

MOOINOOI FARM ATTACK LEAVES FAMILY DEVASTATED

Mooinooi – Four years ago, on 10 July 2015, the lives of the Blignaut family, Braam, his wife Izulda and their four boys, were devastated. In the early hours of that fateful day, two farm attackers crept onto the Blignaut family's small holding in Buffelsfontein close to Mooinooi. Braam was at work when he got a call from his wife, saying that she was afraid and that something felt awry. He rushed home. When he arrived, he was overpowered by two attackers who forced him into his house at gunpoint. The kids who were asleep on the couch in front of the television, were shaken when they awoke to gunmen restraining their father in front of them. Izulda was also tied up, forced from the bedroom and taken into the living room.

The assailants demanded cash and firearms. Braam pleaded with the attackers to take anything they wanted but to leave his family unscathed. He told them that they could take the only cash he had on hand, R250, and that they did not own any firearms. "My husband begged them to take the computer – that it was worth something," Izulda said in an interview with *Platinum Weekly* this week. "Then the one man said to his accomplice... 'I am going to rape his wife'..." My husband understood and whispered to me: 'RUN!' and I knew... life was never going to be the same," Izulda said. Still tied up, Izulda lifted herself and made for the back door with the attackers right behind her. She managed to get out.

She ran with everything she had. The attackers shot several times at Izulda but miraculously missed. She managed to run to a nearby house on the same farm. In those moments, Braam managed to wrestle himself free and ran into the kitchen to fetch his machete. One of the attackers followed Braam and a fight ensued. Braam was shot three times – he sustained one bullet wound to the arm and was shot twice in the back. It left him paralysed from the waist down. The attackers took off with two cheap cell phones and the R250.

The Blignaut family's once carefree life had been shattered forever. It has resulted in unforeseen difficulties and dramatic challenges. The family was forced into survival mode. Apart from the emotional scars, a healthy working husband and father became wheelchair-bound... Izulda became Braam's prime caregiver as he required round-the-clock attention.

In 2017, Braam contracted a virus that attacks and destroys bone and tissue. The only way to stop the virus, was by amputation. In Braam's case, it originated in his hip and as treatment failed, the doctors had no choice but to amputate his limb above the right hip in 2017. After Braam was discharged, he contracted an infection in the wound. Izulda diligently nursed and dressed the wounds – as per instruction from the doctors. Braam's other leg became infected and had to be amputated as well.

In June 2019 the virus had spread once more, and this time, his entire pelvic area was infected. He was admitted to hospital on 28 July, this year, after

struggling with a raging fever. According to blood tests, the wound was septic. Braam was diagnosed with sepsis in his entire body. Nothing more could be done.

On 13 September Braam was sent home as he wanted to spend his last days with his family.

From 1 October, Braam's condition rapidly deteriorated and in the early hours of Saturday, 5 October, four years and three months after the farm attack, Braam died of his wounds.

"I miss him so much and I sometimes still hear him calling me. He was my everything and I see a little bit of him in each of our boys. He was special. He was a great father and husband. Braam taught us that perseverance pays off and that is something we will carry with us forever," Izulde added.

Izulda and her four young sons are in dire need of financial assistance in order to cover the funeral bills and other expenses. They did not have medical aid and therefore have a lot of medical expenses that still needs to be paid. For more information or how to assist, contact Lestelle Slabbert on 082 566 8791.

We extend our sincerest condolences to the Blignaut family.



Braam Blignaut passed away on 5 October.



FOR MORE INFO OR BOOKINGS CONTACT:
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