

AFRICAN JIM transcript

(Text)

The first full-length film to be made in South Africa with an all native cast. It is a simple film and its quaint mixture of the naïve and the sophisticated is a true reflection of the African native in the modern city.

AFRICAN JIM

Daniel Adnewmah	singer of African tribal songs
Dolly	Dolly Rathebe
Night Watchman	Dan Twala
Pianist in the club	Sam Maile
The African Inkspots and the Jazz Maniacs	

Produced by Warrior Films in Johannesburg, South Africa

Narrator: This is the story of a native boy in Africa, the story of one of my tribe. His name is Jimmy Jablanifana. But we will simply call him "Jim".

This is the country where he was born and grew to manhood, where he lived in the freedom of the wide hills and valleys, tending the crops and cattle. It was a simple and good life, and Jim was happy. But, to many of us there comes a time when we feel the urge to leave our villages and to travel to the city. Often the young men go for a year, sometimes two years, or even more, so that they may earn money, and then return to their people, and buy cattle, and marry. Sometimes, it is just a spirit of restlessness and adventure that sends them traveling.

So, one day, Jim changed into town clothes, which were among his proudest possessions. Jim said goodbye to his parents, and set out.

DIALOGUE

(arrival in Johannesburg)

Man: Good evening, my friend, can I help you?

Jim: Well, thank you very much.

Man: You are a stranger to Johannesburg?

Jim: Yes, I've only just arrived.

Man: Have you lost something?

Jim: Yes, I was going to stay with my relatives, I had an address in my pocket, but now I seem to have lost it.

Man: Don't worry, my friend, I can help you. I know of a room not far from here. It's not expensive. You have money for bed and food, of course?

Jim: Yes, I have some money.

Man: Come, I'll take you to my friend's place.

Jim: It's very kind of you.

Man: Oh, it's a pleasure to help one of my brothers.

(Nightclub. Song in African language, apart from opening line.)

Song: Ah, ha – Captain Rhythm...

(Jim lying on ground)

Watchman: Hey, wake up! What's the matter?

Jim: Oh, my head!

Watchman: What's the matter with you, are you ill?

Jim: My jacket! My money! That man at the station – I've been robbed!

Watchman: Oh, take it easy, son. Come on, tell me all about it.

Watchman: Here, take this and make yourself warm.

Here, have some tea.

Jim: Thank you very much.

Watchman: Cheer up, son. The thieves are miles away by now. You stay the night here with me, and maybe tomorrow I'm going to fix you up with a job.

Jim: You are very good to me.

(Guitarist plays)

Watchman: That was very fine, Themba. This is Themba Dusa, a good friend of mine.

This is Jim.

Guitarist: Can you sing?

Jim: A little bit.

Watchman: Let's hear it.

(Jim sings)

Watchman: You have a very fine voice, my friend.

Jim: Where I come from, we sing all the time.

Guitarist: Then you can give us another.

Jim: Not now, I'm tired.

Guitarist: Then I should be going. Good night.

Jim: Good night.

(morning)

Watchman: Come on, wake up Jim.

Jim: Good morning, Charlie.

Watchman: Good morning, Jim.

How are you feeling this morning, better?

Jim: Better, thank you, Charlie,

Watchman: Good. Come and meet some friends. Then I'll see if I can't fix you up with job.

(outside white residence)

Watchman: (whistles)

Kesi: Charlie! How are you?

Watchman: Very well, thank you, Kesi. Listen, is your boss still looking for a garden boy?

Kesi: Yes.

Watchman: Well, this is Jim, a friend of mine, and he wants a job.

Kesi: OK, I'll take him to see the boss now. Come on.

Jim: I've got it. I've got to start right now.

Watchman: Good luck, Jim. I'll meet you here at four. Then we can go home. And I'll fix you up with a bed.

(garden)

Kesi: Take this hose and work on the garden.

Jim: OK.

Kesi! No water!

(Kesi into pool)

Boss: Hey! What's going on! You've caused enough trouble out here. If you're so fond of playing around with water, I'll find you something else to do. Go on, get up to the house.

Radio voice: Continuing our programme of Bantu music...

Boss: You clumsy idiot! Don't stand there like a stupid – get out!

Jim: I'm sorry, sir.

Boss: You're fired!

(gambling)

Jim: Mind if I have a game, fellows?

Gambler: Let's go, buddy.

Gambler: Police!

Jim: Hello, Charlie. I am sorry I'm late.

Watchman: Where have you been? What's all of this?

Jim: Well, it's some new clothes for myself, and a present for you.

Watchman: I thought you had no money. Did you get paid in advance?

Jim: No, Charlie, I was lucky. I won some money playing dice.

Watchman: Playing dice! Well, it's very good of you to give me this. But I don't like the way you got your money.

Jim: Don't worry, Charlie, I'll explain. I was walking down the street, when a number of boys playing...

(fade to black)

(singing group)

Jim: How beautiful!

Watchman: Ah, my daughter has a very fine voice.

Dolly: Sorry to go now, Dad, but I'll be late for the club.
Watchman: Every night she sings at the Ngoma club – you should hear her.
Jim: I should like to hear that very much.
Dolly: Why not come along now? You can come with me.
Jim: Well, thank you.
Watchman: Go, Jim, and enjoy yourself. I have to go to work.
Dolly: Good night, Dad, good night, Mum.

(club interior)

Dolly sings:

Oh, I came to Jo'burg, the golden city,
Oh, what did I come here for?
I'm a long way from home, in Jo'burg city,
So far away from my kraal. (kraal=village)

Oh, a man with sweet talk, from Jo'burg city,
He was the man that I loved.
He bought me jewels and gold to spare,
And stole my heart away.

Now I'm sad and lonely,
For I love him only,
I love him only,
But my man's left me
All alone.

Jim: Dolly, that was beautiful!
Dolly: Thank you, Jim, I'm glad you liked it. Like the place, Jim?
Jim: I'd like to spend every night here.
Dolly: I think I can arrange it for you. The manager needs another waiter, don't you, Louis?
Manager: Yes, sure. You want the job, boy?
Jim: Yes, sir.
Manager: Good. Come to see me tomorrow morning at nine.
Jim: Thanks, I'll be here.
Manager: If you'll excuse me, I have some other business to attend to.
Dolly: Good night, Louis.
Jim: Dolly, who are those men?
Dolly: I don't know.
Jim: Don't you know their names or what they do?
Guitarist: No. Why do you ask, Jim?
Jim: Oh, nothing. I just thought I recognized one of them.
Guitarist: Don't go now, Jim. The floor show's just starting.

(Jim sweeping, Dolly singing in African. Jim joins in)

Dolly: Jim, that was grand!

Johnny: Come here, Jim.

Dolly: You know, Johnny, you should give Jim a chance, with a voice like that.

Johnny: Well, he can have one. Listen, Friday night, the boss of a big recording company is coming over here. You can sing then.

Dolly: But Johnny, Jim is working as a waiter.

Johnny: Well, on Friday night he can work as a singing waiter.

Dolly: What an idea!

Jim: I don't know what to say –

Johnny: Don't say anything. (To band) OK, boys, let us stop for lunch. Cheerio, Dolly. Cheerio, Jim.

Jim: Can I walk home with you, Dolly.

Dolly: Of course, Jim. Come on.

Jim: I'll just get my coat.

(Workmen in street picking up a large crate sing in African)

Oh, to hell with those white men, who make us work so hard, and pay us so little money!

Dolly: That's where my father works at night at the warehouse.

Jim: I know. But what are those three men doing over there?

Dolly: What's the matter, Jim?

Jim; I'm sure I know those men. I'd like to know what they're doing there.

(Nightclub, Jim serving)

Jim: Two teas. Thank you.

Dolly: Don't forget, Jim. This is your big chance tonight. The band are going to play your music at half-past ten.

Jim: I'll be ready.

Dolly: Good luck, Jim.

Gangster: What are the plans for tonight, Chief?

Chief gangster: Ten o'clock, back of the warehouse. We'll first knock the old watchman out, Steff and I will do the job, then you bring the car around.

Gangster: OK, let's eat.

(Warehouse)

Watchman: Jim – what's the matter?

Jim: This place is going to be robbed tonight. I heard the thieves planning – ten o'clock they said.

Watchman: It's nearly ten o'clock already! Let's call the police.

Jim: No, wait – I have to settle it my way. They are the thieves who robbed me! I recognized the one who knocked me on the head! Now, call the other watchmen, Charlie. We can settle this our own way.

Watchman: Yes, the police can have them after we're finished. Ben! Jinot! Telemari!

(African discussion)

(Scuffle)

Watchman: That's fine! Now we can call for the police.

Jim: What's the time?

Watchman: Quarter past ten. Why?

Jim: I can't top now. I'll explain later.

Watchman: Come on, you. Let's find a bed-space tonight.

(Nightclub)

Johnny: Where's Jim? We're waiting.

Dolly: I don't know. I've been looking everywhere. Wait! Here he comes!

Voice: Waiter, waiter – come back here!

(Jim sings in African)

Boss: I thought I'd seen you somewhere before – you're the boy I sacked.

Jim: I'm sorry, sir –

Boss: Oh, forget it. You're no good as a servant, but, my boy, you certainly can sing. In fact, I want you to sing for me on my records.

Jim: Thank you very much.

Boss: Alright, Jim, I'll see you after the show.

(final song)

Jim: Love is the song that I sing.
It's the song of the birds on the wing.
From the town and the kraal
That's the song of us all,
For this brings a kiss to your heart.

Jim and Dolly: For the love is the song that I sing,
For the boys and the girls in the spring.
I will wait for the day
That will be our wedding day,
And this is our song of love.

(Text) THE END

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