of the door; women in bright chitenges sit on the ground, selling tomatoes, spinach, green mangoes, onions, dried fish, and maize meal.

In the distance, two long perpendicular walls frame a football pitch - the sounds of a match echo faintly across the town.

19 EXT. DUSTY FIELD. MUFULIRA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1978

19

The busker's song continues OFFSCREEN - faint, hopeful.

Around twenty boys, aged fourteen to eighteen, play with total abandon, Barefoot. Dust rising with every step. Shirts vs. Skins.

The music fades.

The SOUNDS of the match take over; shouts, laughter, the THUD of the ball, the rhythm of bare feet on the dry ground.

Among them Kalusha (15), stands out - lean, and focused. Shirtless, in newish shorts, eyes fixed on the ball.

Kalusha dribbles with power and precision, gliding toward the goal. A DEFENDER lunges in - Kalusha shifts the ball from right foot to left, then back again. A burst of speed. The defender stumbles as he is outmaneuvered.

The football pitch stretches alongside weathered walls painted with faded adverts.

Fresh posters of KENNETH KAUNDA are plastered over the walls.

Another wall bears the rough outline of a goalpost drawn in charcoal. Opposite it, a second "goal" is marked by a row of discarded clothes.

Two small boys in torn school uniforms sit on top of the wall, cheering wildly.

Another defender charges Kalusha, who grins as he threads it through the defender's legs.

The grin drives him toward the charcoal goal.

BOY ON WALL 1
Kalusha! Tiye!

Kalusha reaches the charcoal goalpost on the wall. The goalkeeper, DAVID CHABALA (18), stands between him and the goal.

He swings his right leg and strikes the ball with precision.

David dives the wrong way.

The ball hits the wall. It's in.

BOY ON WALL 1+BOY ON WALL 2
Goooooooooooooooooooooooooal!

Kalusha's teammates rush him, lifting him in celebration, laughter and cheers echoing across the dusty field.

20 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1978 20

A dapper man rushes down the corridor.

This is CHARLES (early 30s), receding hairline, impeccably dressed - smart suit, handkerchief in the pocket, glasses perched perfectly, radiating confidence.

He clutches a bunch of flowers in one hand and a football in the other.

He has been here before - he knows where to go.

21 EXT. DUSTY FIELD - CONTINUOUS 21

David is downhearted. The ball bounces off the wall after Kalusha's goal and rolls toward him.

David retrieves the ball, and jogs back toward the group.

Derby is among them, fourteen, the youngest of the boys, but tall, strong, and already commanding presence.

DERBY

Chabala, you saving one today?

KALUSHA

Give him a break Derby.

From the edge of the group, HARRISON CHONGO, also fifteen, has been watching Kalusha's goal not with admiration but with assessment. The way a player watches tape.

HARRISON

(to no one in particular)

He got lucky. The defender slipped.

KALUSHA

(not looking at him)

The ball still went in.

HARRISON

Going in isn't the same as being good.

Kalusha looks at him now. A long beat. Then Kalusha picks up the ball and passes it to Kelvin, who plays with it nonchalantly.

KALUSHA

Let's go again. Kelvin start it.

DAVID

If you all played properly, I'd have nothing to save.

BENJAMIN BWALYA JR (17), Kalusha's older brother, joins in, playfully shoving David. Kalusha turns to walk off.

The boys follow Kalusha and return to the set.

Kelvin holds onto the ball, a small smile tugging at his lips. He tosses it to Harrison.

Harrison places the ball down carefully. He rests his foot on it. He waits for them to take their places. He is ready to restart the game.

22 INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

22

Charles bursts into the room.

Four beds fill the space. In one, ELIZABETH (also in her 30s), his wife, cradles a newborn in her arms.

Joy and relief fill the room as Charles takes in the sight of his wife and child.

CHARLES

Liz! Sorry I'm late.

Charles stops when he sees the baby.

ELIZABETH

Not what you were expecting?

A beat.

Then Charles smiles and it is completely genuine.

They share a quick kiss. Charles puts down the flowers, but holds on to the football.

CHARLES

A girl. A beautiful baby girl.

ELIZABETH

And what are you going to do with that football?

He gently places the football beside his wife and daughter.

CHARLES

It's hers. Look at her.

Elizabeth passes her daughter to Charles.

ELIZABETH

Nellie. Let's call her Nellie.

CHARLES

Perfect. Nellie my center forward.

Elizabeth shakes her head, laughing softly.

23 EXT. BUS STATION. MUFULIRA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1978

23

Kalusha, his brother Benjamin Jr, his brother JOEL BWALYA (6), and their mother ELIDAH BWALYA (Around 40) wait at bus station. Sounds of birds, afternoon heat, and silence.

The boys wear suits - proud, a little too formal for the heat - kicking a small football back and forth.

Elidah, elegant in her outfit and poise, sits on a bench beneath a large Jacaranda tree. Purple blossoms scatter across the dusty ground like confetti.

A bus stop manager at the ticket window, half-hidden behind a newspaper. Commuters mill about; a few wait patiently in the shade.

Far down the road, a bus appears in the distance, a shimmer of heat dancing around as it approaches.

ELIDAH

Boys. The bus is coming.

The bus stop manager lowers his newspaper, squinting toward the approaching bus.

BUS STOP MANAGER
 (Shouting)
 LUSAKA BUS ARRIVING!

ELIDAH
 (To the boys)
 Your father will be tired.

The bus rumbles closer, dust swirling around its tires as it slows to turn into the station.

People gather near the lane, shading their eyes from the sun.

Kalusha and Benjamin Jr move forward, excitement on their faces. A few steps behind, Elidah stands with Joel, holding his hand as they watch.

The bus comes to a stop. The door swings open.

Kalusha and Benjamin Jr dart toward the steps, craning their necks to look inside - searching for their father.

Behind the wheel, the bus driver glances into the rear-view mirror, watching passengers disembark.

He spots the two boys by the door.

The driver turns, frowning - a flash of irritation crossing his face.

BUS DRIVER 1
 (To the boys)
 Move away! Let the people out!

The two boys step back from the doorway, making room as passengers begin to file out.

A mix of faces - young and old, rich and poor - descend the steps, weary from travel, grateful for shade.

After about twenty people have passed, a final figure appears at the door.

BENJAMIN BWALYA (late 30s), dignified in a sharp suit, steps down carefully, a small suitcase in each hand.

KALUSHA AND BENJAMIN JR
 DAD!

BENJAMIN
 Benji! Kalu!

Benjamin has barely touched the ground when Kalusha and Benjamin Jr rush toward him, throwing their arms around his waist.

He laughs, steadying himself under their embrace - then looks up.

Across the station, Elidah stands with Joel, watching.

Joel breaks free from his mother's hand and sprints toward his father.

Benjamin drops his suitcases and scoops Joel up, lifting him high with a joyful laugh.

The family drifts away from the bus together, the dust settling around them.

Benjamin meets Elidah's gaze - a long, familiar smile passing between them.

He sets Joel down, steps forward, and embraces her.

BENJAMIN

(Hugging Elidah)

I'm glad to be back.

(To the boys).

Kalu, Benji. Grab my suitcases.

Kalusha and Benji do as they're told with smiles, each grabbing one or their father's suitcases.

Benjamin slips an arm around Elidah and lifts Joel into his other arm.

Together, they turn and walk away from the bus - a picture of family, framed by dust, sunlight, and the hum of the small town.

BENJAMIN JR

What did you bring us dad?

BENJAMIN

You're only this happy because I brought gifts from Madagascar?

Benjamin Jr grins mischievously - the football still at his feet.

He gives it a cheeky kick toward his father.

Benjamin, still carrying Joel and with an arm around Elidah, traps the ball smoothly, dribbles a few steps, and passes it to Kalusha.

Kalusha flicks it back effortlessly to Benjamin Jr, the exchange seamless - a quiet, joyful rhythm between father and sons.

Benjamin gestures toward a bench. The boys set the suitcases down.

BENJAMIN CONT'D

Right. Let's see what we have.

He releases Elidah and opens the cases slowly, deliberately.

Inside, three Adidas bags. He hands one to each boy.

Inside each bag, a shoebox.

They lift the lids - and reveal Adidas football shoes, pristine and gleaming.

A hush of awe, then wide smiles.

JOEL

Boots!

KALUSHA

And socks too!

BENJAMIN

Made in Germany.

The boys settle on the ground, tugging on their socks and sliding their feet into the shiny new shoes, eyes bright with excitement.

Benjamin watches his three sons lacing their boots in the dust. He looks at Elidah. She looks back at him, smiling gently.

24 INT. BEDROOM. BWALYA HOME. MUFULIRA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1978 24

Kalusha crashes onto his single bed, staring up at the ceiling. Two small night tables separate three small beds.

His brothers join him, flopping onto their own beds.

Kalusha carefully sets his new boots at the edge of his bed, almost reverently.

JOEL

We're going to be champions of the world!

BENJAMIN JR

(Laughing)

Chill out Joel.

Kalusha lies still, eyes closed. Silent.

Kalusha's eyes snap open. He breathes calmly, a small smile forming.

KALUSHA

Goodnight Joel. Goodnight Benji.

JOEL AND BENJI

Goodnight Kalu.

Kalusha turns off the light. His new boots gleaming faintly at the edge of his bed.

25 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM STANDS. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988

25

Charles (now in his late 40s) holds Nellie's (now 10) hand as they hurry through the bustling stadium. Behind them, Samson (14) and Charles Jr (12) follow closely.

SUPERIMPOSE: Lusaka, Zambia. 1988.

CHARLES

We'll find a good spot for sure.

They turn into a staircase - an entrance to the stands.

Charles scoops up Nellie and bounds up two stairs at a time. The boys struggle behind him, laughing.

They emerge into the thick of it.

The ROAR of the crowd crashes around them, echoing off the stands. Nellie is mesmerised.

The stadium is packed, a sea of people waving Zambian flags, with the occasional Malawian flag spotted among them.

CHARLES

Bingo.

Charles spots a row of empty seats and walks toward them.

CHARLES

Look at this boys. These are perfect seats.

They're lucky to find seats with such a good view.

The boys grin, excited, while Nellie perches on the edge of her seat, wide-eyed.

On the pitch below, the teams warm up, passing and shooting.

Kalusha and Derby are now ten years older; their bodies moving effortlessly as they practice.

CHARLES

Right. Here we go. Any predictions?

CHARLES JR

We'll win this. Easy.

The teams on the pitch wind up and head toward the locker rooms.

CHARLES

Nellie?

NELLIE

We'll win. Their defense is weak.

Charles smiles proudly.

CHARLES
Bingo. That's my girl. Kuviyala
wanna nichiweme.

NELLIE
Wene wene anakazi.

Charles Jr rolls his eyes and turns back to the pitch.
Nellie notices but does not respond.

CHARLES
Derby will have a good game.

CHARLES JR
And Kelvin.

The teams start to emerge from the tunnel onto the pitch.

CHARLES
Right. Let's see what happens. COME
ON CHIPOLOPOLO!

The Zambian team leads the way, Kalusha Bwalya at the front,
followed closely by Derby Makinka.

26 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM PITCH - CONTINUOUS

26

The teams line up on the pitch.

The Zambian national anthem plays.

Kalusha and his teammates sing loudly, pride and focus
etched on their faces.

The whistle blows. The Zambian team moves quickly and with
precision, dominating the game.

They surge ahead - three goals to one.

From the defense, Derby receives the ball, eyes scanning for
the next play.

Derby spots Kalusha breaking forward.

Derby delivers a perfect cross.

Kalusha flicks past a defender with ease, outpacing him.
Another defender approaches - he taps the ball through his
legs.

Kalusha sprints past the last defender and faces the
goalkeeper. He taps the ball to the right - straight into
the goal. The stadium erupts.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
GOOOOaaaaaaaal! In the dying
minutes! That makes it four one to
Zambia!

Kalusha races to the corner. Derby follows, sprinting to meet him.

The team joins in - a coordinated celebration.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
Let's hope they can play this well
at the Seoul Olympics next month!

Derby and Kalusha embrace, joy written across their faces as the stadium roars around them.

27 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM STANDS - CONTINUOUS 27

Charles lifts Nellie into his arms as the family joins the stadium celebrations. The whole family jumps up and down, swept up in the euphoria of the win.

28 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988 28

Nellie and her two brothers watch the match replays on TV. Nellie mouths the chant silently: Tiye Chipolopolo Tiye!

A phone rings. Elizabeth emerges from the kitchen, carrying plates and glasses. She places them on the table and answers the phone.

ELIZABETH
(on the phone)
Hello?

CHARLES
(on the phone)
Liz. I have to work late again.

ELIZABETH
(on the phone)
This late? It's past 7.

Nellie looks up at her mum.

CHARLES
(on the phone)
Nothing I can do. You know my boss.

ELIZABETH
(on the phone)
Three nights in a row?

CHARLES
(on the phone)
I'll try to be back soon.

Elizabeth puts the phone down. Nellie watches as her sullen mum returns to the kitchen.

Nellie stands up and sets the table.

29 EXT. AIRPORT. SEOUL, KOREA. NIGHT. 1988

29

The Zambian team empty out of the modern, large airport. They lug oversized sports bags. Eyes wide, they take in the chaos - neon signs in Hangul, the hum of taxis, the chatter of strangers.

For a moment, they stand there - strangers in a new world.

Kalusha grins widely; Derby approaches him from behind and puts an arm around his shoulder.

DERBY

This isn't Lusaka is it?

KALUSHA

(laughs)

No it isn't.

DERBY

We made it.

KALUSHA

Yes, we have.

They laugh and walk toward their team bus, emblazoned with a large Zambian flag.

30 INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1988

30

The Lusaka airport terminal is quieter than Seoul. Ceiling fans. Fluorescent light.

Elizabeth, in a Zambian Airways uniform, walks efficiently through the airport, clicking heels, greeting staff by name. She is immaculate; but looks tired.

She is an efficient walker, avoiding other people, her Zambian Airways suitcase gliding behind her. She exits and sees Charles, Samson, Charles Jr, and Nellie waiting.

She beams, hugs the kids - barely glancing at Charles.

31 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD. SEOUL, KOREA. DAY. 1988

31

The Zambian and Italian teams march onto the pitch, the air is wild with thunderous applause. More Italian flags than Zambian fill the stadium.

Among them, Kalusha and Derby slow their pace.

They both crouch, pinch a handful of grass and rub it between their fingers - the same ritual as before - a quiet moment between the two amidst the chaos.

32 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. EVENING. 32
1988

The whole family are crammed into the living room. They are joined by other relatives and friends; every spot taken, all eyes glued on the small TV in the corner.

Elizabeth keeps busy collecting empty beer bottles, clearing plates, greeting people.

Nellie jumps up to help her.

CHARLES
(drunk, shouting from his
chair)
Come on Zambia!

Nellie focuses on the TV while she helps her mum; the game starts.

33 INT. TV STUDIO. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988 33

A sign on the desk reads: "Dennis Liwewe. Sports Desk. Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation."

DENNIS
Mama Mia! What a great day for
Zambian football as our KK Eleven,
our Chipolopolo got a historic
football result!

The screen cuts to replays of Zambia's goals against Italy.

34 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - CONTINUOUS 34

Kalusha, black armband on his sleeve indicating his captaincy, strikes with his left foot and scores his first goal. Zambia 1, Italy nil.

Kalusha shoots a direct free kick. Zambia 2, Italy 0.

David saves a goal attempt.

Charly Musonda passes to Johnson Bwalya, who strikes with his right foot. Zambia 3, Italy 0.

Kalusha shoots again with his left foot and scores his hat-trick. Zambia 4, Italy 0.

The whistle blows.

Kalusha leads the team on a lap of honor, draped in a Zambian flag.

Derby catches up with Kalusha, draping an arm over his shoulder. David (also ten years older) joins them.

DERBY
 (To David)
 You've saved goals in Mufulira AND
 SEOUL!

The others jump on David and celebrate with him.

KALUSHA
 Can you imagine everyone at home
 watching this?

DAVID
 In Mufulira?

They fall silent, eyes on the cheering crowds.

One of the other players starts chanting.

KELVIN
 Tiye Chipolopolo Tiye!

The chant spreads - teammates, then the crowd.

35 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. EVENING. 1988 35

The guests are now celebrating the win; the room is filled with drunk chaos. Elizabeth and Nellie have withdrawn into the kitchen. People fall into furniture, drinks spill, voices overlap, bodies sway, a song erupts.

GUESTS
 Tiyende Pamodzi ndim'tima umo,
 Tiyende Pamodzi ndim'tima umo...

GUEST 5
 (in Nyanja)
 Ahhhhhh! Derby beat them twice!
 (Derby anawamenya kwabiri!)

GUEST 6
 (in Nyanja)
 How can we lose with Kalusha
 (Tingatayitse bwanji ndi Kalusha?)

CHARLES
 Where's Nellie? We need analysis!
 NELLIE!

Charles staggers up to his feet and heads toward the door.

GUEST 5
 Ah let's go.

CHARLES
 (in the direction of the
 kitchen)
 NELLIE!

Elizabeth enters the room.

ELIZABETH

Charles. Please.

Charles turns away from Elizabeth.

CHARLES

Bring her. We need our expert.

ELIZABETH

Charles.

Charles gesticulates with irritation.

CHARLES

Leave it. We're leaving.

ELIZABETH

At this hour? Where are you going?

CHARLES

It's early. I'll be back. Tiyeni!

Elizabeth does not respond. She starts to clean up the room.

GUESTS

Tiye Chipolopolo Tiye! Tiye
Chipolopolo Tiye!

The guests all leave the room taking their chaos with them. Nellie emerges from the kitchen and starts to help her mother. Neither of them says anything as they clean up together, a ritual well practiced.

36 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. MORNING. 1988 36

Elizabeth, now in casual clothing, cooks NSHIMA porridge for breakfast in the kitchen of a small house; she cooks vigorously. She has lost a lot of weight. Charles Jr and Samson rush out, carelessly bumping into her.

ELIZABETH

BOYS!

Outside, Nellie plays keepie-uppie with a football, catching the ball with her neck and foot.

Elizabeth watches her daughter from the kitchen.

Nellie walks inside with the football.

ELIZABETH

So, how did Manchester United do
while I was gone?

Nellie puts the ball down and helps her mum.

NELLIE

A draw. Fifth in a row.

ELIZABETH

They'll win the next one for sure.
And your brothers? Did they behave?

NELLIE

I guess so. They were hardly here.
Neither was dad.

Elizabeth hides her disappointment. Elizabeth passes the bowls of porridge to Nellie.

ELIZABETH

Help me take these into the living
room.

Nellie notices and gently touches a bruise on her mum's arm. Elizabeth pulls away.

Nellie leaves the room. Elizabeth leans out of the kitchen door.

ELIZABETH CONT'D

(shouting)

Boys. Breakfast!

Elizabeth leans on the kitchen counter, catching her breath.

Her breath quickens, her eyes roll back. She passes out and slips to the floor.

Nellie returns to the kitchen and finds Elizabeth collapsed on the floor, passed out next to Nellie's football.

NELLIE

(Panicked)

AMAMA!

She shakes her, tries to wake her.

NELLIE CONT'D

(shouting)

DAD!

Charles rushes in, kneels beside her, and desperately tries to wake her up. He has also lost a lot of weight.

CHARLES

ELIZABETH! Wake up. Wake up!

Elizabeth slowly opens her eyes, confused, scanning the room. She sits up.

NELLIE

Mum!

ELIZABETH

It's OK. I'm just tired.

CHARLES

Nellie. Get her some water. Quick!

Nellie quickly gets a glass of water and passes it to her dad. Charles tips Elizabeth's head to help her drink.

Elizabeth rises slowly with Charles' help.

37 EXT. ROAD TO LUSAKA AIRPORT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988

37

Crowds line both sides of the road, waving Zambian flags, singing, and dancing. Police try to keep the crowd off the street.

A large truck covered in Zambian flags approaches, players on top cheering.

REPORTER

(Talking loudly over the noise)

The whole city seems to be here to celebrate Chipolopolo - home from Seoul.

Nellie and her family are at the front of the road and are pushed back and forth by the moving crowds.

Nellie clings to her mum's hand, nervous but excited.

The truck nears. Kalusha, Derby, and David are at the front of the bus. They wave to the crowd with the other players.

Nellie leans forwards to get a view of the approaching truck. Charles Jr is behind Nellie, protecting her by holding onto her shoulders. They stand their ground.

CHARLES JR

Here they come - look watch!
There's Kalusha Bwalya!

Nellie smiles and starts waving at the truck.

NELLIE

There's Kelvin Mutale!

Also on the bus are all the other players including WISDOM CHANSA, ESTON MULENGA, CHARLY MUSONDA, JOHNSON BWALYA, and RICHARD MWANZE, all in their early 20s.

CHARLES JR

It's Kelvin! Can he see me?

NELLIE

Wave at him!

Nellie waves and shouts at the players.

NELLIE
 (Shouting at the bus)
 Kelvin!

Kelvin waves back. Nellie beams.

Elizabeth smiles, then coughs. Charles looks at her with concern.

CHARLES
 OK. Time to go home. Tiyeni.

The children reluctantly follow, taking one last look at the players.

Charles helps Elizabeth by guiding her away from the main road and into the crowd.

38 INT. HOSPITAL. PATIENT'S ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988 38

Nellie sits next to Elizabeth, who lies weakly on a hospital bed in a long, noisy corridor; her eyes are closed. She has lost more weight. Nellie holds her mother's hand.

Other patients lie on beds near them. Nellie's brothers stand around the bed.

Charles emerges from around the corner and walks toward his family. He has also lost more weight. He puts his hand on Elizabeth's shoulder.

CHARLES
 They said they can get you a room soon. I'm going to call the family for help.

ELIZABETH
 Call my sister. She has a contact in the Ministry of Health.

CHARLES
 OK.
 (To Nellie).
 Nellie, look after mum. I'm coming.

Nellie nods silently. Charles leaves again and goes back down the corridor.

ELIZABETH
 Why are you looking so sad? Did Manchester United lose?

Nellie leans in and holds her mum's hand.

NELLIE
 We won again.

ELIZABETH
 Great. Tell me about the game.

NELLIE

A slow start. Davenport scored,
Leighton saved some. Hughes also
scored.

As Nellie talks, the scale of the number of people waiting
in the full corridor is revealed.

Patients cram into the narrow space. Thin, bruised, coughing
and murmuring. Visitors linger, pacing anxiously.

Elizabeth holds out her hand; Nellie accepts it.

Nurses and doctors rush past, calling out names, carrying
carts, pushing trolleys, the cacophony of the hospital
machines, footsteps, and murmurs filling the air.

The scale of the crowd and chaos overwhelms the frame,
emphasizing the strain on both staff and patients.

39 INT. DERBY'S HOUSE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1988

39

Derby sits on the edge of the sofa, head in his hands,
anxious. A soft KNOCK at the door breaks the silence.

He stands slowly and opens the door.

Kalusha steps in, and without a word, hugs Derby tightly.

Derby leans into the hug, relief and emotion washing over
him.

KALUSHA

How is she?

DERBY

Not good.

KALUSHA

She's at the hospital?

DERBY

Yeah. The private one. We're
heading back later.

KALUSHA

I'll come with you.

DERBY

We just thought she was tired.

He stops. He cannot put the rest into words.

DERBY CONT'D

They're dying in New York. Kalu. In
New York.

Derby begins to sob heavily, his shoulders shaking.

Kalusha hugs him tightly, holding him close. His own eyes betray his anxiety, unmasked despite his composed exterior.

The room is silent except for Derby's quiet sobs, the weight of the moment heavy between them.

40 INT. BWALYA HOUSE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1988

40

Kalusha enters the house.

KALUSHA

Awdi?

There is a muffled sound from inside the house.

Kalusha enters the house into the living room. As he does, his father enters.

BENJAMIN

Kalu.

They embrace warmly. Elidah enters.

ELIDAH

Kalu! How was the flight?

Kalusha hugs his mum.

KALUSHA

It was good. No problems.

Elidah leaves them to it.

BENJAMIN

So, how long will you stay?

KALUSHA

Not long. I fly back to Europe in a few days.

BENJAMIN

(looking at him)

You look tired.

KALUSHA

I'm fine. Derby's mum is in the private hospital now.

BENJAMIN

We heard. We will pray for her. Your uncle... And your cousin, Agnes. And Kande.

Kalusha nods. He knows.

BENJAMIN CONT'D

We'll pray for them all.

Elidah returns with a tray of tea and sandwiches. They move to the sofa. Elidah serves them both a cup of tea and a plate of sandwiches.

They sip tea in quiet reflection. The names of the dead hang in the air.

ELIDAH
Please tell Derby's mother we're
praying for her.

KALUSHA
I will.

ELIDAH
Kalu. I need a favor.

KALUSHA
Anything.

ELIDAH
Can you look out for Benji? I know
he's your older brother, but he has
less experience.

KALUSHA
He's stronger than you think! But
of course.

They share a brief, understanding smile.

BENJAMIN
Good. Now. Tell us about your plans
for the team.

Kalusha smiles.

KALUSHA
We win. We plan to win.

His dad smiles back at him and pats him on the back.

41 BEGIN. MONTAGE. VARIOUS.

41

Southern African 80's pop plays (e.g., Thank you Mr. DJ).

-- Blantyre, Malawi. Stadium changing room.

SUPERIMPOSE: November 13th 1988. CECAFA CUP. Zambia 3 -
Uganda 0

Kalusha scores with a fierce strike to wrap up the game.

The Zambian team dances in unison on the pitch celebrating
their win.

-- Lusaka, Zambia. Stadium.

SUPERIMPOSE: January 22nd 1989. World Cup Qualifier. Zambia
4 - Congo DR 2

The Zambian team score four fantastic goals.

The Zambian team dance alongside the pitch. They celebrate
with the fans in the stadium.

DENNIS (V.O.)

They've done it! Chipolopolo have
done it. We're one step closer to
the World Cup!

-- Rabat, Morocco. Stadium

SUPERIMPOSE: June 25th 1989. World Cup Qualifier. Zambia 1 -
Morocco 2

The Zambian team have lost. Some players sit on the pitch
with their heads in their hands, some squat looking sad,
others walk straight toward the changing rooms.

-- Dakar, Senegal. Stadium

SUPERIMPOSE: January 20th 1992, Africa Cup of Nations
Quarter Final. Zambia 0 - Ivory Coast 1

The Zambian team are all disappointed. Some players cry on
the sidelines. Some lie face down on the pitch in shock.
Kalusha walks straight off the pitch to the changing room.

-- Antananarivo, Madagascar. Zambia vs Madagascar.

SUPERIMPOSE: 20th December 1992. 1994 World Cup Qualifier.
Zambia 0 - Madagascar 2

It's the final five minutes of play. The Zambian team is
losing again. The Zambian team are tired, they're down 2 -
nil.

-- Zambian team changing room. Silence. A cramped room. No
music. No crowd. Just disappointment.

END OF MONTAGE

42 INT. SMALL OFFICE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1992

42

SAMUEL NDHLOVU, wearing a jacket labeled "COACH," sits at
his desk. Godfrey stands, jacket labeled "ASSISTANT COACH."
The players - Kalusha, Derby, Kelvin, David, Wisdom, Eston,
Johnson, and Richard - sit around listening.

SAMUEL

(To the players)

Three months.

A beat of silence. Godfrey and Samuel exchange a look.
Samuel stands up.

SAMUEL CONT'D
That's all we've got.

GODFREY
And right now, we're not ready.

Silence.

DERBY
(leaning forward)
We just came off a run of matches.

SAMUEL
We came off losses.

DERBY
Not all of them.

GODFREY
The ones that matter.

KALUSHA
Madagascar beat us.

A small ripple. Tension.

KELVIN
So what are you saying?

SAMUEL
I'm saying if we continue to play
like this, Africa's best team
doesn't go to the World Cup.

That lands. A small ripple of sighs.

Godfrey wanders over to the window.

DERBY
We're not underdogs anymore.

SAMUEL
No.
(a beat)
That's exactly the problem.

KALUSHA
Can we fix this?

Godfrey turns from the window.

GODFREY
We start with discipline.
(looking at the players)
Shape. Fitness. No passengers.

He lets the words hang.

GODFREY CONT'D
Some of you are coasting on talent.

DERBY
That's unfair.

GODFREY
It's accurate.

A long silence now. He softens - just slightly.

GODFREY CONT'D
This is not about talent.
(looking around again)
This is about whether you can
suffer.

SAMUEL
Senegal will make you suffer.
Nigeria and Cameroon will make you
suffer. And you can bet every Ngwee
in your bank accounts that Morocco
and Ivory Coast will make you
suffer.

GODFREY
You go one nil down, do you think
they'll let you back in?

SAMUEL
No.

A chair creaks as someone shifts.

GODFREY
So we decide now. Are we going to
play? Or are we going to win?

A long pause.

Then:

KALUSHA
We win.

Simple. Certain.

Samuel studies him.

The team watches Kalusha.

Nobody else speaks. The silence goes on slightly too long.

Then, one by one, the others nod. But Kalusha has already
looked away. He is staring at the floor.

43 INT. NIGHTCLUB. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1992

43

The Zambian team drown their sorrows in a loud nightclub. The losses sit with them in different ways - some loud, some quiet, some already gone.

Kalusha and Derby sit apart from the others. Bottles between them. The music is too much.

A long silence.

DERBY

You're starting to wonder if we're good enough.

Kalusha doesn't respond.

DERBY CONT'D

That's what I thought.

Kalusha picks up his bottle. Drinks. Says nothing.

Derby watches him.

Finally, he looks away. He picks up his own bottle.

They drink. Neither of them speaks again.

44 INT. SMALL OFFICE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

44

Two FAZ OFFICIALS sit among stacks of papers and scattered football equipment. Posters of the Zambian national team cover the walls. There's a knock at the door.

Samuel enters, holding a newspaper. His face is tense. He shakes hands with both men.

SAMUEL

Morning.

FAZ OFFICIAL 1

Please, sit Samuel.

Samuel doesn't sit. He holds up the newspaper: "Best team in Africa to lose their coach."

SAMUEL

I read this in the paper.

FAZ OFFICIAL 1

Samuel. We...

SAMUEL

Letting me find out from a newspaper. Godfrey will take over?

FAZ OFFICIAL 1
 (interrupting)
 We don't know how this got to the
 reporters before we could speak to
 you.

FAZ OFFICIAL 2
 You've done a very good job.

FAZ OFFICIAL 1
 We're changing direction.

Samuel starts to leave.

FAZ OFFICIAL 2
 Godfrey takes over today.

SAMUEL
 Today. Right.

Samuel disappointed, shakes their hands, and leaves.

45 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

45

Godfrey commands a training session. His jacket now reads
 "COACH." ALEX CHOLA (40s) assists, his jacket reads:
 "ASSISTANT COACH." Kalusha, Eston, Wisdom, Derby, Kelvin,
 Richard, and David and the full team attend.

The pitch is rough, the stadium worn down. Players wear
 mismatched kits.

They run football drills on one half of the field.

Kalusha arrives last, laces up his boots, and jogs to the
 far end. He wears new kit in Zambian colors.

GODFREY
 Line up.

The players move but not fast enough.

GODFREY CONT'D
 (to Kalusha)
 Captain.

A beat.

KALUSHA
 We just arrived.

GODFREY
 Then catch up.

Kalusha joins the other players as they line up to do
 sprints.

Derby approaches Kalusha. They hug briefly.

KALUSHA

Isn't it early to be back?

Derby looks at him. He doesn't pretend not to understand. A beat.

DERBY

I'm fine.

KALUSHA

It's only been a few weeks.

DERBY

Kalusha. I'm fine. How's Maureen?

GODFREY

(overhears the banter, to
the whole team but
directed at Kalusha)

Less talking, more sprinting!

The other players laugh.

Kalusha and Derby lower their voices.

KALUSHA

She's good.

DERBY

Nice kit.

KALUSHA

I got one for everyone.

DERBY

Imagine David Platt buying
England's kit.

KALUSHA

Or Italy asking Baresi.

DERBY

And look at this stadium. Look at
the pitch.

GODFREY

(to Derby)

Let's go!

Derby looks around at the stadium, dead grass, broken seats.

They inch closer to the start of the line.

DERBY

I've played here all my life.
Scored in these nets more times
than I can count.

KALUSHA

More than me?

DERBY

But not on dead grass. Broken
seats. Cold showers.

It's Derby's turn.

KALUSHA

Things will change, Derby.

DERBY

I hope so.

GODFREY

(To Derby)

Sprint!

Derby sprints off, leaving Kalusha, next in line, looking around at the ruined stadium: Broken benches, a muddy field, dried grass, peeling paint, and rubbish around the pitch.

46 EXT. ROAD. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

46

Nellie, now 15, and her brothers - Samson now 19, Charles Jr now 17 - sit in a funeral car.

They are dressed in black. The same clothes they wore to their mother's funeral.

Nellie looks down at her hands. She is still wearing the white gloves from the service. She starts to pull one off. Stops. Pulls it back on. She does this three or four times without knowing she's doing it.

Outside, the road is ordinary. People walking. A vendor. A child on a bicycle. The world not stopping.

Charles Jr reaches over and puts his hand over hers. Stills them.

She lets him.

They follow the main funeral car that carries their father's coffin.

47 EXT. CEMETERY. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

47

Nellie and her brothers stand in black, faces streaked with tears. WALLS fill the air.

Nellie's face doesn't move. She can't blink.

They are at the front of a crowded graveside service.

A coffin is lowered.

The priest begins to speak. The crowd becomes silent.

PRIEST

In the name of the father, and of
the son, and the holy spirit.
Brother Charles is brought to his
rest in the peace of Christ, in
heaven as he joins his dear wife,
Elizabeth, already in heaven. With
faith and hope in eternal life, let
us pray for his orphaned children.

In the distance, other funerals take place - all are
attended by young children.

Nellie and her brothers are led away. Nellie resists. She
collapses near the grave, falling to the ground, body
shaking.

NELLIE

(crying)

What will become of us?

Her brothers watch, frozen, trapped in trauma.

Slowly, Samson walks over, helps her up; they turn and walk
away with Charles Jr.

48 EXT. BACK OF NELLIE'S HOUSE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1993 48

Two or three days after the funeral. The back yard. Small
and functional. A washing line. A mango tree. A garden that
was once tended.

Nellie sits on the back step, still in funeral clothes,
barefoot. Samson comes out of the house with two cups of
tea. He sits beside her.

Neither speaks for a while.

SAMSON

Junior burnt the nshima.

NELLIE

I know. I could smell it.

A pause.

SAMSON

Mum would've gone mad.

Nellie almost smiles. Then doesn't.

NELLIE

She'd have made him eat it anyway.

A longer silence. The sounds of the street - normal sounds.
Music from somewhere. It feels wrong.

SAMSON

What do we do now?

NELLIE

What do you mean?

SAMSON

I mean - what do we do. Monday.
Tuesday. What happens.

NELLIE

School. I think.

SAMSON

(a beat)

Yeah.

He doesn't sound convinced. She notices.

NELLIE

Samson.

SAMSON

I'm fine.

NELLIE

You don't have to be.

SAMSON

(quietly)

I know.

He reaches over, puts his arm around her neck. The same gesture as earlier - but different now. Heavier. Like he's holding on.

SAMSON

Ku chalo.

Nellie doesn't respond immediately. Then, quietly:

NELLIE

Ku chalo.

A beat. The music from the street gets briefly louder. Samson's hand drops. He stares at the yard.

SAMSON

I might not go back to school.

Nellie turns to look at him.

NELLIE

What?

SAMSON

I don't know. I can't think about it yet.

NELLIE

You can't just-

(MORE)

NELLIE (cont'd)
 (a pause)
 You have to go back.

SAMSON
 (not arguing, just tired)
 I said I don't know.

Nellie looks at him. She wants to push. She doesn't. Not tonight.

They sit in the gathering dark. Tea cooling in their hands.

49 INT. TV STUDIO. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 1993 49

Dennis sits at the sports desk, facing the camera. His manner is bright, proud, completely unaware of what has already happened.

DENNIS
 And next - Senegal. Two games away
 from the World Cup. I'm told the
 boys are on their way as I speak.
 Good luck boys and God bless!

50 EXT. LUSAKA AIRPORT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 50

SUPERIMPOSE: Lusaka, Zambia. Tuesday, 27th April 1993.

Players arrive - they emerge from various cars, with family, with friends, with kit bags. The ordinary business of departure.

They slowly gather together outside the airport.

51 EXT. AIRPORT OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS 51

The family and friends wave from the observation deck as the players board the old plane.

52 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS 52

The same Buffalo sits on the runway, propellers idle. In the daylight, it looks different.

Kelvin tosses a football casually in the air, he tosses it to David, who holds it briefly and then tosses it back.

They turn and wave at the crowd on the observation deck. David cups his hand to his ear - someone is shouting something from up there. He can't hear it. He laughs and waves again.

They turn and walk toward the plane.

They board.

53 INT. KALUSHA'S HOUSE. EINDHOVEN, NETHERLANDS. DAY. 1993

53

Kalusha, five years older, clips on a Walkman to his tracksuit. He is in a large bedroom getting ready for a run.

SUPERIMPOSE: Eindhoven, The Netherlands. Wednesday, 28th April 1993.

As he puts on the headphones the phone rings.

Kalusha takes off his earphones and answers the phone.

KALUSHA

Kalusha Bwalya?

SAM PHIRI (ON THE PHONE)

Hello, Kalusha. It's Sam Phiri.

KALUSHA

Sam Phiri?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

I'm the accountant. From the Football Association of Zambia.

KALUSHA

The accountant?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

Yes.

KALUSHA

Are you calling about my trip tomorrow?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

Yes. And no. Ah. You see. Your trip to Dakar has changed.

KALUSHA

(Annoyed)

Is it money problems again?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

No. It's the boys. They didn't arrive in the Ivory Coast last night.

KALUSHA

What? Another delay? Are they still in Gabon?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

No. They didn't arrive.

KALUSHA

Yes, you said that. Where are they?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
Kalusha. I'm so sorry.

KALUSHA
About what?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
It's confirmed.

KALUSHA
What is?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
The plane, the Chipolopolo plane...
it crashed. Minutes after take off
from Libreville. The reports say
that everyone on board has
perished.

Kalusha freezes. He lowers the phone.

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
Hello? Kalusha? Hello?

Kalusha brings up the phone again to his ear.

KALUSHA
Wait. No. This can't be true. Check
again.

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
Kalusha. I'm sure of this. We
checked and checked again. A team
will leave later today to assess
and begin the process of...

Kalusha lowers the phone again and holds the phone against
his chest. A tear starts to fall from his eye.

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
Kalusha? Kalusha?

Kalusha wipes his eye and brings up the phone handle to his
ear again.

KALUSHA
Yes?

SAM (ON THE PHONE)
Have you turned on your TV today?

KALUSHA
No. Wait a minute.

Kalusha steps toward a small TV in the corner of the room
while still holding the phone.

He picks up a remote and uses it to turn on his TV. He
changes the channel until there is a news show.

ON TV MONITOR

A shaken local man stands on a beach in Gabon, speaking into a reporter's microphone. Curious onlookers stand in silence, waves breaking softly behind them.

MAN BEING INTERVIEWED

(in French)

It was dark... so at first we just saw a big light in the distance. Then there was a loud bang.

(He gestures to the ocean)

We ran down here and saw the light out there, in the water. We knew something terrible had happened

REPORTER

(in French)

And you went out on boats?

MAN BEING INTERVIEWED

(in French)

Yes. We decided to take our boats to see. And that is when we found the parts... floating everywhere.

END OF TV MONITOR

Kalusha lifts the phone up to his ear again and he mutes the TV.

KALUSHA

This can't be happening. Who was on the plane? Was-

Kalusha stops speaking. He pauses.

SAM (ON THE PHONE)

Most were on the plane. I'm so sorry Kalusha.

Kalusha sits down on the bed.

Tears run down his face.

Kalusha blinks and stares out of his window, not focused on what Sam is saying.

SAM (ON THE PHONE CONT'D)

We'll be making plans for everything shortly. We'll need you back here in Lusaka, Zambia.

Kalusha stares into space as tears roll down his face. The muted TV still reports on the crash.

54 INT. TV STUDIO. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

54

Dennis Liwewe sits at a news desk. His eyes are red. He grips a stack of papers, struggling to speak.

DENNIS

We must interrupt this broadcast.
We have lost our team. Nearly our
entire football team, the
Chipolopolo, have been involved in
a tragic plane crash in Libreville,
Gabon just minutes after takeoff.

He takes a shaky breath.

DENNIS CONT'D

We now know a few players were not
on the plane. The rest... did not
survive.

He stops and wipes his eyes.

He lowers his gaze, then gathers himself.

DENNIS CONT'D

Forgive me...

He pauses, breathing deeply, then looks back at the camera.

He wipes his eyes again. He sternly looks directly into the
camera.

DENNIS

We've lost our Chipolopolo, our
mighty copper bullets. May God help
the children left without their
fathers. The young women left
without their husbands. The parents
who have lost their sons. May God
help Zambia.

55 EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE KALUSHA BWALYA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

55

A car pulls into the driveway of a large suburban house.

The driver, ERWIN KOEMAN (early 30s, Dutch), steps out. He
is Kalusha's teammate at PSV Eindhoven.

Kalusha emerges from the house carrying a suitcase. It's
spring; the trees are becoming green again.

ERWIN

Here, let me take that.

Erwin takes the suitcase and puts it in the trunk.

KALUSHA

Thanks Erwin.

Erwin and Kalusha get in the car and leave.

56 INT. CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

56

Erwin drives along the highway toward Amsterdam airport.

ERWIN

How long will you be gone for?

KALUSHA

They don't know yet.

ERWIN

Kalu, if there is anything I can do for you, you just let me know.

KALUSHA

Thank you.

ERWIN

The boys wanted you to know that PSV is with you.

KALUSHA

Thank you. That means a lot to me.

Kalusha stares out the window. Flat Dutch landscape blurs past. Erwin drives. Neither of them says anything for a long time.

57 EXT. AIRPORT, AMSTERDAM. NIGHT. 1993

57

The car pulls up. Kalusha and Erwin get out. Erwin gets Kalusha's bags out of the trunk. He passes them to Kalusha.

ERWIN

Kalu. We were thinking of taking up a small collection. For the wives and children.

KALUSHA

It's a nice idea.

Kalusha wipes tears from his eyes.

KALUSHA CONT'D

Sorry.

ERWIN

No need to say sorry Kalu.

KALUSHA

It's just... It could've been me on that plane. It could've been my children. Maureen...

ERWIN

Kalusha...

KALUSHA

I've gotta go. I'll see you soon.

The men hug. Kalusha walks off before his emotions get the better of him.

Kalusha walks through the glass doors without looking back. Inside, through the glass, Erwin watches him go. He stands there for a moment, hands in his pockets, watching the doors close.

58 EXT. ROAD TO LUSAKA AIRPORT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 58

Nellie and Charles Jr walk slowly along the crowded road to the airport. They're dressed in black - the same clothes they wore to their dad's funeral. Nellie's face is streaked with tears.

The sound of WAILING and CRYING fills the air. Hundreds of mourners line the street, wrapped in black or in chitenges patterned with the Zambian flag.

CHARLES JR

Where is he, Nellie?

Charles doesn't answer. He stares down the road. From the distance, a motorcade of army trucks approaches - each one draped with the Zambian flag. Thirty coffins.

As the trucks roll past, women break from the crowd, throwing themselves across the trucks, screaming the names of their sons, husbands, brothers.

CHARLES JR CONT'D

There he is.

The truck with Kelvin Mutale passes. Nellie gasps, her eyes locked on it.

She follows it with her gaze until it disappears down the road. The crowd fades around her - just the sound of her own breath and the distant crying. She is frozen in grief.

59 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 59

Samson and Nellie watch Dennis Liwewe's report on their TV. Nellie chews on her finger nails, eyes wet. Nellie is dressed in sports clothes.

Neither speaks.

She looks back at Samson. He has not moved. His tea from the previous night is still on the table, cold and untouched. He is watching the TV but not seeing it.

Nellie gets up and grabs a football and a training bag and leaves the house without saying a word.

60 INT. KALUSHA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 60

A memorial gathering fills Kalusha's home. Around a hundred guests - friends, family, teammates - move quietly through the rooms. Conversations are hushed. Grief hangs heavy.

In the open-plan living room, older relatives sit on ornate sofas. The dining table beyond is covered with dishes. Along the walls, people sit shoulder to shoulder on chairs, murmuring.

From the kitchen, the clatter of pots and low voices of women preparing food.

Kalusha and Derby stand together near the window, each with a cup and saucer in hand. Kalusha stirs his tea without purpose, watching his daughters and other children playing in the garden.

Outside, beneath a large black tent, men unfold tables and chairs.

Every so often, someone arrives. They enter with a sudden, piercing loud WAIL that cuts through the silence. Others join in. The silence resumes when they have let out their grief.

Among the arrivals is Kalusha's brother Benjamin Jr. He walks directly toward Kalusha; they embrace lightly, Kalusha does not avert his gaze.

BENJAMIN JR

How are you Kalusha?

Kalusha indicates toward his children.

KALUSHA

This has been tough.

BENJAMIN JR

Yeah. It is.

Kalusha looks down at his tea. He places the cup on a nearby table.

BENJAMIN JR

(nodding slowly, looking
around the room)

Kalusha. The team needs to talk.
Sooner rather than later.

Kalusha does not respond.

BENJAMIN JR CONT'D

We need to decide. Soon.

KALUSHA

I know. I know.

As he says this, he spots Harrison (now 24) arriving. He is composed where others are devastated - not cold, but already somewhere else in his thinking. He greets people efficiently.

When he reaches Benjamin Jr, Kalusha, and Derby, he shakes Kalusha's hand and holds it a fraction longer than necessary.

HARRISON

How are you holding up?

KALUSHA

I'm here.

Harrison holds his gaze a beat too long. Again, Kalusha does not respond.

A large group of FAZ officials arrive.

Kalusha winces.

Harrison notices the reaction.

Harrison walks away confidently to greet the officials. Benjamin Jr follow. Kalusha watches them go.

DERBY

He's counting.

Kalusha doesn't respond. He turns back to the window, to his children.

61 INT. KALUSHA'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

61

Elidah (now in her 50s, in a smart black dress and matching chitenge, gray hair) stands at the kitchen counter surrounded by dishes filled with food ready to be served. Her hands move automatically - arranging, filling, covering - but her eyes are far away.

Through the open doorway, she sees Kalusha still at the window, staring out into the garden. Picking up some of the food, she moves toward him.

62 INT. KALUSHA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

62

Hands full, Elidah emerges from the kitchen, scanning the crowded rooms. She spots her husband chatting politely with guests.

She places the food on the main table, and heads toward Benjamin.

Benjamin (also now older and graying), holds an empty dirty plate with plastic cutlery and a napkin on it.

Elidah approaches, leans in close.

ELIDAH

Sorry to interrupt. Excuse me.

(Whispering to her
husband)

It might be a good idea to go speak
to Kalu.

She gestures toward Kalusha. Benjamin nods and excuses himself from his conversation with the guest.

BENJAMIN

Excuse me.

Elidah takes her husband's empty plate, and returns to the kitchen. Benjamin walks toward his son. As he reaches him, a small group of guests arrive to pay respects; they shake hands with Kalusha and Benjamin.

GUEST 1

Kalusha. Can we offer our
condolences.

GUEST 2

And if you need anything, anything,
just ask us.

KALUSHA

Thank you.

BENJAMIN

Thank you.

The guests move on. Before father and son can talk, two others step forward.

GUEST 3

My condolences, Kalusha.

They both also shake hands with Kalusha and Benjamin.

GUEST 4

My condolences, Kalusha.

The men move away. Outside, loud wailing erupts again. Father and son see a new group arriving - some sobbing uncontrollably.

Among them is Samuel, his face solemn.

Kalusha watches from the window, his eyes distant. He looks down at his cup of tea, stirring it again absently.

BENJAMIN

Kalu. We should go and greet them.

Kalusha sets down the tea and starts to walk out of the room away from the guests. Benjamin sighs and heads outside to meet the new guests.

Just as Kalusha reaches the doorway, Harrison catches up with him again.

HARRISON
Kalusha. I spoke to FAZ.

KALUSHA
And?

HARRISON
They want to move quickly.

He holds Kalusha's gaze.

HARRISON CONT'D
So do I.

Kalusha does not reply. Harrison turns and walks away.

DERBY
I was wrong. He wasn't counting.
He's already counted.

Kalusha storms out of the living room. Derby follows.

63 INT. KALUSHA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

63

Kalusha enters, loosening his tie, removing his jacket. He tosses it onto the bed and sits heavily on the edge of the bed.

The sounds of crying drift in from outside. He lowers his head.

A long silence.

Derby is already in the room. He stands near the window.

Kalusha wipes his eyes.

KALUSHA
Derby. I don't know how to do this.

He doesn't look up.

Kalusha finally breaks down, crying openly. Derby walks over. Sits. Puts his arm around his shoulders.

He waits, holding Kalusha's grief.

Kalusha stops crying.

DERBY
It was good to have the memorial here. The boys would have loved this.

Kalusha wipes tears from his eyes.

DERBY CONT'D
And you're holding up.

KALUSHA
I'm hiding in here.

DERBY
Like a school boy.

Derby playfully punches Kalusha. Kalusha laughs weakly.

KALUSHA
Why aren't you crying?

Kalusha sobs and wipes more tears from his eyes. Derby rises, grabs some tissues and hands them to Kalusha.

Kalusha takes one, wipes his face.

KALUSHA CONT'D
I could've been on that plane.

DERBY
But you weren't. And now you're here.

KALUSHA
But why did God save me?

DERBY
I don't know.

A knock interrupts.

KALUSHA
(To someone outside)
Yes?

A person opens the door slightly, leaning in to speak.

PERSON AT THE DOOR
Sorry to disturb you, but His Excellency, the President is here.

KALUSHA
OK. Tell them we're coming.

The person closes the door, leaving it slightly ajar.

DERBY
Chiluba is here.

KALUSHA
That fucking corrupt thief caused all of this.

DERBY

We can hate him later. Let's go.
You need to show your face. Today
is for our brothers.

A beat.

KALUSHA

OK.

Kalusha sighs and wipes his eyes a few times to calm himself
down.

A long silence.

KALUSHA CONT'D

And if Harrison is captain?

DERBY

(interrupting)

We don't need to talk about that
today.

Kalusha nods.

64 INT. KALUSHA'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

64

In the hallway, Elidah has come to the door. The door is
ajar. She peers inside.

Through the gap: Kalusha on the bed. Talking. Derby is
beside him, but Elidah can't see Derby. To her, the room
holds only her son, alone, speaking to no one.

She doesn't move. She listens. She scans.

Her face doesn't show shock. It shows something older than
shock - a mother recognizing a grief she cannot name and
cannot take away.

She waits. She gives him time.

She closes her eyes. Opens them.

KALUSHA O.S.

Derby, I don't know if I can do
this.

Elidah hesitates.

65 INT. KALUSHA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

65

Kalusha is oblivious to his mother outside the room.

Derby is still in the room. Elidah does not see him. She
never will.

DERBY

Only you can make that decision.
But you don't have to decide that
today. Today is for mourning. We
can deal with the rest later.

KALUSHA

Thanks Derby.

DERBY

Come. Let's go greet Samuel and the
President and all of them. Show
them we're still here.

They rise to leave the room. As they do, there is a knock on
the door. Elidah enters and walks over to Kalusha.

ELIDAH

There you are Kalu. You need to
eat.

KALUSHA

I'm not hungry, mum.

ELIDAH

The President is here.

KALUSHA

I know.

ELIDAH

(a beat)

You were talking to yourself in
here.

Kalusha looks at her. A long beat.

ELIDAH CONT'D

(quietly)

Good. You keep talking to him.

She reaches for his hand. She holds it like only a mother
can, like how she held it when he was five, and ten, and
twenty.

Kalusha looks at her. He holds her hand back.

ELIDAH

Come.

Kalusha follows Elidah out the room. Derby joins them.

They pass framed photographs lining the wall - snapshots of
Kalusha and his wife, Maureen Nkandu, their children, their
home, moments of joy frozen in time.

Among them is a large color photograph of the Zambian
national team - the full squad and coaching staff, smiling
proudly.

Slowly, the color begins to fade from the picture.

One by one, the players' faces turn black and white - fading into memory.

All except Derby, Harrison, Charly, Johnson, and Kalusha.

66 INT. PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM. FAZ HEADQUARTERS. LUSAKA,
ZAMBIA. 1993

66

A small room packed too tightly. Microphones on the table. Fluorescent lights. FREDDIE MWILA, the new coach - in his 50s - sits beside Kalusha. A middle-aged FAZ OFFICIAL is in the back row.

REPORTERS fill the room - mainly local press. One older international BBC JOURNALIST is also present.

REPORTER 1

Kalusha. Is the team ready?
Practically speaking you don't have
a squad.

KALUSHA

We have new players. Young but
good.

REPORTER 1

Young and inexperienced. Can they
take on Morocco?

KALUSHA

Everyone starts somewhere.

REPORTER 2

(pressing)

Do you actually believe Zambia can
still qualify for the World Cup?
After everything?

Harrison enters and heads toward the FAZ official at the back. They shake hands, an unspoken easiness bonds them.

Kalusha's attention is directed toward the disturbance.

KALUSHA

(a beat, the wrong
length)

We'll compete.

REPORTER 2

That's not what I asked. I asked if
you believe it.

Silence. Kalusha looks at the table. Then the reporter. He opens his mouth.

Nothing comes.

He looks down at his hands. Freddie shifts beside him, about to fill the silence.

KALUSHA

(quietly)

I believe in the players. What they're capable of.

REPORTER 3

Some are saying the FAZ acted too quickly. That you're not ready for this.

Kalusha looks up. At the back of the room, Harrison's gaze is level, unreadable.

KALUSHA

(controlled, but barely)

We're - The players are ready.

BBC REPORTER

And the captaincy? Are you ready? Wouldn't it be better to bring in someone fresh?

The room turns to the reporter asking the question they all wanted to ask. Everyone in the room knows what Kalusha is being asked.

Kalusha doesn't look at Harrison. He doesn't need to.

He opens his mouth. A beat. Then, very quietly, almost to himself:

KALUSHA

I don't-

He stops. He looks at his hands. He looks at Harrison.

KALUSHA CONT'D

That's a decision for the Football Association.

BBC REPORTER

Is that your answer?

A long pause. Kalusha is flustered. An empathetic silence fills the room.

FREDDIE

(intervening)

Next question.

The reporters continue. Kalusha's hands are flat on the table. He is very still.

At the back of the room, Harrison watches him - and then quietly leaves.

67 INT. FAZ OFFICE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

67

A modest office. The FAZ official - suits, paperwork, the particular efficiency of men who administer other people's ambitions - from the previous scene sits across from Harrison. Kalusha is absent.

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

The association's position is that we need to move quickly. The world is watching.

HARRISON

I understand.

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

Kalusha is still the best player. That's not the question.

HARRISON

Then what is?

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

The question is whether he can carry this. Whether he can be the face of this.

A beat.

HARRISON

He's barely left the house. You saw the press conference.

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

And we need someone who is present.

HARRISON

I'm present.

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

Yes. You are.

Harrison nods. He doesn't smile. He knows the difference between being given something and earning it.

HARRISON

And Kalusha?

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

He'll be told.

HARRISON

(after a pause)

I'll tell him myself.

The FAZ official looks at him - surprised, but not displeased.

FAZ OFFICIAL 3

OK.

Harrison stands. He straightens his jacket. He pauses at the door.

HARRISON

It's the right decision.

He leaves. The FAZ official watches him go - not entirely certain.

68 EXT. TRAINING GROUND CAR PARK. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 68

Kalusha sits in his car outside the training ground. He has been sitting there a while, sports bag on the passenger seat.

Other cars arrive. Players emerge. They make their way into the training ground, oblivious to Kalusha's presence.

Harrison's car pulls up. He gets out. Walks over to Kalusha. He stops at the driver's window. He taps the window.

Kalusha looks up, sees him, and slowly winds down his window,

HARRISON

I wanted to tell you myself before we go in.

Kalusha waits.

HARRISON CONT'D

I've spoken to FAZ. I'm going to take over. While you-

KALUSHA

While I what?

HARRISON

While you find your way back.

A beat.

KALUSHA

And if I don't?

HARRISON

Then we have bigger problems.

Silence. In the background the training commences.

KALUSHA

Let's go in captain. We shouldn't be late.

Kalusha grabs his bag and opens his door. Kalusha walks off toward the training ground. Harrison pauses. He hangs back.

He waits. Then, follows.

69 EXT. LUSAKA STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

69

Nellie (flip-flops, jeans, oversized t-shirt) walks along a dusty road near the stadium. She carries several plastic bags, green vegetables poking out.

She pause when she sees a sign: "Independence Stadium, Lusaka, Zambia."

Across the road, a bus stop. In the other direction, the stadium looms. She turns and walks toward it.

She slips through a half-open metal gate. Inside, another sign reads: "Lusaka Stadium. Chipolopolo Memorial Site. 1993."

Mounds of soil, about a meter high, line the space like graves.

Each mound is covered with flowers and wreaths. A wooden frame holds a black-and-white photo of a player.

Beneath each, a carved plaque with a name and birth date. The date of death on every single one: 27th April 1993.

Visitors walk quietly among the graves.

Nellie passes a few: Godfrey "Ucar" Chitalu... David Efford Chabala. She stops at one. Kelvin "Malaza" Mutale.

A barefoot security guard approaches. His uniform hangs loose, the truncheon on his belt almost slipping. Nellie wipes her tears before he arrives.

SECURITY GUARD

You're looking at Kelvin. Many people like that one. Player of the Year in 1990... grave in 1993. So fast.

NELLIE

(Reading softly)

"Dad, You have left us alone. What are we to do now?"

SECURITY GUARD

What?

NELLIE

It's written here. On his photo.

He follows her gaze, nodding slowly.

SECURITY GUARD

Ah yes. The families... unimaginable.

(MORE)

SECURITY GUARD (cont'd)

(beat)

He was very good, that one.

NELLIE

He was the best. I saw him once.
Five years ago. When they came back
from the Olympics. I saw him on the
road from the airport. With my mum
and dad.

SECURITY GUARD

I missed that parade.

NELLIE

They've passed too.

SECURITY GUARD

Who?

NELLIE

My mum and dad.

SECURITY GUARD

My condolences.

NELLIE

Thank you.

SECURITY GUARD

Come back in the rainy season.
They'll build a real memorial. Real
graves.

He gestures toward plastic-covered mounds.

SECURITY GUARD

And I'll get a real uniform. To
protect our heroes.

Nellie turns to leave. She shifts the weight of her plastic
bags. The guard walks off in another direction.

She pauses near the gate for one last glance. A name catches
her eye:

"Patrick "Bomber" Banda - 28th July 1974 - 27th April 1993."

Below it, a handwritten note on scrap paper reads:

"Taken too soon at 18 years. Gone is our father, our
husband, our brother and our son."

A gust of wind lifts the paper. It flutters loose, held only
by small rocks. It starts to blow away - until Nellie
catches it with her foot.

She kneels, sets her shopping down, and carefully tucks the
note back under the stones.

She picks up her bags, steps through the gate, and quietly closes it behind her.

70 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

70

Nellie returns home, sets down her groceries. Loud music blares from the living room.

She moves quietly, unpacking her vegetables - not much food, but she works methodically, on auto-pilot.

She chops onions. Stirs a pot of Nshima. Steam rises.

SAMSON (O.S.)

Nellie. My sista Nellie.

Her older brother Samson staggers into the kitchen - drunk, eyes red, reeking of beer.

He staggers toward her. She ignores him and continues cooking.

SAMSON

You're cooking. Good.

He sways, catches himself against the cupboard.

SAMSON CONT'D

We're going to the tavern to watch the game.

NELLIE

(quietly, still cooking)

The food will be cold.

He opens the fridge - empty except for six large beers. He grabs three beers.

SAMSON

Who made you my mother?

NELLIE

She did. When she died.

Samson stops. Nearly drops the beers.

NELLIE

I'm going to Zambia Airways to ask for a job.

SAMSON

Little miss perfect. And school?

Nellie stops chopping; the knife pauses.

NELLIE

I'll drop out.

SAMSON
Whatever. I'm leaving.

He stumbles out.

SAMSON (O.S.)
Tiyeni!

Moments later: laughter, clinking bottles, the sound of the door slamming. Then - silence. Just the bubble of the nshima, Nellie chopping.

71 EXT. NELLIE'S BACK YARD. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 71

Nellie steps outside with two plates and bowls - nshima and vegetables - setting them on a straw mat. There is not much; but it's enough.

Her younger brother Charles Jr follows carrying a water jug and bowl.

They sit cross-legged. Wash their hands. Eat quietly.

CHARLES JR
You don't have to drop out.

NELLIE
I have to find a job.

Charles Jr keeps eating. He doesn't look at Nellie.

CHARLES JR
I already did.

NELLIE
What do you mean?

CHARLES JR
I dropped out. Got a job.

NELLIE
Charles! Why?

CHARLES JR
It's done. You stay in school.
Kande Junior got me a job at that
car place.

NELLIE
Why didn't you discuss this with
me? You have to go back to school.
You don't owe me your life.

CHARLES JR
And you don't owe me yours.

Nellie looks around. The empty, bare room. The small amounts of food. Her schoolbooks on the table.

She nods.

Beat.

NELLIE

One year. Then you go back to school.

Nellie gets up and quietly places her schoolbooks into a bag and slides them under the table.

CHARLES JR

Deal.

They both know this is a lie.

NELLIE

Does Samson know?

CHARLES JR

He doesn't.

NELLIE

It should be him going to work.

CHARLES JR

Yeah.

Beat.

CHARLES JR CONT'D

More importantly, where are we going to watch the game?

NELLIE

Not at the tavern.

CHARLES JR

Never. That's where dad used to go.

NELLIE

The tuck shop, then?

CHARLES JR

I'll check if they're showing it.

They eat in silence - comforted just by being together. In the distance, people talk, laugh, sing.

72 INT. KALUSHA'S HOUSE. EINDHOVEN, NETHERLANDS. EVENING. 1993 72

The house is quiet. Kalusha enters, still in his suit from his flight home from Zambia.

Maureen is elsewhere in the house. The children are asleep.

Kalusha dumps his suitcase casually on the kitchen floor. He takes off his watch and a Chipolopolo bracelet and casually throws them onto the table. Jacket comes off, tie loosened.

He reaches for the fridge and finds a cold beer.

He opens it and drinks it like water.

A knock. Erwin lets himself in.

The men hug.

ERWIN

When did you get back?

KALUSHA

Literally an hour ago.

Erwin looks at him.

ERWIN

How are you?

KALUSHA

Exhausted.

ERWIN

I bet.

Kalusha collapses onto a kitchen chair. Erwin grabs a beer from the fridge for himself.

ERWIN CONT'D

You haven't called.

KALUSHA

I know.

ERWIN

The boys have been asking about you.

A silence.

ERWIN CONT'D

About the way forward for Zambia.

KALUSHA

I'm not captain anymore. But they want me to go back. For the qualifiers. Denmark training. Then Morocco. All of it.

ERWIN

Who made the decision?

KALUSHA

FAZ.

ERWIN

Shit call.

KALUSHA

It was right.

ERWIN

What do you want to do?

Kalusha doesn't answer immediately.

KALUSHA

Stay here. I don't know if I can walk out there again. In that shirt. In front of everyone.

ERWIN

Then don't.

KALUSHA

We lost thirty brothers, Erwin. Thirty people on one plane.

ERWIN

I know.

KALUSHA

And I was here. Getting ready for a run. A bloody run.

He stops.

KALUSHA CONT'D

One thought that goes over and over and over in my head. Why me? Why am I still here?

Erwin is quiet. He knows there is no answer to that.

ERWIN

So stay. Stay here. No one would blame you.

Kalusha is quiet for a moment. He looks at the bracelet on the table.

He reaches for the Chipolopolo bracelet and plays with it in his hand.

KALUSHA

When we were 15, all of us used to play on a dirt pitch. We made goal posts out of whatever we could find. Bare feet. A ball made of plastic bags.

A beat.

KALUSHA CONT'D

We always said we'd do something with it. Make it mean something.

Erwin looks at him. He does not push.

KALUSHA CONT'D

They can't finish it now. And I don't know if I can.

From another room - Maureen.

ERWIN

I should get back. Listen. No matter what you decide, you know where I am.

KALUSHA

I know.

Erwin finishes his beer. He places the empty beer in the sink.

Kalusha stands to say goodbye. The men hug.

Erwin leaves and Kalusha returns to his seat, his beer, and to playing with the Chipolopolo bracelet.

73 EXT. TRAINING GROUND. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

73

A heavy metal door opens onto an empty, sun-bleached training field. Twenty or so Zambian football players and FAZ staff, casually dressed, stroll out, chatting quietly.

Harrison leads the team; he has settled in his new role after a month or so.

Kalusha emerges last and takes his place among the group.

Kalusha and Harrison are joined by GIBBY MBASELA (21), MORDON MALITOLI (20), KENNETH MALITOLI (21), JAMES PHIRI (17), and HAPPY SICHIKOLO (17). They are young, noticeably.

Freddie stands at the front as the new coach - tracksuit, whistle, calm authority.

The stadium beyond is still run down - peeling paint, rust, damp stains, litter scattered among the stands.

Freddie steps forwards as the last of the players take a seat.

FREDDIE

Gentlemen. Four games away from the 1994 World Cup. Four games that will define our lives.

(he starts passing out papers)

We've accepted an offer from Denmark who will host us for a month's training camp. Then Ian Porterfield will take over as coach.

A ripple of excited chatter spreads through the players.

JAMES

EICHO!

DERBY

A Scottish coach!

FREDDIE

We leave as soon as possible. Maybe next week. Need to sort out a few passports.

JAMES

Coach, will there be separate training for us goalkeepers?

FREDDIE

Yes, I'm sure.

GIBBY

(hesitant)

Coach... What plane will we fly with?

The laughter and chatter die down. Freddie shifts, eyes flicking to Kalusha, then back to Gibby.

Everyone looks at the coach.

There's a pause before he answers. He shifts on his feet. He looks at the floor. He looks at Kalusha and then at Gibby.

FREDDIE

With British Airways. The Danish are covering everything.

Relief. A few nods.

MORDON

And after Denmark?

FREDDIE

We'll open our campaign here in Lusaka - against Morocco.

HAPPY

(grinning)

Ah... coach. For such a long time... Can we bring our girlfriends?

The players burst out laughing.

MORDON

Or our wives!

JAMES

Or for some of us, both!

More laughter. Freddie chuckles too.

Harrison interjects.

HARRISON

We minimize distractions.
Girlfriends and wives stay home.

The laughter lingers.

FREDDIE

Alright. Let's go.

Freddie starts to pace as the team line up to start the drills.

74 EXT. TRAINING GROUND - CONTINUOUS

74

Two lines. Sharp passes, movement, finish.

Harrison wears the captain's armband. The players respond to him - they try, they work. But there is a flatness. The drill is correct. Something is missing.

Kalusha joins the back of the line.

The drill reaches Harrison. He plays it forward. The move breaks down. Mordon misses his run. Freddie blows his whistle.

FREDDIE

Again.

The drill resets. The time Kalusha is at the front.

He receives the ball. One touch. He does not look - he already knows where everyone is. He plays it. The move flows. Mordon hits his run perfectly. Goal.

The players react differently. Not celebration but recognition. Something clicked.

From the sideline, Harrison watches.

He watches Kalusha jog back to the line. Kalusha does not look at Harrison.

He watches the younger players orient toward him without thinking. He watches Freddie thinking the same thing.

Harrison crosses his arms. His hand rests on the captaincy armband.

He looks down and around. He is not ready to do it here. Not yet. But the decision to take off the armband has been made.

75 EXT. TRAINING GROUND - CONTINUOUS

75

The training winds up, laughter trailing off as the team leave the field. Kalusha lingers, approaches Freddie.

KALUSHA

Coach.

FREDDIE

Yes, Kalu?

KALUSHA

Before we leave, we should go to the memorial site. As a team.

FREDDIE

That's a good idea. It'll remind us why we're here.

They shake hands. There is a pause. Kalusha walks off first.

FREDDIE CONT'D

Kalusha.

KALUSHA

Yes.

FREDDIE

(a beat)

Nothing. See you tomorrow.

Freddie turns away toward the other coaches. Kalusha hesitates, then follows his team mates out of the training ground.

76 EXT. LUSAKA STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

76

Two old buses rumble up to the stadium gates - freshly painted with the Zambian flag and the word Chipolopolo.

As they park, Nellie walks in the distance - shopping bags in hand, back turned to the arriving buses. She disappears down the road.

The barefoot security guard rushes to open the gates, salutes sharply as the bus rolls in.

The players step out - silent, respectful. Freddie and Kalusha lead the way toward the rows of graves.

No words. Just the sound of wind and footsteps.

77 INT. SMALL BAR. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993

77

A small, dim bar. The barkeeper moves quietly in the background.

Joel, Happy, Gibby, Mordon, and Kenneth sit around a table scattered with empty Mosi bottles. A TV in the corner has

silenced them.

TV MONITOR:

DENNIS (ON TV)

Their next game is undecided but
would likely be a friendly here in
Lusaka.

Harrison enters and heads toward his teammates. He takes a
seat casually.

JOEL

Is Kalusha joining us?

HARRISON

He's on his way.

MORDON

What did you want to talk to us
about?

Harrison grabs a full beer from the table and gulps down too
much beer for the situation.

HARRISON

When Kalusha arrives, I'm going to
give it back.

JOEL

What do you mean?

GIBBY

Does FAZ know?

HARRISON

I requested it.

KENNETH

You've held us Harrison.

JOEL

Yeah, we appreciate it.

Harrison leans back on his chair.

HARRISON

The boys play for him. That's the
truth of it.

They all fall silent.

HARRISON CONT'D

This was my decision. If he thinks
it was FAZ, he won't take it. You
all know that.

GIBBY

And what if he won't take it?

KENNETH

Then, we've got bigger problems.

The door opens. Derby enters first. Then Kalusha. He reads the room immediately - all of them, together, Harrison in the center.

He looks at Harrison.

HARRISON CONT'D

(to Kalusha, flat, no ceremony)

Sit down, Kalu.

A beat.

HARRISON CONT'D

We need a captain. Stop wasting time.

The other players look at Kalusha. Harrison looks at the table.

A long silence.

Kalusha looks around the room. At Joel. At Gibby, At Mordon and Kenneth. At Derby.

Then, slowly, Kalusha sits.

78 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 78

The stadium heaves with life - a sea of flags, whistles, and dust. Supporters cram every inch, roaring.

Players emerge from the tunnel, warming up under the blazing sun.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Ten minutes to kick-off. The first international game for the new Chipolopolo. With Kalusha back as captain.

On the sidelines of the Zambian benches, Freddie Mwila stands beside IAN PORTERFIELD, late 40s, Scottish, tracksuit tucked in, calm focus. They exchange nods as the anthems begin.

79 EXT. STREET. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 79

Nellie and Charles Jr walk along a busy road. They're purposive.

The streets are alive with anticipation. People walk around in all directions, as purposive as the siblings.

80 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1993 80

Dennis Liwewe commentates offscreen, parallel to the game preparations on the pitch.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Back in Lusaka. Back on the pitch.
Whatever happens today - they
showed up.

81 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS 81

Nellie and Charles Jr weave through the busy street,
scanning for a TV.

They pass a full bar.

CHARLES JR

(to the people in the
bar)

Has it started?

BAR PERSON

Not yet. Ten minutes.

NELLIE

(to Charles)

Charles! We can still make it.

CHARLES JR

(to Nellie)

Come on Nellie!

They run toward the distant sound of drums and cheers - the stadium.

82 EXT. OUTSIDE THE STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 82

The national anthem echoes inside. Nellie and Charles Jr reach the closed gates.

CHARLES JR

Follow me.

He leads her toward a crowd slipping through a hole in the fence.

CHARLES JR CONT'D

Here, Nellie!

They squeeze into the crowd - jostled, nervous, exhilarated. Charles Jr never lets go of her hand.

They duck through the fence, breathless - then break into a run, finding space near the far end of the pitch.

NELLIE

We made it!

CHARLES JR
Told you. Better than the tuck
shop!

He beams, scanning the field.

CHARLES JR CONT'D
(excited, pointing)
There's Kalu!

83 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

83

The crowd roars as the whistle blows.

DENNIS (V.O.)
And we are underway here in Lusaka!
Zambia in green, facing Morocco.
The first qualifier since the
tragedy. And Kalusha's first game
as the captain.

The players move with precision and hunger - Kalusha
commanding the midfield.

Just before the tenth minute, Johnson Bwalya strikes but
hits the post.

After 15 minutes, Morocco score.

The crowds in the stadium are silent as the Moroccan players
run to the corner to celebrate.

Kalusha does not react. He stares at the pitch. Still.

An hour of play goes by. The Moroccans defend well.

Zambia is awarded a free kick.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
And here we have a chance to
equalize with 60 minutes played.
Kalusha will step up to take it.

Kalusha steps up to take the penalty. The crowd is quiet.

Kalusha kicks the ball straight over the defenders and
scores.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
Gooooooooaaaaal! KALUSHAaaaaa
BWALYAaaaaa has equalized for
Zambia!

The Zambian team rush to the fans; they are swarmed on the
sidelines.

Kalusha stands apart. Again, still. He does not react and
stares at the action.

He seems oblivious to the cheering around him. Harrison approaches him; they fist bump, bringing Kalusha back to the game.

The whistle blows and the Moroccan team kick off again.

Johnson Bwalya is just outside the box, he passes to Kalusha Bwalya, but he's intercepted.

The Moroccan player who intercepted the ball tries to pass it to his teammate.

Johnson Bwalya quickly strikes the ball perfectly into the right lower corner of the net.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
Johnson strikes. He scores!!!
GOOOOOOaaaaaaaal! Johnson Bwalya
has scored! He has scored!

The Zambian team rush toward Johnson.

The crowd loses control and invade the pitch.

In the last minute, the referee looks at his watch, and blows his whistle.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
And that's it! CHIPOLOPOLO have
done it! We've WON!

Some of the Zambian team fall to their knees. The Moroccan team walk off the pitch.

The pitch is invaded a second time.

Nellie is frozen, staring at the pitch. Charles shakes her out of her freeze.

Kalusha, on the pitch, emulates Nellie. He is frozen. Once again, Harrison approaches him. They hug. The crowds soon reach them both and hoist them both onto their shoulders.

The stadium starts chanting again:

WHOLE STADIUM
CHIPOLOPOLO! ZAMBIA KU CHALO!

Nellie remains silent, trapped in awe.

84 EXT. AIRPORT. CASABLANCA, MOROCCO. DAY. 1993

84

A large bus unceremoniously pulls up to the airport. A small Zambian flag on the door.

The Chipolopolo players file off the bus, subdued, heads low. They pull their bags from the luggage hold.

Ian Porterfield steps off, grabs a kit bag.

IAN

Come on lads. Let's get our bags
and get home.

A reporter approaches with a notepad.

BBC REPORTER

Ian Porterfield? BBC. Tried to
reach you last night.

IAN

Go on.

BBC REPORTER

That loss ends Zambia's World Cup
hopes. Was the new Chipolopolo team
really ready for international
football?

The players glance over, avoiding eye contact, but annoyed.

IAN

Damn right we were. Everyone wanted
a miracle. Didn't happen. But this-
(gestures to his players)
-this is only the beginning.

BBC REPORTER

How's the team feeling?

IAN

Gutted. But we've got Tunisia next
year. That's our focus now.

BBC REPORTER

You think Zambia can still win the
Africa Cup of Nations?

IAN

Aye, I do.

The reporter, nods leaves. Freddie approaches Ian.

FREDDIE

What do you think the world thinks
of us, Ian?

IAN

They think we don't stand a chance.
Stuff them.

Ian pats Freddie on the back, they both grab their bags, and
walk off.

Empty. The same kind of pitch Kalusha grew up on. He is
alone, in training clothes, a ball at his feet.

He doesn't run drills. He just passes the ball against a wall. One foot. Then the other. The way he would have done at fifteen. The sound of it is the only sound.

After a long time, Derby arrives. He sits on the wall and watches. He doesn't ask Kalusha why he is here at dawn. He already knows.

DERBY

We got to the AFCON next year.

Kalusha passes the ball against the wall.

DERBY CONT'D

Six months ago, we didn't have a team.

KALUSHA

I know.

DERBY

So what are you doing out here?

KALUSHA

I don't know what we're playing for anymore. We were supposed to get to the world cup. For them. We didn't.

The ball comes back off the wall. Kalusha stops it under his foot.

KALUSHA CONT'D

What do we tell them now?

Derby doesn't answer immediately. He looks at the pitch. At the wall. At the charcoal lines someone has drawn for goalposts - still there, still the same.

DERBY

We tell them we're still here.

KALUSHA

That's not enough.

DERBY

It's what we got.

Kalusha looks at the charcoal goalposts. He picks up the ball. He walks back to his mark. He shoots. It hits the wall inside the lines.

He picks up the ball again. And starts again.

86 EXT. KALUSHA BWALYA'S HOUSE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1994

86

A sleek van pulls up to a metal gate. A GUARD opens it. The van drives up a gravel driveway.

Joel and Benjamin Jr step out, followed by the DRIVER. They approach the front door; Joel knocks.

Kalusha opens it, greeting his brothers warmly. Derby stands behind him.

BENJAMIN JR

Ready?

KALUSHA

Gimme a minute.

Kalusha disappears down the hall.

The driver gathers the luggage, loads the van. Kalusha returns carrying his daughter TAMELA BWALYA (7).

JOEL

Tamela!

Tamela smiles shyly. Elidah and Benjamin join them outside.

ELIDAH

You'll be late.

BENJAMIN JR

Ma, I've been trying to tell him.

Kalusha hands Tamela to his mother. He pats his pockets.

KALUSHA

My wallet!

He jogs back inside.

BENJAMIN

He's been quiet.

BENJAMIN JR

We'll talk to him.

ELIDAH

He has too much on his shoulders.
This Cup of Nations.

JOEL

Don't worry, Ma.

ELIDAH

That's impossible. I can't stop
worrying about all of my sons.

Kalusha returns, waving his wallet. He hugs his mum, lingering to address her concerns.

KALUSHA

OK, let's go.

Kalusha kisses Tamela and his mother, shakes his father's hand. Derby and his brothers follow him to the van. As they drive out, Elidah holds Tamela close.

ELIDAH

Please God. Keep them safe.

BENJAMIN

He will.

Benjamin wraps his arms around his wife and granddaughter, watching his sons leave.

87 EXT. AIRPORT CARPARK. TUNIS, TUNISIA. NIGHT. 1994

87

The Zambian team exits the terminal, heading toward their bus. Two teen boys spot Kalusha and rush over.

YOUNG BOY 1

Excuse me, Mr. Kalusha Bwalya?

KALUSHA

Yes?

YOUNG BOY 1

Can you sign something for me?

He hands over a school book. The other boy joins.

YOUNG BOY 2

Me too, please!

Kalusha signs both books, smiling.

YOUNG BOY 1

Thank you, Kalusha.

YOUNG BOY 2

Good luck Mr. Bwalya! We'll be watching!

YOUNG BOY 1

Good luck Mr. Bwalya!

The boys run off, grinning. Derby comes up behind Kalusha, teasing.

DERBY

(Joking)

Good luck Mr. Bwalya! Can you sign this Mr. Bwalya!

Kalusha laughs.

DERBY

They just met a future African champion!

Ian Porterfield leans out from the bus door.

IAN

Kalusha. If you've finished frolicking with your fans, would you mind getting on board? We've got some training to do!

KALUSHA

Sorry. Yes, coach.

Kalusha smiles. They climb aboard. The bus drives off.

88 INT. STADIUM ENTRANCE - TUNIS, TUNISIA. NIGHT. 1994 88

The ZAMBIAN and NIGERIAN teams line up in the tunnel.

SUPERIMPOSE: April 10th, 1994.

The roars of the crowd echo through the tunnel.

The players chat nervously, bounce on their feet, stretch their arms.

STEPHEN KESHI, the Nigerian captain, extends a hand to Kalusha who shakes it.

STEPHEN

Hey Kalu. No matter what happens, everyone in Africa is proud of all of you.

KALUSHA

Thank you.

They lead their teams out. The roar of the crowd swells.

The tunnel empties into silence.

89 EXT. TUCKSHOP. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1994 89

A crowd gathers around a TV outside a small store, watching the final.

Nellie and Charles Jr squeeze in, eyes glued to the screen.

DENNIS (V.O.)

And we're about to kick off. It's the super eagles against Chipolopolo. This time last year we didn't have a team, and now we're in the 1994 African Cup of Nations final.

90 INT. CHIPOLOPOLO CHANGING ROOM. TUNIS, TUNISIA. DAY. 1994 90

The players drift in slowly. Their boots echo on concrete. Silver medals hang from bowed necks.

Some take off their shirts.

They're dejected and head straight to the benches and sit down.

Kalusha enters, followed by Derby, the last of the players.

The two coaches are the last to enter.

Freddie sits by the door.

Ian Porterfield stands center, hands on hips.

He looks at the ground.

Mordon sits opposite the coach and breaks the silence.

HAPPY
Miracle Team.

IAN
Listen lads.

HAPPY
What a joke.

IAN
Lads. The super eagles are
champions. But so are you.

The players are unmoved.

Some shift nervously in their seats.

MORDON
Coach, we just lost.

Ian looks around the room.

IAN
In 25 days we'll all be in Lusaka
for the one year anniversary of the
accident. It's been less than a
year. And here we are.

He gesticulates wildly.

IAN CONT'D
At the bloody African Cup of
Nations finals.

He scans the room.

IAN CONT'D
What you did for your brothers is
fucking brilliant.

The players still look despondent.

IAN CONT'D

I don't know about you all, but I'm
in need of a change of clothes, a
steak supper, and a few beers. Who
wants to join me?

Silence. Then -

KALUSHA

I'll join you, coach.

Others echo him, one by one.

IAN

Great. First round's on me.

Ian exits with Freddie. For a moment, nothing.

Then - slowly - the room begins to breathe again. Someone
laughs. Someone else. It spreads.

They start to get changed. Kalusha stays seated, quiet.
Derby puts his hand on Kalusha's shoulder and sighs.

91 EXT. STREET. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1994

91

Nellie and Charles Jr leave a small shop where they have
watched the game. They are joined by other fans all leaving
the shop. They're all dejected.

The sounds of the game on the TV trail them as they leave.

CHARLES JR

(He sucks his teeth)

I really thought we were going to
win.

NELLIE

Same. I really thought we would
score first.

He puts his arm around his little sister as they walk on.

The afternoon light fades, but there is still enough to see
the remnants of the supporters. Discarded flags. Empty
bottles. Food wrappers.

A group of BOYS a little older than Nellie kick a ball
nearby. Hard. Angry. The ball flies wide, clatters against a
wall.

One boy swears. Another storms off.

Nellie watches.

Charles Jr Keeps walking.

After a few steps, Nellie slows.

She looks back at the boys. At the ball, resting awkwardly in the dust.

She hesitates. Then breaks from her brother and jogs off.

CHARLES JR

Nellie!

She doesn't answer.

She picks up the ball with her foot. One touch. Then another. Controlled. Calm.

The boys watch her, surprised.

Nellie looks up at them, still controlling the ball.

Nellie holds the ball under one foot. Then plays it cleanly into motion.

The game resumes. Nellie takes charge.

Charles Jr watches from a distance.

Nellie plays. Not celebrating. Not proving anything. Just playing.

92 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 1994 92

The TV is still on broadcasting the post-match coverage: players, trophies, the Nigerians celebrating. Samson is slumped in a chair, empty bottles and chaos on the floor beside him. He is not asleep. Just still.

Nellie comes in. She sees him. She doesn't say anything. She moves to turn off the TV.

SAMSON

Leave it.

She leaves it. She sits.

A long silence. On the TV: The Nigerians lifting the trophy.

SAMSON

We should've won.

NELLIE

I know.

SAMSON

We had it right there.

He gestures at the TV. His hand is unsteady.

SAMSON CONT'D

Where's Junior?

NELLIE

At work.

SAMSON

Good boy.

He almost smiles.

NELLIE

Samson. You need to get a job.

The almost smile turns into a frown.

SAMSON

Don't.

NELLIE

I'm not asking. Junior dropped out.

SAMSON

I said don't.

NELLIE

Someone has to-

SAMSON

(sharp)

I know, Nellie. I know.

He stands. Steadies himself against the chair.

SAMSON CONT'D

Don't tell me what I already know.

He walks out the room. He slams the door behind him.

Nellie sits in front of the TV. The Nigerians are still celebrating. She watches it for a moment.

Then she turns it off and starts to clean up the mess Samson left behind.

93 INT. CHIPOLOPOLO CHANGING ROOM TUNIS - CONTINUOUS

93

The room has emptied. Boots and kit on the floor. The sound of distant music - the Nigerians celebrating.

Kalusha sits alone, shirt in his hands, staring at the crest.

Derby has also stayed. He finishes packing up his kit and walks over to Kalusha.

Derby sits. He doesn't say anything. He picks his own shirt from out his bag and holds it in the same way - both of them, silent, staring at the same crest.

A long moment.

KALUSHA
I keep thinking they're watching.

DERBY
(quietly)
They are.

KALUSHA
Then we let them down.

Derby doesn't answer immediately.

DERBY
We got here. Less than a year after
-

KALUSHA
(cutting him off)
We got here and lost.

A beat.

KALUSHA CONT'D
David would've saved that penalty.
Kelvin would've scored.

The music from outside gets louder. And then fades.

KALUSHA CONT'D
I don't know how to do this without
them.

DERBY
Then take them with you.

KALUSHA
And if it's never enough?

Derby doesn't have an answer. He puts his arm around
Kalusha's shoulders.

They sit in silence of a changing room that smells like
sweat and defeat.

Outside faintly: Tiyende Pamodzi.

Someone is singing it. A Zambian supporter, somewhere in the
stadium, refusing to go home.

Kalusha hears it. He holds very still.

He folds the shirt. Places it carefully on the bench.

He stands.

For a moment he stays exactly where he is. The question has
no answer. Not yet.

He walks toward the door. Stops his hand on the frame.

Outside, the singing continues.

He listens. He turns to Derby.

KALUSHA
You coming Derby?

Kalusha walks out.

Derby stands up and follows him.

94 INT. KALUSHA'S BEDROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

94

A spacious modern room. Photos line the walls: the Zambia 1988 Olympic team in Seoul, Kalusha with President Kaunda, and the 1994 AFCON final.

And in the center, one large photo of the team in 1993.

SUPERIMPOSE: Lusaka, Zambia. Wednesday, 15th January 2012.

On the bedside table, there are pictures of Kalusha and his family, including Tamela, grown up and a picture of an older Kalusha with his wife EMMY CASALETTI (Italian, in her 40s, elegant and warm).

Kalusha, now gray-haired in his 50s, adjusts his tie in the mirror.

He picks up a small badge of the Zambian flag and adds it to his suit lapel.

He adds his lanyard: KALUSHA BWALYA. PRESIDENT, FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF ZAMBIA. AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS 2012.

Emmy enters the room and walks toward him.

EMMY
Ready? The car's on its way.

KALUSHA
Almost.

They share a smile in the mirror.

Emmy comes to stand behind him. From behind him, she straightens his collar - a gesture so practiced it has become invisible to both of them.

She hugs him from behind. He holds her back, keeping the smile in the mirror.

EMMY
You've been awake since four.

KALUSHA
I know.

EMMY
Thinking about them?

A beat.

KALUSHA
Always.

She holds his gaze in the mirror.

EMMY
They'd be proud of you. Whatever
happens over the next month.

KALUSHA
(quietly)
I'm not doing it for pride.

EMMY
I know.

She lets go and faces him. She kisses him. He holds her hand
against his chest.

EMMY
Come on. Don't be late for your own
tournament.

They turn and walk out hand in hand.

95 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 95

Nellie stands at the kitchen counter. She is now 34. She is
already dressed for work - smart, composed. On the table:
empty bottles that Nellie has collected from somewhere else
in the house.

Nellie starts to place the bottles in a plastic bag. She
ties it up.

Charles Jr appears in the doorway, car keys in hand. He is
also older - now 36.

CHARLES JR
He's not here.

NELLIE
I know.

CHARLES JR
How many times this month?

NELLIE
Who knows.

She hands Charles Jr the bag.

CHARLES JR
 You can't keep cleaning up after
 him.

NELLIE
 (sternly)
 I am just trying to manage all of
 this.

She looks at him. He looks back.

NELLIE CONT'D
 I'll talk to him.

CHARLES JR
 It never works. Does it?

NELLIE
 I'll talk to him.

Charles Jr leaves. Nellie stands in the quiet kitchen for a moment.

Then she opens the fridge. She pulls out a plate of food. She writes something on a piece of paper and places it on top of the plate. The note reads: SAMSON.

She picks up her work bag and leaves.

96 INT. CAR - MOVING. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 96

Kalusha and Emmy sit in the back of an expensive moving car, on their way to a TV studio.

Kalusha's hand rests on the seat between them. Emmy gently places hers over it.

He glances down, then at her, and smiles. He laces his fingers through hers, turning back to the window - watching Lusaka roll by in the sun.

97 EXT. AIRPORT CAR PARK. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 97

An old car pulls through a security barrier. The DRIVER taps a card. The gate lifts, and Nellie drives through the gate.

She finds a space to park and steps out. She's much older and wears a smart suit. She walks toward the terminal.

She carries a work bag and a large sports bag.

98 INT. AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS 98

Nellie walks through the busy terminal. Announcements echo over the PA. Like her mum years before, she weaves through the crowd. She greets other people around her who greet her in return.

She passes a sign: EMPLOYEES ONLY, and enters.

- 99 INT. AIRPORT. NELLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 99
- Nellie walks down a corridor, greeted by colleagues. She enters an office she shares with many others - modest but warm; she settles in.
- On the wall next to her desk: a poster of the 1988 Zambian Olympic football team, bright and proud.
- She places the sports bag down, alongside other football equipment that is cluttering up her office.
- 100 EXT. ZAMBIAN NATIONAL BROADCASTING CORPORATION - CONTINUOUS 100
- A car pulls up to the entrance.
- Emmy and Kalusha step out and head into the modern studio building.
- 101 INT. TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS 101
- In a bright, modern studio, Kalusha Bwalya and HERVE RENARD, a charismatic Frenchman in his 40s with shoulder-length hair, sit side-by-side on a stage sofa.
- Herve leans toward Kalusha and whispers a joke. Kalusha chuckles; Herve grins.
- Behind them:
- ZAMBIAN NATIONAL BROADCASTING CORPORATION Africa Cup of Nations Final. 2012. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.
- Off-camera, a PRODUCER stands behind Emmy, who watches, arms folded. Derby, also now in his 50s, stands behind her and nods at Kalusha, who nods back.
- PRODUCER
OK - and we're live in 3, 2, 1...
- The red light on the camera blinks on.
- 102 INT. NELLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 102
- MARY, in her 30s, one of Nellie's colleagues walks up to Nellie's desk.
- MARY
(excited)
Someone has a TV.
- NELLIE
Oh my god. Thanks Mary. Has the interview started?
- MARY
Yup. Let's go!

Nellie gets up and follows Mary out the door, giggling, excited.

103 INT. TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS 103

TV PRESENTER

We're one week away from the start of the Africa Cup of Nations - jointly hosted by Gabon and Equatorial Guinea - and we're joined by the president of the Football Association of Zambia, Mr. Kalusha Bwalya, and the coach of the Zambian national team, Mr. Herve Renard. Gentlemen, welcome.

Behind him, the studio screen shows archival images - the 1993 team, then the 2012 squad training.

104 INT. AIRPORT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS 104

Nellie stands at the back of a crowded room, watching the broadcast with co-workers. Her eyes glisten.

105 INT. TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS 105

The presenter turns to Kalusha.

TV PRESENTER

Kalusha, as you know, the final will be in Libreville. If you make it-

HERVE

(interrupting)

When we make it!

Kalusha smiles. He rubs his thumb along his wedding ring anxiously.

KALUSHA

Same place.

A beat.

KALUSHA CONT'D

Different ending.

Kalusha's eyes flick past the camera, toward Derby.

106 EXT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. BACK YARD. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 106

Nellie parks her small old car outside her house. Samson, beer in hand, sits on the steps.

Nellie exhales slowly, grabs her sports bag, her work bag, and steps out of her car.

SAMSON
Well, well, well.

NELLIE
Stop, Samson. Not this month.

SAMSON
Ah yes. Your precious Chipolopolo
are playing soon.

She keeps walking, then turns.

NELLIE
Not my Chipolopolo. Look around
Samson. Everyone is getting ready
to support them.

SAMSON
They paying our bills now?

Samson gets up, anger flaring. Nellie bites her tongue.

SAMSON CONT'D
(drunk and angry)
I can't be like you and Junior! It
was all too much.

Samson turns to leave. Nellie turns away, hesitates, turns
around.

NELLIE
You know what. I'm tired Samson.
You left it all to Junior and I.
You're the oldest.

SAMSON
(stopping)
I'm not him.

Samson stops. He wants to say something else. He stops
himself. He walks out through the gate, taking his beer with
him. Nellie looks on, disappointed.

NELLIE
(softly, to herself)
Shit.

Nellie stands for a moment. She turns. Enters the house. She
has things to do.

107 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

107

The ZAMBIAN TEAM train in a new stadium - sprint drills,
short passes, laughter mixed with nerves. They wear new,
smart kits, with new expensive boots.

In the stands: billboards for softdrinks and telecoms.

Herve paces the sideline.

Kalusha and Derby emerge from the tunnel, joining him.

KALUSHA

Well?

HERVE

They're starting to believe it.

Kalusha and Herve shake hands - Derby stands aside. They watch the session.

KALUSHA

And how are they feeling?

HERVE

(laughing)

They're petrified!

KALUSHA

Once we get there, they'll settle.

HERVE

Once we start playing.

KALUSHA

And they look fit.

HERVE

Thank God Nigeria didn't qualify.

KALUSHA

We've been lucky.

HERVE

To be honest with you, this whole tournament feels written in the sky.

A beat. Kalusha looks at the players. At the pitch. At the sky.

108 EXT. STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

108

Nellie is coordinating a training session of young girls. They look to her with respect.

She stands with two or three other coaches, watching the game take place.

She is concentrated.

She is the coach.

109 EXT. STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

109

The stadium is empty.

Nellie sits alone on a bench her father once brought them. Her sports bag sits beside her.

Charles Jr appears from the stairs. Spots her. Comes down.

CHARLES JR

Hey Nellie.

Nellie doesn't respond.

NELLIE

Do you remember sitting here? When we were kids.

Charles Jr sits beside her.

CHARLES JR

Yeah. So many times.

A beat.

NELLIE

I used to think coming here would give us good luck.

CHARLES JR

(smiles)

It still does.

Nellie considers that.

NELLIE

Maybe. Not in the way I thought.

They sit in the quiet.

NELLIE CONT'D

Why does he drink so much?

CHARLES JR

Because he's angry. He is sad. I don't know.

NELLIE

I think he's trying to stay standing. Keep upright.

CHARLES JR

He doesn't do a very good job of standing upright!

Nellie smiles at this.

NELLIE

You OK?

CHARLES JR

Yeah. He got a job you know.

NELLIE

What?

CHARLES JR
Yeah. At my car place.

NELLIE
How long will that last?

CHARLES JR
He seems serious this time.

NELLIE
I wish I'd been the one.

Charles Jr looks at her.

NELLIE CONT'D
To drop out. Not you.

He doesn't answer immediately. He looks at the empty pitch.

CHARLES JR
You know what I remember most?

She waits.

CHARLES JR CONT'D
You scoring. Right there.

He nods toward the near end of the pitch.

CHARLES JR CONT'D
Dad was so proud!

NELLIE
(quietly)
He was.

A beat.

CHARLES JR
You should've kept playing.

NELLIE
You too.

CHARLES JR
(after a long pause)
I'm glad you found coaching.

NELLIE
I tell my players they all get to
dream. All of them.

Nellie pauses.

NELLIE CONT'D
Come on. Let's go home.

They start up the stairs together.

Halfway up, Nellie pauses. Looks back at the empty seats.

Not sad. Not longing.

Grounded.

Then, her phone buzzes. She glances at it.

A text: FAZ. Can we talk? Before the final? We have a proposition for you.

She reads it. Doesn't reply. Puts the phone away.

She turns. Follows her brother out the stadium.

110 EXT. STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

110

The goalkeeper, KENNEDY MWEENE, tall with cornrows, late 20s jogs over to Herve and Kalusha holding an orange bib.

KENNEDY

(to Kalusha)

Sorry to interrupt. We're about to start a practice game. And we wanted to ask...

He holds out the bib to Kalusha.

The squad cheers.

KALUSHA

(Laughing)

So you want me to show you a thing or two? OK. Tiyeni.

Kalusha pulls the bib on. Derby steps back. Kennedy hands a bib to Herve.

DERBY

(to Kalusha)

I'll sit this one out!

KENNEDY

Herve you're with my team!

HERVE

Tiyeni!

KALUSHA

Get ready for a thrashing Herve!

The players howl with laughter as the mock match kicks off, with Derby taking photos on his phone as they play.

111 INT. CAR - MOVING. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

111

Nellie drives through crowded streets. The city is awash with Zambian flags, football merch, and vuvuzelas.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Well, I don't think anyone in Lusaka is doing anything else tonight. Most Zambians will be glued to their television sets.

Traffic crawls. Vendors weave between the cars.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The last time Zambia were in a semi-final of the Africa Cup of Nations was in 1994 less than a year after we had to rebuild our team from scratch after the terrible accident.

Nellie approaches a red traffic light and stops.

RADIO ANNOUNCER TWO (V.O.)

That was 19 years ago when the team was captained by Kalusha Bwalya, and now the Football Association of Zambia is run by Kalusha Bwalya.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

We'll be following the game tonight. Zambia vs Ghana, the semi-final game for a place in the 2012 Africa Cup of Nations Final. And now over to a new love show where listeners send in their questions...

Nellie turns the radio off, dials her phone.

Phone screen: CHARLES JR.

NELLIE

Hey, I'm on my way. Football practice ran late. Save me a seat please! OK.. OK... Bye.

She hangs up. A STREET SELLER approaches, stacked with 20 Zambian flag hats piled on top of each other on his head, 10 scarves around his neck, and holds up two football shirts.

STREET SELLER

Ah madam! No flag? No scarf?

NELLIE

How much for the shirt?

He holds up one of the shirts.

STREET SELLER

This shirt here? Only 10 pin!

NELLIE

How much for two scarves?

STREET SELLER

For you Ma, as you have nothing so far, you can have them both for just 3 pin. Imagine?

Nellie hands over some cash.

He grins, passes her the two scarves

NELLIE

Better make it three.

Nellie hands over more money and he hands her one more scarf.

STREET SELLER

Zikomo! Tiye Chipolopolo! Toye!

Before Nellie can say anything, he darts to the next car as traffic moves. She puts the scarves on the seat next to her, and drives on, the city alive around her.

112 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM. BATA, EQUATORIAL GUINEA. NIGHT. 2012 112

A packed stadium. Flags everywhere - Zambia and Ghana in full color.

Herve Renard, in his trademark formal white shirt, stands on the sidelines.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

And we're about to kickoff the semi final of the 2012 Africa Cup of Nations. Zambia vs Ghana.

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)

And there is the Zambian coach ready to start.

Herve begins to pace along the field, occasionally talking to someone.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

He has said he has to wear a white shirt for his team to win. Do you think it will work today?

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)

Zambia has a lot of work to do. Ghana are one of the best teams in Africa right now.

On the bench, Kalusha sits with arms folded, tense. Derby sits next to him, more relaxed.

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)

And there's Kalusha Bwalya. He'll be one happy man if Zambia win today.

The referee's whistle cuts through the roar.

113 INT. FAZ OFFICE. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

113

Nellie strides down the hallway of the modern FAZ office building. The modernity compared to 1993 is noticeable. She approaches a door and knocks. A muffle from inside. She enters. An official sits behind a busy, modern desk.

FAZ OFFICIAL 4

Nellie. Come in. Please sit. Thank you for seeing me on such a big day. Not ideal timing!

Nellie sits opposite the official.

NELLIE

No problem. How can I help you?

FAZ OFFICIAL 4

I'll be quick. The association wants to establish a national women's coaching program. Formally. Starting this year. We'd like you to head it.

A beat. Nellie is very still.

FAZ OFFICIAL 4 CONT'D

Full contract. Staff. Budget. The resources you've been doing without.

NELLIE

And my girls?

FAZ OFFICIAL 4

You'd transition. Someone would take over the club program.

She looks at him.

NELLIE

Someone.

FAZ OFFICIAL 4

It's a national role, Nellie. This is what you've been working toward.

A pause. Nellie stands up.

NELLIE

Can I think about it?

FAZ OFFICIAL 4

The board meets next week. After the final.

Nellie walks toward the door. She spots a picture of the 1988 Olympic team on the wall. She pauses before the door.

NELLIE
I'll let you know.

She leaves. She does not look back.

114 INT. BAR. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. NIGHT. 2012

114

Nellie pushes through a packed bar, scarves in hand. TVs glow above the crowd, people talk loudly and relentlessly.

She spots Charles in the corner.

CHARLES JR
Nellie! Over here!

She fights through the crowd to reach him.

CHARLES JR
It's about to start.

She hands him a scarf.

NELLIE
Got you a scarf.

CHARLES
Ah! Zikomo!

They both wrap them around their necks.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
And we have kick off!

The bar erupts.

ON TV MONITOR

The players kick off the game.

After six minutes, a Ghana player, ASAMOAH GYAN, is fouled.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
And here is a gift wrapped opportunity for Ghana. David Nkausu fouls Gyan and rightly so the referee has given Ghana a penalty.

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)
It was a soft one, but the defender took him down. And here he steps up to take the penalty.

The kick - SAVED by Mweene.

END OF TV MONITOR

The crowds in the bar go wild. Nellie cheers, waving her scarf.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
Kennedy Mweene! has been crucial to
this Zambian team. What a save!

ON TV MONITOR

The referee blows his whistle for half time.

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)
Nil-nil at the break. Mweene's been
the difference so far.

On the field, Kalusha and Derby head down the tunnel with the team.

115 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 115

The game resumes. Zambia press forward.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
Here's an opportunity for Zambia.
We've had 77 minutes of play.

116 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 116

The crowd leans in. Nellie holds her breath.

ON TV MONITOR

EMMANUEL MAYUKA turns, shoots - GOAL.

END OF TV MONITOR

The bar erupts again.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
He's done it. He's broken the
deadlock! His third goal of the
tournament. What a goal! It may be
the goal that gets Zambia through
to their third AFCON final.

Nellie is stunned. She laughs, tears in her eyes. Charles hugs her.

117 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 117

The Zambian team celebrate on the pitch. On the touchline, Herve and Kalusha celebrate with the other FAZ staff.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
And the Zambian players are
celebrating! They have every right
to be happy! Emmanuel Mayuka the
21-year-old from Kabwe, scores for
(MORE)

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Zambia in the 78th minute of this
 African Cup of Nations semi-final.

The teams jog back to their positions.

TV COMMENTATOR TWO (V.O.)
 That was a fantastic goal. We'll be
 live later on as well for the
 second semi-final. Where Mali take
 on the giants of the Ivory Coast.
 So by the end of the night, we'll
 know the two teams meeting in the
 final.

Derby moves to stand next to Kalusha, who turns toward him
 anxiously.

118 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

118

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 And we're in the dying minutes.

The bar is tense and quiet, eyes fixed on the TV.

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 It's still Zambia one, Ghana nil.
 Will the ref call it? He's looking
 at his watch. And he's blown the
 whistle. Zambia have won!!

The bar ERUPTS with celebrations. People leap onto the
 tables. Nellie covers her mouth, then pumps a fist at
 Charles, grinning. He jumps and hollers with the crowd.
 Nellie stands in the center - stunned, joyful.

119 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

119

The Zambian players are ecstatic. Some kneel to pray.

Others sprint to Mayuka and hoist him up, carrying him
 toward Herve.

TV COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
 Remarkable. Ghana are out of the
 Africa Cup of Nations. And Zambia
 are on their way to their third
 final at the Africa Cup of Nations.
 They face either Mali or Ivory
 Coast but no matter what, that will
 be a historic game.

TV COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
 That's right. The final taking
 place in Libreville, Gabon not far
 from the Zambian 1993 plane crash
 site. It'll be an emotional return
 for the Zambian team.

Herve and his staff all hug each other.

TV COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
Zambia will surely play with the
memories of their teammates who
died in Gabon on their mind.

TV COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
And that is one happy Kalusha
Bwalya down there on the pitch.

Kalusha, calmer, shakes hands with everyone around him.

TV COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
It'll be an emotional return for
Kalusha Bwalya - I cannot imagine
what he's thinking right now.

Kalusha pauses, taking in the stadium, the players, the
moment. Derby walks up behind him and puts an arm around his
neck.

KALUSHA
Next stop the final.

DERBY
How does it feel Kalu?

KALUSHA
Like coming home.

They turn and smile at each other, taking in the
achievement.

120 INT. HOTEL ROOM. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012

120

Kalusha slips on a suit jacket, ties his shoes. His phone
rings: "Dad."

He answers.

BENJAMIN (ON THE PHONE)
Kalu?

KALUSHA
Dad.

BENJAMIN (ON THE PHONE)
How are you?

KALUSHA
Good dad. How are you?

BENJAMIN (ON THE PHONE)
Good. Your mother is here as well.

ELIDAH (ON THE PHONE)
I'm so proud of you. You got them
to the final.

KALUSHA
No, they did it themselves.

ELIDAH (ON THE PHONE)
You led them Kalu.

BENJAMIN (ON THE PHONE)
We're all set. We'll see you in a few days.

ELIDAH (ON THE PHONE)
See you soon my son. And pass on our greetings to Emmy.

KALUSHA
I will. See you soon.

He hangs up.

Emmy walks into the hotel room.

EMMY
You ready?

Kalusha looks up at her.

KALUSHA
I don't know.

She hugs him tightly. They turn, head out.

121 INT. CAR - MOVING. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012

121

Emmy and Kalusha sit in the back. Derby sits in the front seat. The car stops. Outside: a crowd.

Kalusha looks to Emmy - he is anxious and sad.

EMMY
Let's go pay our respects.

He nods. They step out, greeted immediately by players, FAZ staff, photographers, and media.

Derby gets out but remains by the car. He does not follow them.

122 EXT. BEACH. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012

122

A solemn procession along the shoreline. Some carry candles, others flowers. Waves hush the sand.

Among them: The Zambian team, coaches, FAZ staff, former presidents RUPIAH BANDA and KENNETH KAUNDA, and president MICHAEL SATA.

A hymn begins, low and steady. The crowd joins.

They reach a wreath laid on the sand. One by one, they place flowers.

Kalusha Bwalya steps forward, unfolds a paper. Cameras tighten in.

KALUSHA

In 1993, the Chipolopolo came here to fulfill a promise; a promise to bring glory to Zambia. They did not succeed but instead they gave up their lives for our country. We have returned here to pay our respects for those who lost their lives 19 years ago. But we've also returned here to take on the baton. May they rest in peace.

He folds the piece of paper, pockets it. Another hymn swells. Kalusha wipes his eyes. He does not look for Derby. For once, he does not look.

Players lift the flowers and wreath, carry them to the water, set them afloat. The waves bear them seaward.

The dignitaries and team turn back along the beach.

Kalusha and Emmy remain.

KALUSHA

I still miss them.

EMMY

I know, Kalu.

Emmy puts her arms around Kalusha as he begins to cry.

123 INT. NELLIE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 123

Nellie watches the beach memorial on TV, alone, a scarf around her neck. The third scarf lies on the table in front of her.

The broadcast ends. She doesn't turn off the TV. She sits with it.

The front door opens. Samson enters. He sees her. She doesn't turn.

He slouches down into the chair opposite. He sees the scarf on the table.

A long pause.

NELLIE

(not looking at him)

I got you a scarf.

SAMSON
You didn't have to do that.

NELLIE
I know.

He picks it up. He doesn't put it on. He just holds it.

SAMSON
I've been watching.
She turns now.

NELLIE
Which part?

SAMSON
The beach. All those flowers.

A pause.

SAMSON CONT'D
Mum would've cried.

Nellie looks at him. Something shifts in her face.

NELLIE
And she would've been very loud
about it.

Samson almost smiles.

A beat. He looks back at the scarf.

SAMSON
I'm trying, Nellie.

NELLIE
I know.

SAMSON
I just-

NELLIE
You don't have to explain.

She stands. Goes to the kitchen.

Kitchen sounds travel through to the living room.

Nellie returns with two cups of tea.

She sets one in front of Samson. Sits back down.

He looks at the tea. Then at her.

Neither of them says anything. On the TV, the broadcast moves on.

A pause.

NELLIE

The final is on Sunday. We're going to watch it.

Samson looks at her.

NELLIE CONT'D

Junior and I are going to watch it. Together.

A beat.

SAMSON

That's yours and his now.

NELLIE

It doesn't have to be.

SAMSON

Football is in the past for me.

He means it. He is not angry. He is stating a fact for himself.

Nellie looks at him.

NELLIE

(after a moment)

OK.

She does not push. She has learned, over the years, when to push.

Samson gets up.

SAMSON

Thank you for the scarf.

He leaves the house.

Nellie sits. She stares at his tea, left unfinished. The scarf sits next to it.

124 INT. HOTEL ROOM. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012

124

Kalusha stares out of the window at the ocean, coffee in hand. Derby sits in a chair, reading on his phone.

DERBY

We should get going.

KALUSHA

We should.

A KNOCK. Kalusha sets the cup down, opens the door. Herve and two FAZ officials enter.

HERVE

Good morning! Today is the day!

KALUSHA

(to Herve)

I'll grab my things. You seem happy.

HERVE

Et pourquoi pas? Today, we win the African Cup!

The FAZ men laugh. Kalusha smiles, shoulders a bag and laptop case. They all head out.

125 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

125

RAINFORD KALABA and CHRISTOPHER KATONGO, in Zambian tracksuits, approach a door and knock.

RAINFORD

He always sleeps late this one!

CHRISTOPHER

Always! Come on Mweene!

They knock again. The door opens. Kennedy Mweene emerges, corn rows tidy, grinning.

KENNEDY

Morning guys! Have you come for my autograph? Guess who is getting interviewed by the BBC?

They laugh.

RAINFORD

Ah you. We're all getting interviews today.

KENNEDY

Who else do they want?

CHRISTOPHER

Come on Mr. Famous. Do you want to do push ups for being late?

Kennedy emerges and they walk down the corridor.

126 INT. CHIPOLOPOLO CHANGING ROOM. LIBREVILLE, GABON. NIGHT. 2012

126

The team is focused. Boots laced. Jerseys crisp.

Herve strides in - crisp white shirt - and steps to the center of the room.

We don't hear his words yet. Just the intensity.

- 127 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 127
- Kalusha's family - his parents, brothers, wife, and children - take their seats near the Zambian bench. The Zambian presidents sit nearby.
- Benjamin moves along the row greeting them.
- 128 INT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. BAR. NIGHT. 2012 128
- Nellie and Charles Jr, both draped in their scarves, are in their favorite bar watching the game with friends, all decked in Zambian colors.
- A giant TV dominates. Nellie checks her phone.
- CHARLES JR
- Nellie. He won't come. Let's enjoy the game?
- Nellie nods, pockets the phone.
- 129 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 129
- Herve paces the touchline. Kalusha stands behind him, shadowed by Derby.
- DENNIS (V.O.)
- Good evening to you all, where ever you're listening. This is Dennis Liwewe and we are about to start the 2012 African Cup of Nations final. It's Zambia vs Ivory Coast, live here in Libreville, Gabon. The Ivory Coast know they're against a team who are here to bring glory to Zambia and our fallen brothers who died perhaps not even 10km from where this final is taking place.
- Kalusha scans the stands - finds his family. They wave. Kalusha waves back.
- On the pitch, DIDIER DROGBA and Christopher Katongo - both wearing black captain armbands - exchange pennants, shake hands.
- The referee flips the coin.
- Game play starts with the Ivory Coast kicking off.
- DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
- And here we go, after 23 days of a tournament, we are about to decide who are the champions.
- TIME CUT - 70th minute.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

And we are in the second half
having played 70 minutes of
football. It's still nil all with
no team yet to score. Both teams
are defending solidly. But wait!
Wait! It's a penalty to Ivory
Coast!

GERVINHO goes down in the box.

130 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 130

The bar erupts in outrage.

NELLIE

That wasn't a foul!

CHARLES JR

Get up! You're not Italian!

131 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 131

The referee runs toward the Zambian player.

DENNIS (V.O.)

And Muyamba gets a yellow card.

The Zambian players swarm the referee. Herve waves them
back, shouting orders.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

Even Mweene is coming off his line.
But it's no good.

Drogba places the ball ready to take the penalty.

132 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 132

NELLIE

(quietly)

Come on Mweene!

The bar falls silent.

133 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 133

Mweene readies himself. Drogba focuses. Herve barks. Kalusha
folds his arms tight. Derby paces.

Drogba strikes - it goes OVER!

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

Add that to his list of missed
penalties!

Kalusha and Derby leap, arms raised. Herve applauds,
pointing at Mweene.

- 134 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 134
- The bar erupts with joy. Nellie throws her hands in the air with joy.
- 135 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 135
- The Zambian supporters in the stadium go wild.
- Mweene rushes up to Drogba, wagging a finger - a playful taunt.
- The players reset.
- TIME CUT - 80th minute.
- At the 80th Minute, Katongo bursts through.
- DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
We have ten minutes to play. And here comes Katongo, he's strong, he passes one defender, he shoots!
- He hits the post.
- A collective groan rolls around the stadium.
- 136 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 136
- The bar erupts with a SIGH as well, stunned that he has missed. Nellie holds her scarf around her head trying to hide her face.
- 137 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 137
- The referee blows his whistle. It's the end of regular play.
- DENNIS (V.O.)
We have had 90 minutes of full time and an extra 30 minutes added on but still no one has scored. It's nil - nil. So we go to penalties.
- The players all walk toward their respective benches. Huddles form. Captains confer. The ritual begins.
- 138 INT. BAR BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 138
- The bathroom is alive with chatter. Nellie washes her face until the noise dulls.
- She looks at herself in the mirror. She pauses.
- Someone shouts out "CHIPOLOPOLO." The sound pulls her back. She joins in, loud and full-hearted. They all spill out singing.

- 139 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 139
- Nellie emerges with the singers - then stops. Samson stands beside Charles Jr. Samson wears a Zambian scarf - the one Nellie bought.
- Samson turns and spots Nellie. Brother and sister lock eyes.
- A beat.
- He walks toward her. She to him.
- They hold each other. For a moment, just the two of them, in the middle of the noise.
- She pulls back. Looks at him. He looks at her.
- Charles Jr interrupts them.
- CHARLES JR
Come on you two. The penalties are starting!
- The three siblings return to watch the game. All wearing matching scarves.
- 140 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 140
- Kalusha and Derby stand with FAZ officials on the sideline, hands in pockets, gaze fixed on the pitch. Kalusha's family watches him, anxious and proud.
- 141 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 141
- The bar is silent. Nellie stands between her brothers, gripping her scarf.
- 142 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 142
- Mweene walks toward the goal. The Zambian players link arms, shoulder to shoulder.
- The first Ivory Coast player walks toward the penalty spot.
- Kalusha and Derby watch Mweene, unblinking. vuvuzelas drone.
- 143 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 143
- The bar holds its breath. A lone voice breaks the silence.
- SUPPORTER
COME ON MWEENE!
- 144 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 144
- Christopher strides in, cool as ice. He strikes - GOAL.
- The Zambian team erupts with joy.

- 145 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 145
 Chaos. Scarves whirl. Flags fly. Nellie, Charles, and Samson shout along with everyone else.
 A hush descends again.
- 146 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 146
 The Zambians on the halfway line bow their heads in prayer. Mayuka steps up.
 Mayuka shoots carefully - tucks it in - GOAL.
 The Ivory Coast player, SOL BAMBA, walks up.
 He strikes - Mweene SAVES.
- DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
 AND IT'S BEEN SAVED BY MWEENE!!!
 MWEEEEEEENNNEEEEEEE!!!!
- 147 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 147
 The place explodes.
- 148 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 148
 But then the referee blows his whistle.
- DENNIS (V.O.)
 No! There's a flag up!
- 149 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 149
 The supporters scream at the TV screen, now outraged.
- SUPPORTER
 REF!
- NELLIE
 Come on ref!
- 150 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 150
 So the assistant referee says
 Mweene came off his line. Another
 chance for Bamba.
- Kennedy is disappointed but returns to his goal. Bamba shoots again and scores.
- DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
 It's 3 - 2. We saw Drogba miss a
 penalty at the 70th minute, then
 Katongo hits the post, and now a
 retaken penalty!

The next Zambian player, ISAAC CHANSA approaches.

Chansa murmurs to himself, then slots coolly - GOAL.

151 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 151

The supporters scream at the TV screen again, this time with joy.

152 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 152

The Zambian team urge their fans to lift the noise. Herve barks orders; FAZ officials look anxious. Kalusha, hands in pockets, is composed. Derby stands by him, equally calm.

The next Ivory Coast player, MAX GRADEL, steps up.

He shoots a powerful goal and scores.

The next Zambian player, FELIX KATONGO, steps up.

DENNIS (V.O.)

And now it's Felix Katongo. His older brother, the captain, has already scored a goal. What will Mrs. Katongo be thinking back in Mufulira?

He's nervous and hesitates.

He shoots and he scores.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

Mrs. Katongo will be smiling. Everyone in Mufulira will be smiling! Great goal! 4 - 4 and it's still an even game.

The next Ivory Coast player, Drogba, steps up to take his goal.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

What a moment for the captain of the Ivory Coast. He missed his penalty earlier in the game.

He's relaxed and shoots the ball calmly to score.

Herve paces up and down the pitch. Mweene steps up to take a penalty.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)

The Zambian goalkeeper has to score or Ivory coast have won it. If he does score we go to sudden death.

He shoots easily and scores.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
He scores! It's 5 - 5.

He scores and walks over to the Ivory Coast goalkeeper and shakes his hand.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
What a cool penalty and he goes up to shake the hand of the other goalkeeper. That was a great moment for African football.

The crowd clap as the goalkeepers shake hands.

Herve, Kalusha, and Derby stand next to each other on the sideline.

Many of the Zambian team are now on their knees praying.

The Ivory Coast team talk amongst themselves.

They debate who to send up.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
The Ivory Coast team are now running out of players. They're taking their time deciding who to send up.

The Ivory Coast player, KOLO TOURE, is chosen and he nervously walks up to take his penalty.

He shoots but Kennedy dives and saves the ball.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
And it's saved!!! Mweene!
MWEENEENEEEE!

153 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 153

Absolute SCENES in the bar. Nellie stands frozen, stunned, as pandemonium rages around her.

154 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 154

Kennedy sprints to his teammates; they engulf him.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Mweene has saved the penalty! The flag stays down. And Zambia have the next penalty to win the Africa Cup of Nations.

The Zambian team regroup and then Rainford Kalaba walks calmly toward the penalty spot.

He shoots and misses.

- 155 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 155
 Silence drops like a stone.
- 156 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 156
 Rainford lowers his head, trudges back. Ivory Coast rejoice behind him.
 The Ivory Coast team regroup. GERVINHO steps up.
 Before he can play, the ground staff run up to clean up the torn up penalty spot.
 They take their time.
- DENNIS (V.O.)
 And here comes Gervinho. He's the 17th player to take a penalty. And they have to clean up the penalty spot. And here he goes, Gervinho. Can Mweene save the day for Zambia?
- Gervinho balloons it over.
- DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
 He doesn't need to! Gervinho has hit the ball over the post! And Zambia have another chance to win it!
- 157 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 157
 The bar goes WILD again, the whole bar cheers and sings. One SUPPORTER throws up a hand.
- SUPPORTER
 Everyone! EVERYONE! Quiet!
- Slowly the bar becomes quiet.
- NELLIE
 (under her breath)
 One more goal. Just one more.
- The room stills. Nellie has her arms around both brothers.
- 158 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 158
 The Zambian team stand arm in arm again.
 STOPHIRA SUNZU begins the long walk.
- DENNIS (V.O.)
 And here comes Sunzu.
- He reaches the spot - calm, centered.

Sunzu sets the ball. Teammates fall silent. Herve, Kalusha, and Derby stare, unblinking.

He runs up to shoot.

159 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 159

The bar is silent as they watch Sunzu prepare for the shot. Many supporters crosses themselves. Some can't watch. The sibilings stand together - arms around each other.

NELLIE
(to herself)
Come on. Come on please.

160 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 160

Sunzu pauses - SHOOTS - GOAL.

161 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 161

The bar LOSES it for one last time. The whole bar CHEERS.

Samson and Charles lift Nellie up in the air.

She windmills her scarf, laughing and crying. They crash into a three-way hug.

162 EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 162

Sunzu tears to the corner of the pitch, the entire team chasing. The stadium goes WILD.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Zambia has won the Africa Cup of Nations!

The team smothers Sunzu, lifting him high.

DENNIS (V.O. CONT'D)
Where ever you are, in Petauke and Monze and Kalabo and Kitwe and Ndola and Kasama and in every town in Zambia, remember this moment!

The Zambian benches are empty. FAZ officials hug. Herve and Kalusha hug. They stop and hold the moment.

Derby stands behind them.

Herve is dragged away by a player. Kalusha turns to face Derby.

KALUSHA
(to Derby)
We did it.

DERBY
Did you ever doubt it?

Kalusha smiles but before he can reply, the players hoist him up onto their shoulders and parade him around. They carry him away. Derby stands watching, hands in his pocket.

DENNIS (V.O.)

19 years on, the scene of our greatest tragedy has now become the scene of our greatest success.

WHOLE STADIUM

ZAMBIA KU CHALO!

Kalusha's family start to make their way down to the pitch.

The teams line up to approach the podium.

AFCON officials ready the medals. Ivory Coast receive their silver medals.

Kalusha and Herve smile, clap, and cheer with the FAZ officials and the coaches.

Herve helps an injured player along.

The team beckons Kalusha. He joins them on the podium.

Derby watches from the sides.

The Zambian players mount the steps of the podium, one by one.

Mweene wears a large Zambian flag. Other players wear chitenge in national colors wrapped around their waists.

Two players hold up a banner that says "In memory of 1993. Chipolopolo plays on."

Last is Katongo. He steps up. He takes his medal.

And then the trophy.

He moves to the center of the team. He pauses. Then lifts the trophy up, a celebration joined by the entire team.

As he lifts the trophy, the FIREWORKS erupt.

The team jump up and down on the stage.

Katongo then hands the cup to Kalusha.

Kalusha kisses the cup. He then holds it up to the crowds. They cheer WILDLY again.

He is beaming.

163 EXT. BEACH. LIBREVILLE, GABON. DAY. 2012

163

Morning after. The beach is empty but for a few fisherpeople. Kalusha and Derby walk down the beach to where

the ceremony was held the previous week. They are alone.

They walk toward the water.

They stop and stare silently at the ocean as the waves crash against the shore.

164 EXT. ROAD TO LUSAKA AIRPORT. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 164

The Zambian football team, including Kalusha and Herve, are aboard a bus that moves slowly along the airport road. They have just returned from Gabon. Derby is absent.

The bus is drenched in flags and the streets are so full that the bus travels very slowly down the road. The scene is drenched with the SOUND of the crowd cheering, singing, and playing vuvuzelas.

In the crowd, Nellie stands with her two brothers. They wear their Zambian scarves around, waving at the team.

CHARLES JR

Look Nellie! Kalusha waved at us!

The three siblings laugh together in response.

165 EXT. LARGE STADIUM. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012 165

Kalusha drives up to the stadium gate. It's now modern and well-kept.

Two security guards open the gate and salute as he drives through.

He parks. Gets out, a small bouquet of flowers in hand.

He walks slowly across the quiet grounds toward the memorial graves.

They too are now tended and immaculate.

He stops at one grave. Kneels.

KALUSHA

(to the gravestone)

We did it Derby.

He gently lays the flowers on the gravestone.

GRAVESTONE: Derby Makinka. 5 September, 1965 - 27 April, 1993.

Kalusha stays for a moment. He cleans the graveside, moving leaves and debris.

He stands. Looks around at all the other graves. He pauses for a minute. He does not move.

KALUSHA
 (to the whole site)
 We did it.

He has been carrying this for nineteen years. He will carry it for the rest of his life. But it is different now. He knows the difference.

Finally, he sighs, hands in pocket, turns and leaves.

166 EXT. SPORTS FIELD. LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. DAY. 2012

166

Nellie arrives at a sports field.

On the pitch, a football practice with a young girls team is underway. Other coaches wait for Nellie.

She starts to walk toward the pitch.

She is interrupted by an FAZ official.

FAZ OFFICIAL 4
 Coach - they're asking for you
 inside.

Nellie glances toward the small office.

She looks back to the girls.

They're waiting. Restless. Ready.

NELLIE
 They can wait.

Nellie walks toward the other coaches. The FAZ official turns away.

She fist-bumps the other coaches - all women - and then scans the drills.

She spots BARBRA BANDA (12) and RACHEAL KUNDANANJI (12) who train as a pair.

NELLIE
 Barbra! Racheal! Let's restart that
 drill.

BARBRA AND RACHAEL
 (in unison)
 Yes coach!

At the far end of the sports field, a Zambian flag ripples in the breeze.

Nellie folds her arm and watches the two players perfect her instructions.

FADE OUT