

Screenwriting exercises - Dela Gwala

Freewriting exercise:

She said that there were no women on the street so where were they? I saw a woman holding her baby to her chest, kissing her baby on the forehead - legs snuggling her belly. She was standing outside a hair salon. She was blonde. She had braids and wigs behind her - lining the window display. Around the corner, men were taking refuge from the heat, sitting on the pavement or hard black chair. On phones or staring straight forward or staring at us - the large group of people passing by with pens and notebooks.

Character sketch: Anna De Vries

She's recently been pregnant but the baby didn't stick. It's hard when you have the belly from birth but no baby to show for it. She kisses her son on the forehead to distract herself from that thought. She can't remember why she chose this hair colour. I guess blonde seemed like an easy way to become someone else for a little while. There's always taxis except when you're tired and want to head home. She thinks about what's waiting for her at home - silence. Her husband isn't home. He never is. She tries to remember how she met/fell in love with him.

Scene writing exercise:

Anna (37) is standing outside the corner shop/ corner cafe by Mowbray station. She is holding her two year old son, Julian. She closes her eyes and kisses him on the forehead distractedly. She hears the bang of something falling to the ground and opens her eyes. She sees a man pick up the bike that fell to the ground. He jumps on it and starts cycling. Another man runs past her. It's the security guard from the pizza shop/shed. He runs after the bike for a few minutes and then stops. He screams at the man disappearing from view. This wakes/startles the sleeping toddler who starts to cry and scream. Anna clicks her tongue in disapproval.

Anna: Look now, what you've done and you didn't even catch that guy.

Security: Fok man, I'm going to lose my job.

Anna: Don't use that language around my child.