



PRISONER NELSON MANDELA

By Sam Pinnell

Edited for 2022-2023 season by Lucille O'Flanagan

PRINCIPAL SOURCES

Mandela by Anthony Sampson, Harper Collins 1999

Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela, Abacus 1994 www.nelsonmandela.org

CAST (WITH DOUBLING SUGGESTIONS FOR A 4 PERSON CAST, 3M. 1F)

Actor one: Nelson Mandela

Actor two: Doctor, White guy, Paper seller, President Daniel Malan, White Man, Policeman, Prison Guard, Sergeant Vorster, Prison Governor, President De Klerk, Reporter 1

Actor three: Graca, Schoolmistress, Tribal elder 2, Albertina, Winnie, Zindzi

Actor four: Schoolboy, Tribal elder 1, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Waiter, George, Driver, Reporter 2

SONG “FREE FREE” SUNG X 4 & 1 solo

SCENE 1 (2013)

MANDELA IS DOZING IN THE GARDEN. HIS WIFE AND A DOCTOR COME TO HIM.

GRACA

Madiba wake up. You have a visitor, the Doctor is here to see you.

DOCTOR

Mr Mandela, it is an honour to meet you. Mrs Mandela tells me –

GRACA

Call me Graca please.

DOCTOR

Graca tells me that your chest infection is getting worse Sir.

MANDELA

My wife worries too much Doctor, but I suppose I must admit that my lungs are not what they used to be, that's true.

DOCTOR (takes his STETHOSCOPE AND LISTENS TO MANDELA'S Chest)

May I ?

Hmm. We may need to take you back to hospital. You certainly have a lung infection Sir. Possibly as result of the TB you caught on Robben Island.

MANDELA

And what do you know of Robben Island? Let us discuss this matter further. Come Doctor let us take a little walk. You will see that I'm not done yet.

GRACA

Be careful. Don't let him do too much.

MANDELA

I have spent too much of my life apart from my family. It is my greatest regret. Finally I am at home and happy with my third wife and you want to move me. There will be no dying today. Haven't they told you? I am 95 years old. I'm outliving them all. Even my dear old friend Walter has passed away and left me. I miss him every day.

DOCTOR

Your breathing is a little laboured sir, let's sit awhile.

THE TWO MEN SIT ON A PARK BENCH. MANDELA PLACES HIS HAND ON THE DOCTOR'S HAND

MANDELA

You know when I was your age we two could not have sat here on this bench, the black and the white. Can you hear anything?

DOCTOR

No, just the usual noise of the street.

MANDELA

Aaah. It is my age I think. I hear voices all the time, voices from the past. They call to me.

DOCTOR

They call your name?

MANDELA

Yes, they call all of my names, for I have many. Such a long life, so many memories. It seems like only yesterday I was a child.

SUNG :

The sun shines,

Sun shines bright,

Bright in the day.

The sun bur-urns, burns our skin.

But we get on with the day.

We think of the rain.

We forget the pain.

We sing. And sing. X 2

SCENE 2 (1925)

SCHOOL MISTRESS

Sit down children. Lessons are about to begin. British history.

SCHOOLBOY

Again!

SCHOOLMISTRESS

Look we have a new student in the class today. You boy: what is your name?

MANDELA (proudly)

I am Rolihlahla Mandela. My name means, “tree shaker” but I am here to study not to cause any trouble.

SCHOOL MISTRESS

No, no, no that won't do at all. All the boys here must go by English names.

SCHOOL BOY

No African names allowed here. I am called William.

SCHOOL MISTRESS

Yes, here at the missionary school we will give you a first class British education.

MANDELA

And what about our own culture?

SCHOOL MISTRESS

(laughing) There is no such thing as African culture. It is uncivilised to have an African name. From now on you can be Nelson. The name of a great British hero. Yes, Nelson Mandela.

SCHOOL BOY

Ha! Welcome Nelson. That's a really stupid white man's name!

SUN SHINES SUNG x 2 (1 x English then 1 x Xhosa solo Mandela)

SCENE 3 (1925)

TWO TRIBAL ELDERS SEATED ON THE FLOOR. NELSON RUSHES IN.

MANDELA

Guess what happened at school today? They took my name away and-

ELDER 1

Rolihlahla be quiet! This is a meeting of the elders!

MANDELA

But my new name is Nelson. But why can't I keep my African name? Why?

ELDER 2

Sit down little one, it sounds like you have a lot to learn. And you won't learn it at school that's for sure. The British think that the history of South Africa started in 1652!

ELDER 1

Listen carefully. Of course there is a black culture. You are part of the Xhosa people.

ELDER 2

And each Xhosa belongs to a clan. You are part of the Madiba clan.

MANDELA (trying it out)

Madiba.

ELDER 1

Your father was a respected man.

ELDER 2

A counsellor of Kings.

MANDELA

But what use is that to me, now that he's dead?

ELDER 2

It is sad to lose a parent so young. But you must trust in us, your clan, to look after you now.

MANDELA

But if we have our own kings how is it that we are ruled by the British?

ELDER 1

Ah Madiba, that is a sad story. Once we lived in South Africa as a proud black nation.

ELDER 2

Then one day long ago a Dutch ship on the way to Asia was shipwrecked here.

ELDER 1

The Dutch sailors loved the country so much they stayed. Then more Dutch came as settlers and they pushed us off our own land.

ELDER 2

Then gold and diamonds were discovered

ELDER 1

And the greedy British came and fought the Dutch to claim South Africa for themselves.

ELDER 2

The British told our people that their true chief was the great white queen across the sea.

ELDER 1

But that white queen has brought us nothing but misery.

ELDER 2

We have an old saying: When the whites came to South Africa they had the bible and we had the land. They said “let us pray”. We closed our eyes. And when we opened them we had the bible and they had the land.

MANDELA

It isn't fair. When I'm older I'm going to study law. And one day I will change South Africa. I will put things right.

ELDER 1 (LAUGHING)

He'll never change the world with a name like that!

ELDER 2

Then study hard little one. For there are a lot of wrongs to put right. Certainly for one little boy! And one with such a funny English name. Nelson Mandela!

SUN SHINES SUNG x 1 elder solo then x 1 all

SCENE 4 (1941) "Walter Sisulu Property Services, Johannesburg"

MANDELA IS NOW 23 YEARS OLD. HE ENTERS TO FIND A SMARTLY DRESSED MAN SITTING BEHIND A DESK.

WALTER

You must be Nelson Mandela. Come in, come in. Take a seat. I am Walter Sisulu. But you must call me Walter.

WALTER

Hmm....so you went to college at Fort Hare?

NELSON

Yes, indeed. The only all black college in the country so perhaps you can guess why I chose to go there?

WALTER (SMILING)

Yes I think I can. Now what brings you here today Mr Mandela?

MANDELA

Here to Johannesburg? Well I intend to go to university and study the law.

WALTER

Actually I meant what brings you *here*. Here, as in my office.

MANDELA

Ahh I see. Well a cousin of mine suggested that you were a man who could help me here in the city. I don't really know anyone here you see.

WALTER

I think I can help you Mr Mandela. There's a white lawyer I work with sometimes, Lazar Sidelsky. Let's see if he will take you on as a clerk. Let's get you started in the law.

MANDELA

Thank you sir, err Mr Sisulu, err Walter.

WALTER

And thank you Nelson.

SUN SHINES SUNG (to "day")

Scene 5. (1941)

WALTER'S HOUSE. A GATHERING IS IN PROGRESS. CHATTER. MUSIC.

ALBERTINA

You must be Nelson Mandela! I am Albertina. My husband has told us all about you. Come you must meet some of our comrades, but be warned: Walter is in the middle of one of his speeches! Once my husband gets started on politics he's not an easy man to interrupt.

WALTER (IN MID FLOW)

Africa is a black man's continent and it is up to Africans to reclaim what is rightfully ours. Times are changing, our tribal differences are melting away, it is time to think of ourselves as Africans. And to realise that whites are not a superior race. Nelson, Albertina, come and join us.

NELSON

Don't let us interrupt you, Walter.

WHITE GUY

Walter was telling us he has no need of supporters like me, but let me tell you there are plenty of whites in the communist party who are happy to join our black comrades in the struggle against inequality.

ALBERTINA

Walter believes that the African National Congress cannot be seen to be a mixed organisation.

WALTER

We must be a pure African voice. If we admit whites then we will always be seen as inferior to them.

WHITE GUY

And what does Dr Xuma, your leader think of these radical ideas?

WALTER

Dr Xuma is a devoted president of the ANC, but he believes in doing everything in the English style.

WHITE GUY

And you think you know better ?

WALTER

I do. We have told Dr Xuma that we intend to form a youth organisation.

NELSON

And how did he take that news?

ALBERTINA

Oh he strongly objects of course! He believes that we Africans are too undisciplined to organise a mass campaign.

WALTER

And we aim to prove him wrong. We're going to light a fire under the ANC. Are you with us Nelson?

NELSON

You make me nervous Walter with all this politics. Perhaps it's not for everyone this life you've chosen.

WALTER

And what life is that?

NELSON

A life dedicated to the struggle. A dangerous life. With no guarantee of success.

ALBERTINA

As you say it is the life he has chosen. It might be dangerous but Nelson, in all honesty, are you saying that he has any other choice?

WALTER

What's the alternative Nelson? Will you work for Mr Sidelsky forever? Is he teaching you that much?

NELSON BEGINS TO LAUGH

WALTER

What's so funny?

NELSON

D'you know what Mr Sidelsky tells me almost every day? Stay away from men like Walter Sisulu. If you go into politics you will break up your family and end up in jail.

WALTER

Well Nelson, on that score he is probably right. So you will join us then?

NELSON

I will.

SUN SHINES SUNG (Sisulu & Mandela up to “day”)

Scene 6 (1948)

NIGHT. NELSON AND WALTER LEAVING A POLITICAL MEETING

NELSON

Stop yawning Walter! That was a serious meeting.

WALTER

So serious it's been going on all night. And in all that time we never even discussed the general election that's been going on outside!

NELSON

I can't imagine that the 1948 election is going to make any difference to us. None of our people have a vote. And everyone knows the United Party will get in again.

WALTER

What if the Nationalists win the vote?

NELSON

No Daniel Malan's party is standing on the platform of apartheid. I can't believe the whites want South Africa to become even more racist than it is already. The Nationalists supported the Nazis during the war, for goodness sake.

A PAPER SELLER APPROACHES SELLING THE RAND DAILY MAIL

PAPER SELLER

Read all about it! Shock election result!

MANDELA REACHES FOR A PAPER

PAPER SELLER

Oy! What d'you think you're doing boy! Papers are tuppence. Money up front!

MANDELA HANDS HIM THE MONEY WITH DIGNITY AND TAKES THE
NEWSPAPER

PAPER SELLER

That's better! See my lad, things have changed. Time for you lazy, thieving blacks to show your betters some respect.

WALTER (angrily)

How dare you speak to my friend like that!

PAPER SELLER

How dare I? I'll tell you how I dare. Because the law says I'm better than you lot. Better in every way. You can swan around in your fancy trousers but now the Nats are in power, they're going to send you back to the fields, to live like the animals you are! Yeah, go on then. Attack me! Me; an innocent man! This is why I voted for the Nats !

WALTER AND MANDELA CHASE OFF THE PAPER SELLER, WHO
RETURNS TO PUT UP THE "WHITES ONLY" SIGN ON THE BENCH.

WALTER

Apartheid. It is really happening.

MANDELA

Yes, our people will be even more cruelly treated than before.

WALTER

I like this.

NELSON

Are you mad? This is a disaster.

WALTER

People will want to fight now; they will be queuing up to join the struggle. The whites have over-played their hand Nelson.

NELSON

Come on, let's get home. This is no night to be on the streets. Every racist in the country must be out celebrating.

WALTER

You know me Nelson; I'm always ready for a fight. And Lord knows we are going to have to fight like never before.

SUN SHINES SUNG (all, to "buu uuurns")

Scene 7 (1948)

THE NEW APARTHEID PRESIDENT DANIEL MALAN GIVES A SPEECH: ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE MANDELA IS GIVING A SPEECH AS IF TO TWO SEPARATE CROWDS.

MALAN

We have won a great election victory. Let my people rejoice that I, Daniel Malan, will run South Africa for the white Afrikaners: the Dutch descendants.

NELSON

From now on we true Africans will have even less power than we did before.

MALAN

Whites are superior to Africans and apartheid will entrench white supremacy forever. The white man must always remain boss.

MANDELA

These people are our oppressors. There are six million people in South Africa, 4 million of us are black and yet we have no votes.

MALAN

Eie Volk, eie taal, eie land: our own people, our own language, our own land!

MANDELA

We cannot vote, we can only live where the government tells us to live. This government has taken our land, our voice, our freedom.

MALAN

Marriage between races is now illegal. Buses and schools will be separated into white and black. Blacks will be taught just enough to work as our housemaids and our servants. These practices are now the law. The races will be segregated. Anyone who breaks these laws will be severely punished.

MANDELA

I am a lawyer and I will fight for you where I can. But within the law we can only do so much. When the law is the law of injustice we must join together and fight. The ANC asks you to join our campaign of defiance against the government. Put on your armbands : green, gold and black. Green for the land, gold for its riches, and black? Black is for the people. Power!

CROWD

The power is ours!

MANDELA

Power!

CROWD

The power is ours!

SUN SHINES SUNG x 1

Scene 8 (1957) “Mandela and Tambo, Lawyers”

MANDELA’S LEGAL PARTNER OLIVER TAMBO IS CONCLUDING A MEETING.

MANDELA

Oh I’m sorry Oliver, I didn’t realise you had a client with you.

OLIVER

Don’t worry Nelson, I was just concluding my consultation. Madam this is my colleague Mr Nelson Mandela.

MANDELA

And may I apologise to you also for interrupting Mrs -?

WINNIE

It’s Miss. My name is Nomzamo Winifred Madikizela. But you can call me Winnie.

MANDELA (taking her hand)

It’s a pleasure to meet you Winnie. I hope my colleague Mr Tambo has been helpful with your legal matter today? We pride ourselves at Mandela and Tambo that we are the best black law firm in Johannesburg.

WINNIE (amused, flirty)

Mr Mandela you are the *only* black law firm in Johannesburg.

MANDELA

To be truthful, Winnie, we are the only black law firm in South Africa!

WINNIE

Mr Tambo has been most helpful. It is good work you do here.

MANDELA

Let me tell you more about it. Let me take you to lunch?

SUN SHINES SUNG (up till “day”)

Scene 9 (1957) “Raj Indian Restaurant” Johannesburg

MANDELA (sitting opposite Winnie)

..it’s illegal to walk through a Whites Only door, a crime to ride a Whites Only bus, a crime to sit on the wrong bench, to drink from the wrong water fountain.

WINNIE

Our people need lawyers. But how can you win equality for all under the law, when the law itself is racist?

MANDELA

I agree. It’s becoming very clear that the only way forward is radical action from the ANC.

WINNIE

I agree, we must fight against this evil Apartheid government and its unjust laws.

WINNIE BREAKS OFF AND BEGINS TO COUGH

MANDELA

Is the Indian food too spicy for you? It’s one of the only restaurants near the office that will serve black people.

WINNIE (mopping her brow)

No, no it’s fine. Could I have some more water please.

MANDELA (to the waiter)

More water here please!

WINNIE

I’ve never eaten Indian food before. It is quite...interesting.

WINNIE REFILLS HER GLASS AND TAKES A BIG DRINK

That's better!

MANDELA

Sorry, for our next date I'll choose more carefully.

WINNIE

So this is a romantic date is it? I thought it was a business meeting.

MANDELA

I know we've only just met but I have a feeling about you. I can tell you now that I know you are going to be my wife one day!

WINNIE

And are you free to make such a commitment Mr Mandela?

MANDELA

At the moment I am still married to my first wife Evelyn. We married young and when I became involved in politics we drifted apart. We've been separated for some time. I never thought to start divorce proceedings. Until now. Now that I've met you I will start those proceedings today.

WINNIE

You don't need to be in such a hurry Nelson. We've got the rest of our lives to spend together after all!

SUN SHINES SUNG (Mandela and Winnie) end on "day"

Scene 10 (1960)

A HEAVILY PREGNANT WINNIE IS AT HOME WITH THEIR BABY GIRL
ZENI

WINNIE

Come on Zeni. Be a good girl and settle down for your mother.

SHE BEGINS TO SING A LULLABY. MANDELA BURSTS IN WITH A YOUNG MAN (GEORGE)

MANDELA

Have you heard the news Winnie?

WINNIE

Shhh! The baby. And who is this ?

GEORGE

I am George mam. I come from Sharpeville.

MANDELA

I cannot believe you haven't heard the news Winnie! You know that there was a demonstration planned yesterday in Sharpeville?

WINNIE

Yes, of course. They were going to burn their identity papers in front of the police. A peaceful protest.

GEORGE

Let me tell you Madam it did not turn out that way!

WINNIE

Sit down, tell me what happened.

GEORGE

There must have been 20,000 of us there.

MANDELA

We have eyewitnesses; they say the crowd was calm.

GEORGE

It was. We burned our passbooks to show the authorities that we don't accept their stupid restrictions. If white people don't have to carry their ID at all times why should we? More police came, some 300. They tried to arrest the speakers at the rally.

MANDELA

The police pushed forward. The crowd pushed back.

WINNIE

My god! What happened next?

GEORGE

There was no warning. Suddenly two gunshots rang out. Then forty seconds of solid gunfire. The police fired straight into the crowd. People screamed and ran.

WINNIE

Was anyone hurt?

GEORGE

69 people died Mrs Mandela. They died!

MANDELA

And 180 or more seriously injured.

GEORGE

They shot women and children; little children. Most of the dead were shot in the back. Running away d'you see? Not running forward to attack, like the police are saying.

MANDELA

The government are on the news calling it "an ordinary police action".

The rest of the world are calling it a massacre.

THERE IS A CRASH AND A POLICEMAN BURSTS IN

POLICEMAN

Nelson Mandela. I am here to place you under arrest. South Africa is under Martial Law.

MANDELA

Where is your warrant? How dare you enter my home.

POLICEMAN

We are seizing all your papers and documents. Search the house! Membership of the African National Congress is now illegal.

WINNIE

This is outrageous! Where are you taking him?

POLICEMAN

I do not have to give you that information. You have no rights

GEORGE

He has a right to a lawyer.

POLICEMAN

Hah. I don't think so. And take your hands out of your pockets when you're talking to me boy.

GEORGE

I do not have to take my hands out of my pockets for you.

POLICEMAN

Next time I expect we'll be coming for you, whoever you are. And for you Winnie Mandela.

WINNIE

They will pay for this. If Nelson is gone it is up to us. We must fight! No more peaceful protest! This is a new era!

SUN SHINES SUNG x 1

Scene 11 (1961) NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: "The Black Pimpernel: police seek Nelson Mandela"

NELSON MANDELA HAS HIS FIRST TV INTERVIEW. HE FACES OUT FRONT.

I am on the run. Living underground because of persecution from the South African state. As one of the leaders of the ANC, I continue to campaign for a free and equal South Africa. I may have little time before I am arrested again. But the struggle is my life. After the Sharpeville massacre the world is watching. We have formed a new group 'Spear of the Nation'. Yes write it down. I am its commander in chief.

We do not want to kill people but we believe in violent action. We are ready to destroy power plants, railways and telephone lines. I have never been a soldier, never fought in a battle, and never fired a gun. But I am going to start an army. I will fight for freedom till the end of my days. Tell your listeners that. Take my words and send them out into the world.

SUN SHINES SUNG x 1

Scene 12 (1962)

NELSON IS IN THE PASSENGER SEAT OF A CAR, AN UNKNOWN MAN IS DRIVING.

DRIVER

Relax Nelson. These are back roads. No one comes this way.

MANDELA

Wait what's that up ahead? I can see lights.

DRIVER

They look like headlights, probably just another car.

MANDELA

Well if it is, it isn't moving. Something's wrong. It's a roadblock!

A POLICEMAN (SGT VORSTER) STEPS OUT AND FLAGS DOWN THE CAR

SGT VORSTER

Stop the car!

DRIVER

What is the problem?

SGT VORSTER

Don't speak to me like that boy. The problem is what I say it is. Now get out of the car, both of you.

DRIVER

We are just driving home Sir.

SGT VORSTER

Get down on your knees, both of you.

MANDELA

This is unacceptable, what is it that you think we have done?

SGT VORSTER

I am Sergeant Vorster and I have an arrest warrant. Papers ! Documents! Name and occupation.

MANDELA

I am David Motsamayi, a chauffeur.

SGT VORSTER (shining his flashlight into Mandela's face)

I don't think so. We have information that you are the fugitive Nelson Mandela. The man the papers are calling: The Black Pimpernel!

MANDELA

That is ridiculous! I am David Motsamayi. Look at my passbook.

SGT VORSTER

I don't care whose documents you're carrying. I know who you are. Look at you. On the run, hiding out at Liliesleaf Farm among your fellow blacks.....who do you think gave you up? What do you think we had to give him?

MANDELA

30 pieces of silver?

SGT VORSTER

Very funny! Try a shilling. (LAUGHS)

MANDELA (to the Driver)

You must tell the others at the Farm, they need to get out.

SGT VORSTER

Too late my friends. We're doing a raid on the farm right now.

MANDELA

I demand a lawyer. I have my legal rights even in South Africa.

SGT VORSTER

You fancy yourself a lawyer. Do you know what the penalty is for acts of sabotage?

MANDELA (almost inaudible)

Death.

SGT VORSTER

Speak up boy. I didn't hear you.

MANDELA

Death! The penalty is death. But first officer there has to be a trial.

SUN SHINES SUNG x 1

Scene 13 (1963) 'Palace of Justice, Pretoria. The Supreme Court.'

VOICE OVER ON TAPE CALLING THE COURT TO ORDER: "Order! Order!
The state versus Nelson Mandela and others. Justice De Wet presiding". ON FILM
JUDGE DE WET IN HIS COURTROOM.

JUSTICE DE WET

You are all accused of recruiting persons for sabotage and of guerrilla warfare for the purpose of starting a violent revolution. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?

MANDELA

My Lord, it is not I but the government who should be in the dock. My name is Nelson Mandela and I plead not guilty.

WALTER

My name is Walter Sisulu and I plead not guilty.

WINNIE

Courage Walter, we are with you !!!

SUN SHINES HUMMED

SCENE 14 (1963) THE TRIAL. 5 MONTHS LATER.

ON FILM THE JUDGE IS SAT IN THE COURTROOM, FANNING HIMSELF.
HE IS HOT AND TIRED.

WALTER

You simply cannot read this statement to the court Nelson.

MANDELA

Why not? What do I have to lose? This trial is a joke. How long has it been going on?

WALTER

5 long months. God knows Nelson we are all fed up with it. But if you say what is on this paper they will take you out the back and hang you straight away!

MANDELA

Walter my friend, I think they are going to hang me no matter what I say. This is probably my last chance to have my words heard by the people. The court is full of reporters. I cannot pass up my chance to speak.

SUN SHINES HUMMED

Scene 15 – 1 (1963)

ON FILM THE JUDGE IS SAT IN THE COURTROOM.

JUSTICE DE WET

Mr Mandela. At this time I understand that you are to make a statement from the dock. I warn you that by refusing to submit to cross-examination you put yourself in a precarious position.

MANDELA

I am aware of the provisions of the criminal code My Lord. I still intend to read my prepared statement.

I have dedicated my life to the struggle of the African people. The ANC wants full political rights for Africans. I have cherished the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an

ideal, which I hope to live for, and to see realised. But, my Lord, if needs be, it an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

APPLAUSE FROM WINNIE, WALTER AND THE CROWD IN THE COURT.

Scene 15 – 2 (1963)

ON FILM THE JUDGE IS SAT IN THE COURTROOM, LAW BOOKS IN FRONT OF HIM

JUSTICE DE WET

Silence in court! I would like the record to show that I am giving the accused the only mercy which the law allows me. I have decided not to impose the supreme penalty of death. The sentence in the case of all the accused will be one of life imprisonment.

WALTER

Life! We will live!

MANDELA

It is a small victory my old friend, a small victory. Life in Robben Island Prison. We might come to regret that we were spared.

SUN SHINES SOLO - WINNIE

Scene 16 (1964) ROB BEN ISLAND PRISON.

GUARD (shouting)

Prisoners Mandela, Sisulu: welcome to Robben Island.

We have a saying here: This is the Island here you will die.

MANDELA

We may be prisoners but we have our rights. When can we receive visitors?

GUARD

Here you may have one letter and one visitor every six months. Visitors must be close family only

MANDELA

Can my daughters visit?

GUARD

Visitors must be 16 years or older.

MANDELA

But my little daughter is only three.

GUARD

Then you can see her in 13 years time! Now line up, into your cells. Step forward Prisoner 46664.

NO ONE MOVES

GUARD

Prisoner 46664.

WALTER

Nelson, that's you!

GUARD

Good, Mandela good. Forget your name. You won't need it here. You are 46664 from now on. Now get inside your cell.

Scene 17 (1964)

MANDELA STEPS INTO THE CELL. HE LOOKS AT THE MAT ON THE FLOOR, THE TIN BUCKET. HE SITS ON THE MAT.

MANDELA

46664. Here for life.

SONG “HARK” PERFORMED

SCREEN SHOWS CALENDAR PAGES BEING TORN OFF TO SHOW
PASSAGE OF TIME

MANDELA

Dear Winnie Life is hard here at Robben Island. Each morning a load of stones the size of basketballs is delivered into the yard. Our job is to break them into smaller stones. Warders walk among us to enforce silence.. We have no hot water. All we are given to eat is soup or maize porridge. Which is disgusting. We are supposed to receive vegetables but the prison cooks steal them all. Coloured prisoners get a piece of bread but we blacks do not. In our cells we have only a mat on the floor to sleep on and a tin bucket to serve as a toilet. The warders insist we call them Boss. If it wasn't for my snatched conversations with Walter I don't think I could survive here.

GUARD

46664! What are you doing? Step forward.

MANDELA (with some contempt)

Yes Boss.

GUARD

A letter eh? Let me see.

THE GUARD TEARS UP THE LETTER.

GUARD

Totally unsuitable. Such a letter cannot be sent, as you well know.

MANDELA

I will try again. Let me try again.

GUARD

One letter every six months, you know the rules.

MANDELA

But you haven't sent my letter.

GUARD

A letter is a letter. Try again in 6 months time. What's the hurry Mandela? You've got a lifetime to get it right!

SONG "HIT HARDER" SUNG

Scene 18 (1966) A PRISON YARD

WALTER AND NELSON ARE KNEELING, WORKING AT BREAKING STONES. THEY SING.

WALTER

This work at the quarry is hurting the men Nelson.

MANDELA

For me it's my eyes. The dust makes them sting and the bright light burns as it reflects into them from the limestone. How many times have I put in an official request for protective glasses but nothing!

GUARD

Quiet down you men. And no more singing!

WALTER

But at least the work means they're letting us out of our cells and we get a chance to speak. Is there any word from Winnie?

MANDELA

I hardly ever hear anything. Sometimes the guards leave a newspaper cutting in my cell saying she's been arrested again. They do it to torment me. But you know in a way it gives me strength. We are stuck in here but Winnie and others like her are carrying on the fight. I learn more from those newspapers than I do from Winnie's letters. The prison censors them. I wait six months for a letter and then they give me this.

MANDELA HOLDS UP A LETTER FROM WINNIE. SO MANY WORDS HAVE BEEN CUT OUT BY THE CENSOR'S RAZORBLADE THAT IT IS ALMOST ALL HOLES.

WALTER

It would be funny if it wasn't so cruel.

MANDELA

I take some comfort from it none the less. If she is writing now then she is alive and she is free. Oh Walter, each minute seems to take an hour in here.

GUARD

46664. Report to the main block, you have a visitor.

SONG "HIT HARDER" SUNG

Scene 19 (1966)

MANDELA

My god Winnie! It's so good to see you.

WINNIE

Nelson, you look thinner. How are they treating you?

GUARD

No talking about prison conditions!

MANDELA

I am well. You must not worry. What news do you bring?

WINNIE

You know I was in prison.

MANDELA

Yes, they told me. But not why.

WINNIE

Ha! You would have been proud Madiba. Police raided the house. One man stormed into my bedroom. The cheek of it! I punched him right in the shoulder, he fell down and they said I tried to break his neck. I wish I had.

MANDELA

You must be careful Winnie. Think of the children. You are all they have.

WINNIE

The children miss you, they are growing up fast.

MANDELA

I wonder if they will even remember me? They were so young when I was sent away.

WINNIE

I talk to them about you every day, they will not forget. They know what you are fighting for.

MANDELA

What is happening in the struggle Winnie?

WINNIE (whispering)

The papers say South Africa is going bankrupt; so many foreign businesses will have nothing to do with us because of apartheid –

GUARD

Speak up. No politics! You have been told. Anyway time up. Mrs Mandela make sure your papers are in order when you exit the island.

WINNIE

We fight on Nelson, we fight on.

MANDELA

Be careful Winnie, be careful. I miss you, I -

BUT WINNIE IS ALREADY BEING LED AWAY BY THE GUARD.

SONG "THE SUN SHINES" SUNG x 1

Scene 20 (1969)

MANDELA AND WALTER ARE PLAYING CHESS IN THE CELL

WALTER

Things are slowly changing Nelson. The government is locking up so many political prisoners they don't know what to do with us or how to keep us quiet. Who would have thought? A chess set!

MANDELA

Shh. I am thinking.

WALTER

May I remind you that this is supposed to be a game for our entertainment?

MANDELA

I am carefully considering the ramifications of every option. It's my preferred mode of operation. Not only in chess but in politics too.

WALTER

You are driving me crazy. Move your knight for goodness sake. You know you will.

MANDELA

A little more thinking time never goes amiss. There's no hurry is there Walter?

WALTER

Ha! You know that there is not.

A GUARD APPEARS AT THE CELL DOOR

GUARD

46664?

MANDELA (STANDING UP)

Yes Sir?

GUARD

You made a request for prisoners to have protective glasses for the work in the limestone quarry?

MANDELA

I did. But that was three years ago!

GUARD

Well the paperwork has been approved.

(HANDING WALTER AND MANDELA A PAIR OF OLD SUNGLASSES EACH)

Here. You are a troublemaker 46664. Let us have no more of your tree shaking.

MANDELA

You see Walter, I was right. Slow and steady wins the race.

SONG "SUN SHINE" SUNG x 2

Scene 21 (1982) "Prison Governor's Office. Knock before entering"

GOVERNOR

Come in Mandela. You've been here what ? 18 years? Longer than I've been Governor here. You have something of a university operating for the younger men do you not?

MANDELA

We do what we can Sir.

GOVERNOR

The previous Governor had you down as a troublemaker, you have organised go slows, hunger strikes... But despite all this rabble rousing you have done well here have you not?

MANDELA

I have earned my degree Sir, studying by post. And I am proud of what I have managed to achieve. Given the circumstances.

GOVERNOR

Yes, the circumstances. You will have noticed a change in these circumstances of late no doubt?

MANDELA

Yes we have noticed improvements over the last few years. Our campaign to receive bread was finally successful, more men have been allowed to study; the forced labour at the quarry has been stopped. But if you are looking for me to express gratitude ...

GOVERNOR (holding up a hand)

Yes, yes. But before you start a speech... I have here your movement order. You and some of the other political prisoners are being transferred to Pollsmoor Prison on the mainland.

MANDELA

Why am I being moved after all this time? Is it to divide our group of political prisoners?

GOVERNOR

Calm down Mandela. It's not just you we're moving. We're getting rid of a whole group of you old- timers. Including your pal Walter Sisulu. And one more thing. President Botha himself has asked me to pass an offer to you.

MANDELA

What can he possibly offer me? Except my freedom.

GOVERNOR

Ah yes. Your freedom.

MANDELA

You cannot be serious. Botha will offer me my freedom after all this time?

GOVERNOR

He might. We want you to make a public statement that the ANC will renounce all violence as a way of ending Apartheid.

MANDELA

You will appreciate that I need to think it over.

GOVERNOR

It's a good offer Mandela. Grab it.

MANDELA

I will give it my consideration Sir and write my reply.

SONG "IT IS ME TATA" SUNG – ZINDZI solo

Scene 22 Zindzi Prison Visit

MANDELA

Zindzi! My daughter is it really you.

ZINDZI

Tata. My father. Yes it is me.

MANDELA

It has been so long since I have seen you. You're all grown up.

ZINDZI

I wanted to come before. But they would not let children come to the prison. I am so sorry.

MANDELA

No need for you to be sorry. How is your mother, how is my Winnie?

ZINDZI

She is fine but she is still banned. The authorities hassle her constantly. She campaigns in the streets against them, they arrest her, they release her, they arrest her again. It is cat and mouse. I think it wears her down.

MANDELA

I was hoping she could come today, I need a favour.

ZINDZI

Name it Tata. I can do it.

MANDELA

You are your mother's daughter. I can see so much of Winnie in you.

ZINDZI

I am my father's daughter too. I am a child born of the struggle. The state has kept my father from me for most of my life but I have not forgotten him.

MANDELA

Bless you my daughter. Yes if Winnie is banned from speaking maybe it is time for another Mandela voice to be heard.

ZINDZI

Just tell me what you need.

MANDELA

I was made an offer by President Botha. I have considered it. I have written my reply. Take it Zindzi. Read it to the people.

ZINDZI

I will.

SONG “SUN SHINES” SUNG up to “day”

Scene 23 (1985) SOWETO STADIUM

ZINDZI

People of Soweto. My father Nelson Mandela has received an offer from President Botha. My father has lived on Robben Island in terrible privation. And now, from Pollsmoor Prison where his unlawful detention continues, he sends this reply to President Botha:

“We will not renounce violence. Let Botha renounce violence. Let him dismantle Apartheid. What freedom am I being offered whilst the ANC, remains banned? Only free men can negotiate; prisoners cannot enter into contracts. Your freedom and mine cannot be separated.”

These are my father’s words and I am his proud daughter. My father is more than just another political prisoner. His name is famous all over the world. From America to Europe to Australia the cry is heard: FREE NELSON MANDELA. And that cry is louder every day. Power!

CROWD

The power is ours!

ZINDZI

Power!

CROWD

The power is ours!

SONG "SUN SHINES" SUNG up to "day"

Scene 24 - (1989) POLLSMOOR PRISON

MANDELA

Walter have you heard the news? Is it true?

WALTER

It is my friend. President Botha has resigned and now we have President De Klerk. He is dismantling Apartheid!

MANDELA

Hah, for the first time in our lives we are not a member of a banned organisation. Now we're just regular politicians. I don't know how I feel about that!

WALTER

The time for negotiation has arrived. Finally Nelson, after all this time. Is this it?

Are we going to be free?

MANDELA

It's too early to say but I tell you something Walter: Mr De Klerk is a man we can do business with!

SONG "SUN SHINES" SUNG x 2

Scene 25 (1990) DOOR SIGN: "President F W De Klerk"

DE KLERK

Good morning Mr Mandela.

MANDELA

Good morning President De Klerk

DE KLERK

Sit down sit down.

MANDELA

Sir I must ask why I've been summoned to speak to you personally today?

DE KLERK

Am I keeping you from more important business Mr Mandela?

MANDELA

No no sir, of course not. I have found our talks so far to be very fruitful.

DE KLERK

Indeed, indeed. I too have found them most enlightening. Mr Mandela I propose to release you from prison tomorrow.

MANDELA

Tomorrow?

DE KLERK

That is too soon? You would wish to stay longer?

MANDELA

It is just a surprise I think, after all this time.

DE KLERK

It is all in place. Tomorrow you will be a free man.

MANDELA

No.

DE KLERK

No?

MANDELA

I don't want to sound ungrateful but I should like to take a week to prepare. My family and the ANC will want to be in attendance. I have much to organise. I know it seems ridiculous to be asking to stay in prison but that is the request that I am making.

DE KLERK

Well Mr Mandela. I offer this: a compromise. I will agree that your release can be from the prison in Capetown, as you wish. But we must release you tomorrow.

MANDELA

Very well. Tomorrow. From Capetown. I shall walk free with Winnie by my side.

DE KLERK

To freedom !

MANDELA

To freedom !

SONG "SUN SHINES" SUNG x 1

Scene 26 (1990)

NELSON AND WINNIE ARE AT THE PRISON GATES

MANDELA

There were times Winnie when I never thought I would see this day.

WINNIE (AS SHE STRAIGHTENS HIS TIE)

I never doubted it, Nelson. Are you ready?

MANDELA

I am.

THEY WALK. MANDELA RAISES HIS FIST IN THE ANC SALUTE

WINNIE

Make no mistake Nelson, this is not just a celebration. There's real anger here. Some of us want a war!

MANDELA

We are negotiating Winnie. I want to see peace in our country.

REPORTER 1

Mr Mandela what do you have to say to the people?

MANDELA

I have heard calls for revenge. I say to you that I of all people could call for revenge. I have had my whole life stolen from me. I stand here today with my wife Winnie. She has had to raise our children without me. I have not been the father I wanted to be. For 21 years I was not allowed to so much as touch my wife's hand. I have not been a husband to her. But we stand hand in hand here today and I say to you that I do not seek revenge. There is no profit in starting a war. We cannot win a war. But we can win an election.

REPORTER 2

Qu'est ce que vous allez faire maintenant Monsieur Mandela?

MANDELA

Maintenant jeune homme? I think I will go home.

SONG “SUN SHINES” ends on “day”

SCENE 27

MANDELA AND WINNIE AT HOME, GOING THROUGH A PILE OF
TELEGRAMS AND LETTERS

WINNIE

Look at this one Nelson: Best wishes from the President of the USA! There are hundreds of telegrams and letters for you.

MANDELA PICKS UP A LETTER, AND LAUGHS

WINNIE

What is it?

MANDELA

They are not all from Presidents. “Dear Mr Mandela, I’m just an ordinary Capetown housewife and I wanted to say I am very glad that you are free and back amongst your friends and family, but your speech yesterday was very boring.”

WINNIE

Well maybe these days people are looking for more of a man of action than a man of words.

MANDELA

I don’t agree. Trust me Winnie. Slow and steady wins the race.

WINNIE

When you went into prison 27 years ago black people had no vote. Now you are free and black people still have no vote. Why aren’t you angry Nelson? Why won’t you fight?

MANDELA

I will fight an election. That is the only fight I have in me. I would ask you for your help but I think it is not enough for you.

WINNIE

Things have changed Nelson. I have changed. You must let me make my own way.

MANDELA

I see.

WINNIE

I have made up a bed in the spare room. I am going out to a meeting. You'll be okay on your own?

MANDELA (sadly)

I am used to being on my own Winnie. What's another night?

Scene 28

ON SCREEN WE SEE A MONTAGE OF SOME KEY EVENTS FOLLOWING NELSON'S RELEASE. MANDELA TO VISIT PRESIDENT MITTERAND IN PARIS. RAND DAILY MAIL August 1992: ANC CALLS NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE VOICE OVER : "Nelson Mandela and President F W De Klerk have been jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize".

MANDELA VISITS NEW YORK. MANDELA VISITS LONDON NEWSREADER VOICE OVER "After months of negotiations a date has been set for South Africa's first national one person one vote election. Mr Nelson Mandela will stand as the ANC candidate".

Scene 29 (1994)

WALTER

Well Nelson, it's been a hell of an election campaign. Who would have thought when we were on Robben Island that things would turn out this way. You have your final campaign speech ready?

MANDELA

I'm still working on it.....how about: I have walked a long walk to freedom and it is not over yet. No one is born hating a person for the colour of their skin. People are taught to

hate and they can be taught to love. We shall have a true democracy in South Africa. I believe a mark on a piece of paper can change the world. Too much?

WALTER

No I like it. But some of our people are not literate. Are you sure that they will come out and vote?

MANDELA

At every rally I tell them: look at your ballot paper, beside every candidate's name is the symbol of the party and a photo of the man. When you see a photo of a young and handsome black man, mark your X there.

WALTER (laughing)

Then we have done all we can. Tomorrow we will find out if we have our first black president.

Good luck 46664.

MANDELA

You can call me Mr President. Better get used to it Walter!

Scene 30 (1994) NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: "MANDELA ELECTED PRESIDENT"

MANDELA

Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will experience the oppression of one by another. Let freedom reign. The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement! God bless Africa. Thank you.

SONG 'FREE FREE' x 2 then Graca hums on entrance

Scene 31 (2013)

GRACA

How is Madiba Doctor?

DOCTOR

Graca ! His chest is rather bad; we should take him back inside.

MANDELA .

My apologies, my mind has been wandering. I am an old man now and like all old men I find I live in the past too much, I have had a long life even though the state once tried to take it from me. Do you hear them? The voices? So many voices, how can it be that only I can hear them?

NEWSREADER VOICE OVER "Breaking news: South Africa's first black president and anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela has died today at the age of 95".

THE ACTORS STAND IN SPOTLIGHTS. SAD MUSIC PLAYS.

DE KLERK

I am proud to be the man who finally freed Mandela to fulfil his destiny. His greatest legacy is that we are at peace with each other, let us join hands now and mourn together as one nation.

WINNIE

Even though we were kept apart for more than 20 years, he was always my husband. The struggle divided us but it also united us.

WALTER

Hello my old friend. It's me Walter. So we find ourselves together again, and this time there can be no pardon and no release. But there is peace here too, so reach out and take my hand.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCREEN READS: NELSON MANDELA 1918-2013.

THE END

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