CHARACTERS AND STORY BOARD

Lucky Spender – Age 27 – The Player – Skinny, cool looking dude with an attitude. Has 3 girlfriends, one just had a child and is suing for alimony. He likes to be a Jones, drives a flashy car, wears flashy clothes and rents an apartment he can’t afford.

Lucky’s salary is garnisheed for skipping alimony payments, then he skips his car payments, finally his landlord threatens to evict him unless he comes up with the rent. He needs quick cash so he goes to a mashonisa (loan shark). A few weeks later the Mashonisa tells him he must pay double the money. He can’t. He gets beaten up very badly by a bunch of thugs who work for the mashonisa.

Ernest Shy – Age 45 – The Family Man - Slightly rotund average looking guy, good-natured spouse and parent. He is a family man with 2 teenagers, one 13 and one 18 years old. He is trying to save for their college education, but he is struggling because his kids want Nike shoes and spend all their time on their cellphones. He never discusses his financial difficulties with his wife, because it is not ‘a done’ thing. He decides to talk things through with his family, all sit around a table, discuss how they can save and start planning for the boys’ university. All works out well as the family starts working together on a budget.

Faith – Age 32 – The Struggling Single parent - Average looking, average build, no distinguishing features or aspects that may solicit special treatment, she symbolizes the fact that anyone who seeks help from community networks is likely to receive it, not because they’re pretty etc.

Her husband has AIDS and is very ill. She has two young daughters 6 & 9. She doesn’t know how she’s going to pay for her husband's funeral. There is no funeral plan and she is supporting 2 children of his sister, who also died of AIDS. Faith seeks the help of a reverend who puts her in touch with community projects where she learns to generate extra income.

Jack Black – Age 58 – Average looking guy. Believes his ship is about to come in. He’s close to retirement, but doesn’t have an adequate retirement plan, friend tells him about a quick money-making scheme. The scheme goes under and he loses virtually all of his savings. He panics and starts gambling to make the money back. He loses more, gets depressed and starts drinking. Drunk on the job, he makes a bad decision and gets a fellow worker hurt. He is
suspended pending an investigation, is referred to social worker and is rehabilitated.

**OPENING SCENE**

**A/W 1 – Main characters sitting in the canteen**

Lucky, Ernest, Jack sitting around table, chatting. Background sign reads CANTEEN.

**A/W 2**

The guys see a lady walking in. It’s Faith.

**A/W 3**

**Lucky:** Who’s that?

**Jack:** That’s Faith, William’s wife, he’s been boarded with AIDS and she is here sorting out his financial affairs.

**A/W 4**

**Ernest:** Their medical aid is running out and on top of it they are looking after William’s sister’s 2 kids, she also died of AIDS.

**Lucky:** Man money is a problem. You know, the company should just pay us more.

**Jack:** But you earn a lot of money and you’re not even married!

**A/W 4**

**Lucky thinks:** If only it was that simple! In his mind he sees Thandi, and Susi and Gladys. They are all shouting at him at once.

**Separate (A/W 5) flows from A/W4**

Thandi: I need new shoes!

Susi: I want to go to that fancy restaurant!

Gladys: I’m pregnant Lucky and you’re going to pay for this baby!
A/W 6 – You see all three men facing Faith, with Faith walking towards the table

Ernest waves for Faith to join them.

A/W 7 - Faith is now seated at the table with the 3 men.

Ernest: How are you Faith?

Faith: It’s been very hard, William is very ill. I am afraid he will die soon and we don’t have funeral insurance. The children need food. I don’t know what I am going to do.

A/W 8

Jack thinks – Yeah I’m also in deep trouble. I am almost retired, but my friends told me about this get rich quick scheme. I didn’t have enough savings and I thought it was a sure thing. I can’t believe I was cheated. It was a scam! I’ve lost every penny I have. I thought gambling would make it better, but now I’m losing even more!

A/W 9

Jack sees himself at a bar, downing a bottle of something.

A/W 10

Ernest is also thinking: “My sons are always on their cellphones, their mother buys them expensive Reebok and Nike clothes, one is going to college soon! And I can’t talk to my wife about money, it’s just not done.

A/W 11

Faith: With William so ill our medical aid is also running out and I am getting notices from the town council, cause I can’t pay my electricity bill.

Ernest: Faith why don’t you ask your church, or go to the community center to get help? They could figure out ways for you to earn some money.

A/W 12

Faith: Thanks Ernest, that sound like a good idea, I might just do that.
LATER.........

A/W 13
We see Jack playing the slots, drinking at the same time.

A/W 14
We see Lucky with a summons for alimony in his hand and his landlord shouting at him because his rent is late.

A/W 15
We see Ernest’s wife give him a bill of R1500 for a cellphone.

A/W 16 - We see Faith arrive home, candles are lit
Her eldest daughter (9) tells her: “Mommy they’ve switched off the electricity.”

A/W 17 - At the canteen again (only the guys are present)

Jack: Geez guys, I’m in big trouble. I partied a bit too hard last night and wasn’t quite sober when I got to work today. I was working on a machine with Samuel, I wasn’t concentrating and I dropped it on his hand! He is in hospital and management is investigating me. I’ve been tested for alcohol...I definitely getting fired!

Lucky: Oh man that's bad!

A/W 18

Lucky thinks: My bossed called me in. Pregnant Gladys has hired a laywer and now I have a garnishee order against my salary for support payments. It’s a R2000 per month! And they’re threatening to take my car away, because the payments are behind!

Ernest says: I think you need to get some help Jack.

A/W 19

Ernest thinks: I need some help to stop my wife and children from spending me bankrupt! I wonder how Faith is?

A/W 20 - We see Faith at the door of a church talking to a reverend.

Faith: Reverend I need help, my electricity has been cut off and I can’t feed my own or my sister-in-law’s children. My husband is very ill.
Reverend says: Faith we have community programs where they will teach you how to plant and sell vegetables. We can also send you to people who will help you with arrangements for a funeral for William when the time comes…

**A/W 21 – We see Faith on the phone to Ernest/split scene with Ernest on the other side**

Faith: Just wanted to thank you for suggesting I seek help within the community. I think everything will be alright.

Ernest: It’s a great pleasure Faith.

**A/W 22 – Ernest is putting the phone down**

Ernest thinks: Perhaps I should have my own family help me! Yes, I will talk to the boys and my wife and explain my financial situation!

**A/W 23 – We see Ernest, his wife Mae and two sons (one about 11 the other about 18) sitting around a table.**

Ernest: So boys, how do you think we could save money, so that you can both go to college?

Boy one: I could mow the neighbours’ lawns. I suppose I could go to my friends rather than talk on the phone with them all the time.

Boy 2: I could wear cheaper clothes. It doesn’t have to say Nike or Reebok or Adidas to be good, does it? I also leave many lights on in the house. In future I’ll switch them off.

**A/W 24**

Boy 1: Yeah and I’ll never leave the hosepipe running and forget about it again.

Wife: I will plan my shopping better. I often buy things we already have in the house.

**A/W 25 – Boys are gone from the table. Ernest and wife alone.**

Wife to Ernest: Why did you never tell me you were struggling financially? How can we stop spending if you don’t tell us you’re in trouble?

Ernest: I thought you would think I am not a good provider!
A/W 26 – Canteen again (Just the guys)

Ernest: Hey guys. I have had such a breakthrough with my family. I told them about my financial situation, now we discuss it openly and the wife and boys are all making suggestions about how we can save! I can’t believe I never tried it before.

Jack: I’m not so good, I got a final written warning from the boss and was found guilty of negligence at my disciplinary hearing. Next time I step out of line, they’ll kick my butt out of here! What’s worse is I am still struggling with the booze and I can’t afford it unless I gamble!

Lucky: That’s a bummer man.

A/W 27

Lucky thinks: I am not going to talk to these losers. I have a genius plan to get out of my trouble. This mashonisa guy, some colleagues say he is just the dude to loan me money. As big a loan as I like and no questions asked. I will see him tonight.

Ernest: Jack why don’t you see a counselor man, they can help you quit drinking and gambling and there is a program right here at work to help you. It’s anonymous so no one will know you’re going for counseling.

A/W 28 – Lucky looks sly, like he knows something the others don’t

Ernest again: Hey by the way, I heard from Faith. Some community members and the church have taught her how to grow her own veggies and make clothes, now she is selling it and she can pay her bills and look after William.

LATER....

A/W 29 – Lucky is making a deal with a shady looking character

Mashonisa: So you want 2 thousand. Cool, but I want it back by next month okay. At least 30 percent interest!

Lucky: Sharp!

A/W 30 – Lucky takes the money and walks away, the mashonisa is smirking.

A/W 31 – Back in the canteen

Lucky: (looking haggard) Guys I am afraid man. I loaned money from this mashonisa dude and I
can't pay him back. I don’t have the money. I am being evicted from my flat, because it was too expensive for me to afford and I thought I could sell my car, but the bank is taking it back.

**Ernest** and **Jack** look grim

**A/W 32**

**Lucky:** And my ex-girlfriend who is pregnant has put the sheriff on me, she wants support payments and all my clothing accounts need to be paid! What am I going to do?

**Ernest:** Can't you talk to this loan-shark Lucky?

**A/W 33**

**Lucky** (looking terrified): No man he'll kill me!

**A/W 34 - We see Lucky talking to the mashonisa**

Mashonisa: Where’s my money dude?

**Lucky:** Please can I have another week I promise I'll pay you.

**A/W 35**

Mashonisa: You already owe me double cause you’re a week late! You need to be taught a lesson........

**CLOSING SEQUENCE**

**A/W 36**

We see Faith happy, selling vegetables to neighbours over her garden fence.

**A/W 37**

We see Jack in therapy with a social worker.

**A/W 38**

We see Ernest and his family sitting around the table, his wife is writing on a document that clearly says BUDGET. They are talking about the boys’ education.
Boy 1: “I want to go to Wits”
Boy 2: “I want to go to Rhodes!”

A/W 39

We see Lucky lying in an alley, badly bruised and battered, can't tell if he is alive or dead.