The Gods Must Be Crazy

By Jamie Uys
It looks like a paradise, but it is the most treacherous desert in the world: The Kalahari.
After the short rainy season...
...there are many water holes, and even rivers.
But after a few weeks, the water sinks away into the deep Kalahari sand.
The water holes dry, and the rivers stop flowing.
The grass fades to a beautiful blond colour...
...that offers excellent grazing.
But for the next nine months, there'll be no water to drink.
So most of the animals move away, leaving the blond grass uneaten.
Humans avoid the Kalahari like the plague because man must have water.
So the beautiful landscapes are devoid of people.
Except for the little people of the Kalahari.
Pretty, dainty, small and graceful, the Bushmen.
Where any other person would die of thirst in a few days...
...they live quite contentedly in this desert.
They know where to dig for roots and bugs and tubers...
...and which berries and pods are good to eat.
Of course they know what to do about water.
In the early morning, you can collect dewdrops...
...from leaves that were carefully laid out the previous evening.
Or a plume of grass can be a reservoir.
If you have the know-how, a clump of twigs can tell you where to dig...
...and you come to light
with an enormous tuber. You scrape shavings off it with a stick that is split for a sharp edge. You take a handful of the shavings, point your thumb at your mouth and squeeze. They must be the most contented people in the world. They have no crime, no punishment, no violence, no laws... ...no police, judges, rulers or bosses. They believe that the gods put only good and useful things on the earth for them. In this world of theirs, nothing is bad or evil. Even a poisonous snake is not bad. You just have to keep away from the sharp end. Actually, a snake is very good. In fact, it`s delicious. And the skin makes a fine pouch. They live in the vastness of the Kalahari in small family groups. One family of Bushmen might meet up with another once in a few years. But for the most part, they live in complete isolation... ...unaware there are other people in the world. In the deep Kalahari, there are Bushmen who have not heard of civilized man. Sometimes they hear a thundering sound when there are no clouds. They assume the gods have eaten too much and their tummies are rumbling. Sometimes they can even see the evidence of the gods` flatulence. Their language has an idiosyncrasy of its own. It seems to consist mainly of clicking sounds. They`re very gentle people. They`ll never punish a child or even speak harshly to it. So the kids are extremely well-behaved.
Their games are cute and inventive. When the family needs meat...
...the hunter dips his arrow in a brew that acts as a tranquilliser. When he shoots a buck, it feels a sting and the arrow drops out. The buck runs away, but soon it gets drowsy...
...and it stops running. After a while, it goes to sleep. The hunter apologizes. He explains that his family needs the meat. The characteristic which really makes them different from all other races...
...is that they have no sense of ownership at all. Where they live, there’s nothing you can own. Only trees and grass and animals. These Bushmen have never seen a stone or a rock in their lives. The hardest things they know are wood and bone. They live in a gentle world, where nothing is as hard as rock, steel or concrete. Only 600 miles to the south, there’s a vast city. And here you find civilized man. Civilized man refused to adapt himself to his environment. Instead he adapted his environment to suit him. So he built cities, roads, vehicles, machinery. And he put up power lines to run his labour-saving devices. But he didn’t know when to stop. The more he improved his surroundings to make life easier...
...the more complicated he made it. Now his children are sentenced to...how to survive in this complex and hazardous habitat. And civilized man, who refused
to adapt to his surroundings...
...now finds he has to adapt
and re-adapt...
...every hour of the day
to his self-created environment.
For instance, if it`s Monday...

...and 7:
adapt from your domestic surroundings...
...and re-adapt yourself to an
entirely different environment.
has to look busy.
I`ve got a good story
about handicapped children.
Handicapped children? No! You don`t
recommend stuff you don`t....
Sorry. I`II onIy print sweetness and Iight,
even if it bores the pants off them.
busy for 1 5 minutes.
And then,
you have to look busy again.
-Hi, Kate.
-Hi, Pete.
Can you use this about the
teacher shortage in Botswana?
-Good story?
-Yeah.
They`II take anybody
who can read and write.
I don`t know. I got bawIed out
for writing a story on mugging.
My page shouId be sweet and Iight,
Iike Liberace and Jackie Onassis.
Your day is chopped into pieces.
In each segment of time...
-...you adapt to new circumstances.
--May I share a tabIe?
No wonder some people go
off the rails a bit.
Does the noise in my head
bother you?
No.
StiII got that story about
the teacher shortage in Botswana?
Yeah. You gonna use it?
-No. Maybe they can use me.
In the Kalahari, it's always Tuesday, or Thursday if you like. Or Sunday.
No clocks or calendars tell you to do this or that.
Lately, strange new things sometimes appeared in the sky.
Noisy birds that flew without flapping their wings.
One day, something fell from the sky.
Xi had never seen anything like this in his life.
It looked like water, but it was harder than anything else in the world.
He wondered why the gods had sent this thing down to the earth.
It was the strangest and most beautiful thing they had ever seen.
They wondered why the gods had sent it to them.
Pabo got his finger stuck in the thing and the children thought he was very funny.
Xi tried the thing out to cure thongs.
It had the right shape and weight.
It was also beautifully smooth and ideal for curing snakeskin.
And Pabo discovered you could make music on it.
And every day they discovered a new use for the thing.
It was harder and heavier and smoother than anything they`d ever known.
It was the most useful thing the gods had ever given them.
A real labour-saving device.
But the gods had been careless.
They had sent only one.
Now, for the first time, here was a thing that could not be shared...
...because there was only one of it.
Suddenly, everybody needed it most of the time.
A thing they had never needed before.
became a necessity.  
And unfamiliar emotions began to stir.  
A feeling of wanting to own, of not wanting to share.  
Other new things came.  
Anger, jealousy, hate and violence.  
Xi was angry with the gods.  
He shouted, `Take back your thing! We don`t want it! Look at the trouble it brought.`  
The gods did not take it back.  
He shouted, `You must be crazy to send us this thing! Take it back!`  
Then he shouted, `Look out! Look out!`  
But he spoke too late and the thing felled his daughter Dani.  
Xi carried the thing away from the shelter and buried it.  
That evening, there was no laughter and no chatter around the family fire.  
A strange feeling of shame had come over the family...  
...and they were very quiet.  
Xi said, `I have buried the thing. It will not make us unhappy again.`  
That night, a hyena smelled the blood on the thing, and dug it up.  
A bad-tempered warthog chased the hyena away and it dropped the thing.  
The next day, Dani found it.  
Her brother Toma heard her playing on it and said, `Let me try. Let me try too.`  
That night the family was very unhappy.  
They began to talk about this thing.  
They did not have a name for it.  
They called it the `evil thing.`  
Gaboo said, `Perhaps the gods were absent-minded...  
...when they dropped the evil thing on the earth. They`ve always sent only good things, like rain, trees, roots and berries to eat.
We are their children and they love us. But now they've sent this evil thing. ``Xi said, ``The thing does not belong on the earth. Tomorrow I will take it to the end of the earth and throw it off. ``Gobo said, ``I think the end of the earth must be very far. I think you'll have to walk for 20 days. Perhaps 40. ``Xi said, ``I will start walking tomorrow. ``Two thousand miles to the north in the state of Birani... ...trouble was brewing. It's 35 million to combat erosion in the valley. And 6 million for improvement of the-- Hold it, minister. We can't expect-- Get out. We need the car. That was Sam Boga's gang. You said they were in Cabinda. That's what I thought. How many got away? There were two jeeps. Four got away. Sam Boga was there? No. This time, he's got to die. Find him and kill him yourself. Bring him here. Where is Sam Boga? Where is your hideout? Bring the one in the corridor. Bring that one. Where is Sam Boga? Where is your hideout? Take them... ...to the helicopter. They went south. I'll direct you from the helicopter. Yes, sir. Gas guzzler. Four of the eight assassins
got away in two jeeps.
The other four were shot in the
Cabinet room by the security guards.
-Bastards.
-The assassins wore brown T-shirts...
...the trademark
of the terrorist gang...
...led by the notorious Sam Boga.
However, eyewitnesses state Sam Boga
did not take part in the assassination.
It is assumed that he masterminded the
attack, some distance from the capital.
Sources announced
that the assassins killed...
...the ministers of education,
public works and agriculture.
The president, who survived the hail
of bullets with only a flesh wound...
...will be addressing the nation
in a few moments.
We did it! We did it! We got the
president, and five of his ministers!
You didn`­t, you know. That`s him.
It was the will of the Almighty
that I was spared.
We mourn the deaths
of three members...
...of my Cabinet.
We extend our deepest sympathies--
He`s lying. We got six.
I saw them go down.
You killed three and wounded five.
And you lost four.
Why do I have to work with
amateurs? Did you get away clean?
Yes, we were in and out in two
minutes. They will never find us.
Attention.
-What happened?
-We ran out of gas.
-How long ago?
-About 15 minutes, sir.
Okay, let`s go!
Now, you tell me.
Where is Sam Boga?
Where is your hideout?
Next time you`re going
to be a bit higher.
I`II tell you, I`II tell you!
The banana forest at Dumgaze.
I`II tell you, I`II tell you! I`II show you.
The banana forest at Dumgaze.
I`II tell you. I`II show you where.
-Do you hear me?
-Right here, general.
-Banana forest at Dumgaze. Follow me.
-Right, general.
The man we want is the president,
not the bloody minister of education.
Understand? I`II come with you.
We`II get him in his bed.
Cover up! Cover up!
Come on. Mount the bazooka.
Move it, move it!
Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up!
Now take cover. You, you go there.
Not there, you bloody fool.
Get out of there.
-WeII?
-They`re there. They`re there.
You cannot see them,
but they`re there.
Okay.
You see, there they are.
Okay. No, hold it.
Okay. Shit.
Cut it out, man!
Okay.
-Born to be our champion.
-You showed them.
-Beautiful, man.
-Hey.
Quiet.
Stand by.
Let`s go.
The most inquisitive creature
in Africa is the baboon.
Xi said,
``That is a very evil thing you`ve got. You better give it back so I can take it and throw it off the earth. It brought unhappiness to my family. If you don`t give it to me... ...it`ll bring grief to you and your family too.``
He spoke long and earnestly until the baboon began to pay attention. He must have convinced it, and it dropped the thing.
And Xi said,
``You have done a very wise thing.``
-So you want to go to Botswana?
-I want to get away from all this. But in the Kalahari?
Mom, it`s not in the Kalahari. Botswana isn`t all desert.
Get in there. Why do they put the nuts where you can`t get at them?
Right in my bIoody face.
Every year I have to Iay here on my back.
Keep it down a bit, Mpudi.
I`m trying to tune the scanner.
Okay, Mpudi. Go ahead.
Every year you come here with a bigger and better tent and equipment. And every year, you turn up with this and I have to work my ass off. That`s funny. This eIephant`s dung shows a compIete Iack of boron.
HeIIo, Reverend.
What are you doing on a horse? I hit a rock with my crankcase. Cracked it wide open.
The troubIe is, I have to meet the new schooIteacher at MabuIa. You can have that one, but she`s in a terrible shape.
We`ve been knocking around in the HamaduIas.
I promised Mpudi that I`d work here, so he couId have a week to patch it.
Here, Reverend.
-Thank you.
-Get in there, you bloody--
Morning, Mpudi.
Morning, Mpudi.
-Morning.
-Will this make it to Mabuela and back?
She's gonna be a bastard to start.
Sorry, Reverend.
-I put in new rings and they're tight.
-But will she make it?
You said I could have a whole week.
This is an emergency. We want to know
if she'll make it to Mabuela and back.
I haven't looked at the brakes
or steering gear.
-Mpudi.
-Okay, she'll make it.
As soon as I connect the steering
rack, but she'll be a bastard to start.
There we are, Reverend.
Then she'll be all yours.
I don't think I can handle her.
I hear Mpudi calls her the antichrist.
Well, she is a thing.
I was hoping-- I was ho--
-I was hoping you could go.
-I'm very awkward around women.
-Yes, aren't we all?
-No, it's not like that.
When I'm in the presence of a lady,
my brain switches off or something.
-I turn into an idiot.
-You ought to meet more women.
-It only gets worse.
-But will you do this for me?
Come on, Prince. Come on. Go, boy.
Come on, boy.
Come on, come on. Okay.
Okay.
Son of a--
Choke. Choke, choke, choke, choke.
You tried to murder me,
you son of a--
Don`t switch her off or Iet her staII.
You`II never start her.
Don`t park on a slope.
You got no hand brake.
Now you teII me.
- Goodbye.
- Goodbye, Andrew.
- Take care, now. Goodbye.
- Bye, Mpudi.
One day, a very noisy animal rushed past where Xi was sleeping.
It left very peculiar tracks, as if two enormous snakes had slithered past.
Everybody lie down on the ground.
All of you, lie down!
Come on, lie down, you and you!
Everybody lie down!
Hey, you! Didn`t you hear me?
Lie down!
He can`t hear you, sir.
- He`s deaf.
- Shut up!
Hey, wake up!
Come and give us petrol here.
Did two jeeps pass here?
Yes, sir. They took half my stock.
They took a big can of petrol,
and they made me to lie down.
If you find them, ask them.
They must pay me my money.
It`s a lot of stuff they took.
Morning.
- Miss Thompson?
- Yes.
- My name--
- How do--?
My name-- My name is--
My name-- My name is Andrew Steyn.
How do you do?
The Reverend cracked his crankcase,
so he asked me to....
Thank you.
How far do we have to go?
How far do we have to go?
How--?
Oh, sorry.
Hello, Andrew.
Hello, Phineas.
-Good morning, madam.
-Good morning.
-I’m sorry, madam. Sorry.
-It’s all right.
Here. I’m truly sorry, madam. Sorry.
It’s all right.
What are you doing?
What--? What--? What are you--?
Your brakes are shot.
-Yes.
-What are you doing?
I’m opening the gate.
How do I get out of here?
No, it’s all right. I....
Now I just....
-Oh, this is too weird. I’m getting out.
-No, it’s okay. I just have to....
-What are you doing now?
-I’m closing the gate. But don’t worry.
Are you crazy? It has no brakes!
Do you wanna get me killed?
-Are you crazy?
-All right, it’ll come back.
-What?
-The Land Rover, it’ll come back.
-What do you mean, it’ll come back?
-It’s all right.
-I suppose you think it was funny.
-I’m sorry. The brakes don’t work.
I noticed.
Xi saw a strange-looking person, and greeted him.
But the man didn’t hear him.
Xi said, ‘This is a funny stick.
Did it grow on a tree?’
He couldn’t understand why he ran away.
He realized the man must’ve seen
the evil thing he was carrying.
That`s what made him run.
-She stopped.
-I noticed.
Can you start her again?
No. We gave her new rings,
and they`re very tight.
-How far are we from the mission?
-About 30 miles.
-Will we get there before dark?
-I don`t know.
-This thing has stopped.
-I noticed.
Are you sure you can`t start her?
Yes. This morning it took a horse
and three men.
-So now what?
-I can make a fire.
And there`s some food
and a sleeping bag.
Spend the night?
I`m afraid so.
You sure this thing`s stopped?
Yes. Didn`t you notice?
I can carry you across.
Then you don`t have to....
Okay.
Watch it! Be careful!
Thank you.
I`m sorry. I`m sorry.
-I`m sorry.
-Look at my dress! I lost my shoes!
-Your what?
-My shoes.
I`m sorry.
Well, watch it, buster.
I`m sorry.
-Sorry. I`ll fetch your bags.
-No! You`ll drop them!
I`ll get them myself.
I`m all right. I`m okay.
Leave that one. I don`t need it.
Idiot.
What are you doing?
Leave me alone! Don’t you dare!
-Go away!
-It’s all right. She’s gone!
Keep away! You keep away from me!
No, I wasn’t-- There was this warthog.
-What warthog?
-She’s gone, but--
Keep away.
-I wasn’t--
-Go away!
I wasn’t--
I didn’t....

Half a mile away, Xi was fixing dinner
when he was rudely interrupted.
Half a mile away, Xi was fixing dinner
when he was rudely interrupted.
The rhino is the self-appointed
fire-prevention officer.
When he sees a fire,
he rushes in and stamps it out.
-Do you work here in Botswana?
-Yes, I-- Yes. Yes.
And what do you do?
I-- I collect manure. I--
Get away from-- Get away from--
Leave me alone!
Miss Thompson?
Miss Thompson?
Miss Thompson!
Miss Thompson!
Oh, it’s all right. He’s gone.
-Who’s gone?
-The rhinoceros.
What bloody rhinoceros?
Didn’t you see him?
He stamped out the fire.
You stamped out the fire.
I saw you.
No, he did it first.
I didn’t want him to come back, so....
-But didn’t you see?
-Keep away.
Miss Thompson, if you make a fire,
and a rhinoceros sees it...
...he comes and stamps it out.
Rhinos do that.
It’s a most interesting phenomenon.
You get sudden urges, and come
up with warthogs and rhinoceroses.
All right, I’ll show you.
I’ll make another fire.
Think I’m lying. I’ll show you.
You see how I’m making another fire?
You’ll see he’ll come back.
Think I’m a liar.
Maybe it’s too far away.
Maybe it’s upwind.
Mr. Steyn.
Ask them. They’ll tell you
rhinoceroses always stamp out fires.
I don’t speak the language.
Okay, I’ll ask them.

See?
I noticed.
They’re Tswanas. They always shake
their heads when they mean to say yes.
What are you doing?
I’m making coffee.
Some people didn’t show
me their passports.
They smashed the barrier.
They’ve got guns. This is Frank.
Were they in two jeeps?
Yes, sir.
They’re being followed by
armoured cars. Can you see them?
Excuse me, sir.
Yes, sir. I can see one.
Stop them!
Yes, sir.
Stop! Stop, stop, stop! Stop!
Frank?
Frank? Frank, what was that noise?
Frank?
I stopped them, sir.
Right. Explain that they cannot cross
our border under arms.
We cannot allow them to violate
our territorial integrity.
Request permission to cross
your border in hot pursuit of Sam Boga.
Sorry. We cannot allow an armed force
to come into Botswana.
I gotta get Sam Boga.
He shot up half our Cabinet.
Our police will track him down and
hand him over to you, dead or alive.
Bye. Bye. Can`t they help us?
They`ll take a message to the river.
I think I can get the thing
out of the river.
There`s an electric winch on the front.
Mr. Steyn?
Mr. Steyn!
-Miss Thompson?
-Could you help me, please?
Don`t look.
That`s a watape tree. You mustn`t go
near a watape tree. They grab you.
Could you hand me my gown, please?
It`s in the suitcase.
The pink one with the white edging.
Ow! Thank you.
Sorry.
Sorry.
Sorry.
Thank you very much. Thank you.
That morning, Xi saw the ugliest
person he`d ever come across.
She was as pale as something
that had crawled out of a rotting log.
Her hair was quite gruesome...
...long and stringy and white,
as if she was very old.
She was very big.
You`d have to dig the whole day
to find enough food to feed her.
Go away.
Although it was a hot day,
she was wearing skins...
...that looked as if they
were made from cobwebs.
She was doing strange and magical things. 
It struck him that she must be one of the gods. 
He wondered what she was doing on earth. 
He was glad he met her. 
He`d give her the evil thing... ...and go home to his family. 
He said tactfully that he didn`t need the thing, and she could have it back. 
But she was very rude, and she walked away. 
-That`s a Bushman. How`d he get here? 
-I don`t know. He`s rude. 
There was another god. 
He had a fire inside him. 
The smoke came out through his mouth and nostrils. 
Xi said politely, ``It was kind of you to send us this thing... ...but it made my family unhappy. Please take it.`` 
Sorry, no sabe. 
Where`s the truck? 
I`II try and get it down. 
There was a peculiar sound, and Xi saw a most amazing animal approaching. Its legs went around instead of up and down. And there was a weird-looking god on its back. He wore blue skin on his head and red on his body. And hair grew on his face. What the heII happened? Where have you been? The funny thing was that they couldn`t speak. They made sounds like monkeys. 
-Hi. 
-What happened? Where`s the antichrist? What the heII did you do that for, huh? I`II teII you Iater. Let`s get it down.
And the IittIe Bushman?
What`s he doing in these parts?
I don`t know. He was trying
to teII me something.
-You speak Bushman?
-Yeah.
The hairy one could speak.
He says, `Thanks for the bottIe,
but you can have it back.``
I didn`t give it to him.
-WeII, he don`t want the bottIe.
-Then he`d better throw it away.
The hairy one said, `We don`t want it.
You`ll have to throw it away yourself. ```
Xi was very disappointed.
It was unfair of the gods to make him
throw it off the earth.
In fact, he began to doubt
whether they really were gods.
Get out! Get out!
Get out! Get in there.
Get in there! Move it! Move it!
Let`s go! Let`s go! Let`s go! Let`s go!
Yes, yes, yes. Here comes
the great white hunter to the rescue.
Miss Thompson, I presume.
HeIIo, Steyn. How wouId you Iike
to traveI in styIe for a change?
Yes, thank you.
How do you open this thing?
With a can opener?
Quaint. MiIady?
-Thank you very much, Mr. Steyn, for....
-Bye-bye, Steyn.
Goodbye, Miss Thompson.
By the way, I am Jack Hind.
The Reverend`s worried.
He got to me on the short-wave...
...so I offered to Iook for you.
That was very sweet of me.
-It sure was.
-WouId you Iike to sit over there?
Sure.
Thank you, Mr. Steyn.
See you, Steyn. See you, Mpudi.
I don’t want to talk about it.
She thinks I’m a lunatic,
and I don’t blame her.
You know, she asks me what do I do,
and I say I collect manure.
I don’t tell her I analyse it
for my doctoral thesis.
I bet you she thinks I shovel the stuff.
Was it rough?
I’d rather not talk about it.
That rough.
It won’t be long now,
and your suffering will be over.
When you get there, you’ll have to
stand there and look beautiful...
...while the whole tribe sings
their welcome song at you.
Then you can relax, have a bath
and a nice breakfast.
Is it true that when a rhino sees a fire,
he stamps it out?
Where did you hear that one?
Did Steyn tell you?
Why would he tell you that?
I’d rather not talk about it.
—Here. This’ll put hair on your chest.
—That’s all I need.
She wouldn’t believe me about
the warthog and the rhinoceros.
—What rhinoceros?
—I don’t want to talk about it.
So how did this thing get up the tree?
She got stuck in a watape tree
and I had to....
You know she’s got flowers
on her panties?
So that’s how this thing got up the tree.
Yes.
Don’t I wave or take a bow
or something?
No.
Notorious Communist guerrilla leader
Sam Boga and his band...
...have crashed through into Botswana.
-They are heading for Mozambique.
-Well, how many?
Not even 300.
I told you bastards,
don't waste ammunition!
Now we can't even fight back anymore.
All of you switch your guns over
from automatic to single-fire.
Anyone withholding information
which could lead to their capture--
That's automatic. That's single.
Citizens are warned that Sam Boga
is a dangerous person...
...and that he and his gang
are well-armed. So it'll be unwise--
And why are you so beautiful?
I'm going to the school
to give her these.
You gonna look like that?
-Like what?
-Like it's a funeral.
You've gotta smile
and tell her she looks good.
How are you an expert on women?
I got seven wives. How many you got?
-Why aren't you at home with them?
-I know how to marry them.
-Nobody knows how to live with them.
-So, what did you marry them for?
Someday I have to tell you
the facts of life.
`And yet we all agree
that every plate we break...
...was cracked by Mr. Nobody.
'Tis he who tears our books, who--`
Come in.
Good morning, Mr. Steyn.
Morning, class.
Good morning, Mr. Steyn.
I-- I brought--
Please, just leave it.
I brought you your shoes.
Come in.
Come in.
Shoe.
You don`t want to talk about it, huh?
Shame.
The animals looked ridiculous
but good to eat...
...and he was hungry.
Suddenly a young boy made
chattering noises at Xi.
So he said, `I shot
one of those animals.
It`ll go to sleep soon,
and then we can eat it.``
But the boy ran away, maybe to call
his family to join in the feast.
There was a weird sound...
...and another of those strange animals
with the round legs appeared.
The young boy and a grownup got
out of it, and seemed very excited.
Xi said, `Come, sit down.
There`s enough meat for all of us.``
But the man was rude and greedy.
He took the whole animal.
He said, `You have very bad manners.
If you eat the whole thing,
I`ll have to shoot another for myself.``
The man shouted,
but he didn`t want anything to do...
...with such an uncouth person,
so he ignored him.
Suddenly there was a thunderclap.
The animals ran away, and he ran
after them. He was very hungry.
Do you speak English?
You are free to remain silent
until you have seen your lawyer.
If you speak now, whatever you say will
be taken down as evidence against you.
And why are you so beautiful?
I got to go to court.
What did you do?
The cops were here. They say they
captured a little Bushman for stock theft.
They say all he can speak is "Xixo,"
so they want me to interpret.

Xixo.

Xixo.

They brought Xi into a place
with several people.

He smiled at them in greeting,
but nobody smiled back.

Interpreter.

You, Xixo, are hereby charged with
wrongfully and unlawfully slaughtering...
...one goat on the 21st of September,

How plead you?

Guilty or not guilty?

Mpudi found it difficult to interpret
because, in his language...
...there was no word for "guilty."

FinaIy he asked,
``Did you shoot an animal?``

Xi said, ``Yes, I did, but that man took it.

He did not want to share it with me.``

-Well, what does he plead?
-Not guilty.
-They gave him the death sentence.
-For killing a goat? No.

Three months in jail, same thing.

He gonna die for sure.

He never seen a wall.

Now, he got walls all around him.

But didn’t you explain to them?
-

They said, ``Silence in court.``
-

Yeah, but surely they ought to know.

Nobody knows the Bushmen.

Nobody ever goes into the deep Kalahari.

How come you know so much about them?

When Botswana belonged to the British,
I hit a policeman for insulting my father.

So I fled, right into the Kalahari.

I died, you know. Dehydration.

Some of those little buggers found me, and buried me.

Only my head stuck out.
For two weeks, they pushed water and food into my mouth. And when they dug me up, I was nearly white. Like you. I lived with them for three years. They're the sweetest little buggers. He's gonna die for sure. Can I go to Mahadi tomorrow? You wanna go and see little what's his name? I want to get him out. Now, don't do anything silly. They got to let him out. Maybe if we explain to them. -You coming too? -Yes. Says he's sorry. He try to eat the food tomorrow. -Has he eaten anything? It's been a week. -No. Of course we're worried. We can't force-feed him. -You've got to let him out. -He's got 1 1 weeks to go. WeII, is there no way? Can't we buy him out or something? WeII, if somebody wants to employ him as a convict-labourer. But he has no experience, no qualifications. He got qualifications. He can teach you things about plants and animals. Yes. We want to employ him as an ecological expert. He will have to remain in your employ for the full 1 1 weeks. If he leaves, we will hunt him down and lock him up for a long time. Okay, thanks. We can't put him inside. No, you're right. I understand the words,
but the meaning....
Talks about a bad thing,
an evil thing.
And about the end of the world.
Well, explain to him he has
to stay with us for the full 11 weeks.
-He doesn't know from weeks.
-Well tell him when it's okay to go.
-Hello, Andrew. Mpudi.
-Hello, Jack.
I hear a Bushman's working for you.
Yeah, his name is Xi.
-Are they good trackers?
-Best in the world.
Mind if I borrow him?
One of my guests wounded a cougar.
My trackers can't find it.
This is where we lost him.
You'll see, he'll find him.
Hey! Hey!
Scram, go away!
Get!
Go away!
-I'm sorry, I didn't realise--
-I don't want to talk about it.
What do you want?
Hurry up. Hurry up.
Get them out.
Come on. Get him.
Hurry up, man.
You can drop those guns.
Bastard.
You want me to let fly?
Now get out.
With your hands up.
Bring out all the kids.
Sergeant, I'm going to walk due east
from here to Motambe...
...and I'm taking
all these kids with me.
If I see one truck or one aeroplane
or one policeman...
...or one soldier or one person...
...we'll mow these kids down.
-Have you got shortwave in there?
-Yes.

Now get on to headquarters, and tell them
I want a corridor 10 miles wide.
The army and the police
better clear out everybody.
And they’ve got to put down food
and water every 20 miles.
And then get the hell out of the way
before we get there. Tell them that.
All right, get them into a circle.
I want a big circle around me.
Leave the small ones. It’s miles
to Motambe. They’ll never make it.
Okay, now buzz off.
Clear out the people from this end...
...because I want to start marching
in two hours.
And I warn you,
you better clear out everybody.
Clutch.
Brake. Brake.
Clutch. Clutch!
I’m teaching him to drive.
Just for the hell of it.
Nothing else to do around here anyhow.
-Still mooning about the schoolmarm?
-Sort of.
I want to move up to Nioko for a
few days so we can do a game count.
-How will this get us through the jungle?
-We strip it down.
Come on, Xi. Come on!
He don’t know from doors.
Stop playing that bloody game.
Okay, it’s time. Let’s go.
Move them.
Come on. Everybody up.
Come on, let’s go.
Keep them going.
Keep them in a circle around me.
Move them!
Don’t leave any stragglers.
-Keep your paws to yourself!
–Shut up.
Get them into a circle.
A circle, a circle!
–Stop yelling at them.
–That’s not a bloody circle.
–Can’t you do anything right?
–I can’t get them into a circle.
They keep coming up in a square.
Then, make it a square.
Let them walk in a square.
Keep them going.
Don’t let them straggle.
Who says they’ll come this way?
He says he wants a corridor
I’m sorry. We’ll have to get out of the way
for now until he passes this point.
Where can I find Andrew Steyn?
You’d better warn him too.
He’s five miles that way.
You turn right at the…
Damn it, I’ll come and show you.
Johnny, will you take them to Machadi?
Tell them to sing.
Come on, everybody. Sing, sing!
Wouldn’t you know?
Now where do we find him?
They left this morning.
Come on!
They went through.
They’ll meet up with Boga for sure.
–Is there a way around this?
–It’s a hell of a long way.
Well, let’s go.
Mpudi.
One, two, three, four, five…
…six adult oryx.
He says there are people
things down there.
–Where?
–Down there.
Army truck. Unloading something.
I wonder what they’re up to.
Looks like food.
Cooking pots and stuff.
Maybe it`s a picnic.
Funny. They`re going away.
They went away and left their stuff.
~Yeah, funny.
Oh, weII.
One, two, three, four, five, six....
You`ve got to let them rest.
The smaller ones can`t keep up.
They can rest when they get to the food.
~You`re driving them too hard.
~It`s a long way to Motambe.
You said 20 miles.
They can`t walk 20 miles without eating.
Halt!
Look at that!
I told you,
stop playing that bloody game!
You`ve got to let
the little ones turn back.
Nobody turns back.
Next thing,
everybody`s gonna get sore feet.
Next one drops out, I shoot him!
You, you, help her.
If you got to carry her, carry her.
If I catch you playing again,
by God....
March!
They can`t march 20 miles.
They`re not soldiers!
If they want to eat,
they`d better march 20 miles!
Are you scared it`ll spoil your image
if you admit you made a mistake?
Halt!
You! Come here!
See that hill over there?
Go to the top, and wave this thing
until the army people see you.
Then you go down to them, and
tell them Sam Boga made a mistake.
Now I want them to leave food
every 10 miles.
Understand?
- Yes.
Now, get going. Move!
March!
One ostrich and four, five...
...six, seven, eight--
A lot of children. The food
must have been left there for them.
What the hell? They've got guns.
The kids?
No. There are men down there
with guns. It's no picnic.
I think those kids are hostages.
What was that on the news
about Sam Boga?
That man said I must go to the top,
and I must wave my conga.
So Miss Kate said 20 miles
is too much.
- Is she down there?
- Yes.
We'll have to immobilise them.
- Are Bushmen good stalkers?
- Best in the world.
Let him have a look at them.
All right.
Explain to him that the men with the guns
are bad. We have to put them to sleep.
He want to know how did
those people get in there?
No, no, they're not....
You explain.
One hour, then we move!
I'm gonna have a snooze.
``Dear Miss Thompson:
Your abductors have been injected
with an immobiliser.
When they go to sleep,
you must disarm them.``
Tell him he must give her the note
only after he's shot all the men.
When he shoots, he must
pull back on the thread quickly...
...so the man can think it was a horsefly
or a wasp that stung him.
He`s fast. It`II work.
He must dip the needle each time.
I can`t see the little bugger.
Yeah, I see him.
Now, look at that.
Yeah, he`s clever.
Nothing`s happening down there.
It takes time.
Who are you?
Some of those guys are down.
She`II need help when they wake up.
Hey, wake up, man.
You gotta wake up.
Come on, you can`t sleep now.
Come on.
We need some rope.
There`s plenty in the Land Rover.
He can fetch it.
I didn`t teach him for nothing.
Says he don`t understand the gears.
-Told him he can drive in any gear.
-Let`s go!
And you take that one.
And you, that one.
And I`II take--
There`s only six.
There should be eight.
Maybe they`re asleep as well.
I don`t know.
All right.
I want you to circulate
among the children.
Quietly. And tell them that
when we grab the guns...
...they must run fast into that crevice
behind us and take cover.
Okay? Good.
Ready? Go!
Come on!
No! Get down, get down!
And stay there!
Get back! All of you!
-Hey, watch it!
Sorry.
We've got to outflank them.
You go around. I'll keep you covered.
Get back! Get back!
Hurry up!
-You okay?
-Yep.
-Who are they shooting at?
-I don't know.
Four, five, six.
Two are missing.
This one here, and I heard shots from over there.
Look.
Roll over.
Mpudi, hold him.
What's happened?
Have you got water in there?
Hold these for me.
-Get up.
-But what happened, man?
Oh, it's a long story.
What happened to those guys?
Are they all dead?
Did you kill them?
They've been immobilised.
Where's Kate and the kids?
They're hiding back there.
They can come out now.
Oh, my God. Mpudi.
Keep that guy covered.
Kate! It's okay.
You can come out now!
We've got everything under control.
You can come out!
-Jack?
-Hi there. The marines have landed.
It's okay. You can all come out.
All right, come on. Come on.
You're safe now.
Better collect those men before they wake up. You were right.
-Did you fix him good?
-Yeah, get up.
WaIk.
Boy, you had a tough time, huh?
Watch out!
Stop fooling around, Steyn.
I`m sorry. I`m sorry.
I`m sorry.
It`s all right, Steyn. Move.
MiIady.
Sergeant, get on the radio and organise some buses to take the kids home.
How come suddenly he the big hero?
We`d better get back to our equipment.
Says thank you, goodbye and hopes you have lots of children.
-TeII him thanks. I`II miss him.
-He can`t use that.
-I have to--
-Bushman don`t know about money.
-What can I give him?
-There`s nothing here he can use.
-Bushman don`t need things.
-He`s gotta take the money. It`s the Iaw.
He`s going the wrong way.
The Kalahari`s that way.
Says he got to find the evil thing and get rid of it.
I don`t know.
-I`m going to miss the little bugger.
-Yeah, me too.
-You gonna look like that forever?
-Like what?
Like Jack Hind is better than you.
-No, I`m going to talk to her.
-TeII her you were the big hero.
No, I can`t do that.
But I do want to talk to her.
I`II teII her....
I`II say, `Look, Miss Thompson...
...I know you think I`m an idiot...
...but normaIIy I`m quite normaI.
It`s only when I`m in the presence of a Iady that I....
It`s reaIIy just an interesting psychoIogicaI phenomenon.
If a man who is susceptible to a type of para-Freudian syndrome like this...
...encounters a nubile female, what happens?
I suppose another big word happens.
-Too erudite?
-Yeah, whatever that means.
Okay. I`II put it more simply. I`II say:
``Look, Miss Thompson.
Kate. Kate.
It`s really only an interesting psychological phenomenon.``
She`II understand that bit.
She`s a schoolteacher.
I`II say, `When there`s no lady present...
...I can catch an insect without hurting it.`
If she knew me better, she`d see I`m not a stumbiebum.
-All I need is a little practise. If I--
-Wait for me. You need moral support.
There she is.
You better do your thing before the pupils come.
Yeah.
Morning.
Morning, Miss Thompson.
Morning.
-How are you?
-Fine, thanks. How are you?
Fine, thanks, and how are you?
I`m fine, thank you.
Kate...
...I know you think I`m an idiot...
...but I`m not really like that. It`s...
...only when I`m around wom--
Around you. I`m sorry.
Normally, I`m quite normal.
But whenever I`m in the presence of a lady...
...my fingers turn into thumbs, my brain switches off.
Watch it!
It`s flour.
I noticed.
It`s actually--
Actually, it`s really only an interesting psychological phenomenon.
Perhaps it`s some Freudian syndrome.
When I brought you your shoes,
I came to apologise...
...for the stupid things I did
when I met you at MabuLa.
To explain that I`m not as stupid as that.
But then, of course, I blew it, and I....
So I don`t blame you if you think....
But it`s really only an
interesting psychological....
When you get to know me better, you`ll
see that I`m not always stumbling.
It`s really just an interesting
psychological phenomenon.
Yes, you are a very interesting
psychological phenomenon.
And I think you`re very sweet.
Xi was beginning to think he`d
never find the end of the earth.
And one day, suddenly, there it was.