



A FILM BY **STEPHEN NAGEL**
WRITTEN BY **DEAN RAVELL**
PRODUCED BY **HANIEFA MOOIDEEN**

NICOLA DUDDY **MEGAN ALEXANDER** **BRAD ROMAN** **CAELAN CURRY**

DAY ZERO



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Narrative Short

Running Time:
Directed By:
Written By:
Co-Produced By:

~18 minutes
Stephen Nagel
Dean Ravell
Haniefa Mooideen

Production Company:
Edited by:
Cinematographer:
Composer:

BTG Productions
Aden Hepsten
Stephen Nagel
Bobby Dean

Mature Content Warning: Themes of violence, strong language, and sexual assault.



LOGLINE

In a post-apocalyptic Cape Town, a group of people being pursued by a vicious, relentless hunter must make their way to a safe haven at all costs.

SYNOPSIS

Cape Town has no more water. The city was warned of the day that this would happen, ominously referring to it as Day Zero. That was ten years ago. Maggie, Ash and Shaun are survivors in a world run by factions and ravaged by gangs.

On a routine supply run they encounter Nico, an old adversary who wants to infiltrate the safe haven they've made for themselves, with one of the last water sources - called the Oasis.

OUR STORY

The idea for Day Zero came about as Cape Town was dealing with a very real drought, the worst it's seen in decades. We imagined a world where the water ran out, and society collapsed. We set out to build this world, using genre to define a new story with universal appeal. Not something easy to do on an indie film budget right?

Add to this the fact that we're super indie, with an indie budget, and it's a much tougher endeavour. We produced Day Zero on virtually no budget, shot it on a mobile phone, borrowed props from family and asked friends to be crew members in our guerrilla-style indie film.

We knew that the only way to make this a story worth telling would be to take the rich world we've built, conceive a believable situation and localise it to a specific character and a very personal story. In doing so, Day Zero tackles themes of toxic masculinity, human desperation and the banality of a plausible post-apocalyptic world.

There are many doors being opened and closed in the South African film industry and after many were closed on us we decided it was time to make our own door.



Nicola Duddy as *Maggie*

Nicola is a Cape Town based performer with a variety of experience in acting, MC'ing and radio. Her true passion lies in acting for TV, film and theatre. Her goal is to play an active role in the growing local film and TV market in a bid to see it go from strength to strength.

Nicola plays Maggie, a strong, intelligent woman. Maggie is resourceful, quick on her feet, and thinks of the group before she considers herself. She is kind-hearted but can be ruthless if necessary.



Megan Alexander as *Ash*

Day Zero is the second film Megan has worked on with us, the first being Detour. It's safe to say we make a good team. She's in the early stages of her career, having joined the industry in 2015 and starred in a few short films and TV ads since then. She has huge ambitions to create her own content in future and act full time. Megan currently lives in China, fulfilling another dream, but will return home ready for the next project.

Megan plays Ash, a hot-headed person who often lets her emotion take over. Ash is not strong physically but makes up for it in confidence. Ash never backs down from a challenge and often makes rash decisions.



Brad Roman as *Shaun*



Brad has been apart of some amazing productions including *Backstage* and *Suidooster*. He's also appeared in a number of commercials for well-known brands in South Africa. Theatre and TV presenting has been a large part of his impressive body of work over the years too.

Brad plays Shaun, a man of few words. Shaun is all business and almost always calm, but can speak up if someone or something pisses him off. Shaun is all about the mission, and his experience has made him quite sceptical about a lot of things.

Caelan Curry as *Nico*



Playing Nico in *Day Zero* was Caelan's first film role with dialogue. He'd done other smaller non-speaking roles in a few commercials, TV shows and feature films. He studied chemistry at university and currently works in web development, but after discovering a love for acting, he feels like it's what he wants to work towards most of all.

Caelan plays Nico, a mysterious man with a calm demeanour but dangerous intentions. He has an eeriness about him that is creepy at first; however, he can be charming if he talks long enough. He is playful, but dangerously so, with no shame and no remorse.

DIRECTOR, Stephen Nagel

I'm a micro-budget, independent filmmaker from Cape Town, South Africa. Day Zero started from a need. A need to create. I've done my fair share of pitches, and experienced my fair share of closed doors. I refuse to give up, and that's how we developed our mantra for this project: "Make your own door, and open it". Considering how real the water crisis felt to Capetonians, I understood that there was real concern and tapped into this to connect with audiences. When the world ends, it ends for all of us, doesn't it?

Day Zero looks at the mundane nature of a plausible post-apocalyptic world, as climate change continues to impact us. To make the story appealing and the characters relatable, I wanted to take this a step further and tackle themes of toxic masculinity, gender-based violence and human desperation, ideas that are central to the conflict in the film.

As a Capetonian, I was poised to tell this story. I've been collecting my own shower water and flushing my toilet with a bucket for over a year. My team has been busy with this film for 8 months. It takes a level of grit and relentlessness to get a completely independent project off the ground; to keep showing up week in and week out. We did this because we had something to say about the water crisis and the human condition, and used parts of our lived experiences to express that. I'm forever grateful to my team.

The style of low-budget filmmaking here borrows from the raw style of the earlier practical horror work of James Wan while the recent mobile filmmaking of Steven Soderbergh has been an inspiration too. In addition, Jean-Marc Vallée's naturalistic approach to filmmaking is not only creative, but also very appealing to a no-budget filmmaker. Films like *The Road* inspired the format of the film, with the core story being a journey, in a vulnerable state, with a constant threat.

Having shot a few micro-budget short films in the past, I was prepared for a fluid workflow, planning contingencies for challenges that are bound to spring up. I'm very collaborative, and enjoy the use of natural light, while encouraging improvisation from actors. My goal was always to lean in to the organic moments and let the details of this world be shaped by how things in the real world around us were developing.



SCREENWRITER, Dean Ravell

Born and bred in Cape Town, it has always been my passion to tell stories close to home. Day Zero was an opportunity for us to tell a story about a real issue affecting our daily lives, but with our own creative spin. When developing the story we looked at themes of revenge, desperation and the human condition and set it in a post apocalyptic world ten years after Day Zero.

Having studied screenwriting, I always appreciated the artform. My goal has always been to write a story worth telling and although I'd written scripts in the past, Day Zero was always going to be on another level. It had to be. It is a rich story with layered characters that have a complex history. We adapted the script continuously to ensure the strong adult themes were communicated well, and kept an open and collaborative approach to the dialogue. I am so honoured to have my name on this project.



PRODUCER, Haniefa Mooideen

I'm a creative first and foremost. Humans are my canvas of choice. I've had the pleasure of working as a makeup artist and stylist for TV and film over the years and being part of a creative collaboration is why I enjoy what I do and why I was drawn to Day Zero.

This project gave me free reign creatively as nothing was off the table. Creating each character's style and executing it for screen is a huge passion of mine and this film allowed me to do that and so much more. Being a producer on Day Zero was an experience I will always remember but it would not have been possible without the collaboration of the beautiful individuals who all had a hand in bringing it to life.



CREDITS

Directed by:

Written by:

Co-produced by:

Director of Photography

Editor

Hair, Costume & Make-up Designer

Music by

Production Sound Recordist

MAIN CAST

Maggie

Ash

Shaun

Nico

The Corpse

EXTRAS

Stephen Nagel

Dean Ravell

Haniefa Mooideen

Stephen Nagel

Aden Hepsten

Haniefa Mooideen

Bobby Dean

Dean Ravell

Nicola Duddy

Megan Alexander

Brad Roman

Caelan Curry

Tara Essack

Elverisa Davids

Devan Adams

Shinead Van Niekerk



Script Supervisor:

Production Assistant:

Production Assistant:

Production Assistant & Photographer:

Grip:

Caryn Welby-Solomon

Sharna Hector

Garth Wicomb

Vernon Kallis

Matthew November

Voice Overs:

Yaseen Dalvie

Yaaseen Barnes

Shiloh van Leeve

Lynton Ward

Yolisa Nyoka

Aidan Winnaar

Tien-Ming Cheng

Thami Giyose

Cynthia Carrasco-Hernandez

Joseph Jordaan

Roseline Jordaan

Caroline Nagel

Stephen Nagel Sr.

Jo-Ann Elizabeth Nagel-Witbooi

Jason van Rooy

Jinhwa Yeo

Kaydy Stofberg Cheng

Shadley Desai

Loudon Cito

Richard Stubbs

Claire O Connell

Special Thanks:



COMING SOON

DAY ZERO

A Film by Stephen Vaughan
Written by Sean Havell

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