

BAYEDE'S KEEPER



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Bayede's keeper

#1

My legs are stretched out as Khethiwe butchers my hair with the comb.

She pulls and pushes my head around as the comb walks through my scalp.

This happens all the time she's not soft like mama but her work is as beautiful.

"Ouch" I say.

She pulls even more and sighs.

"I don't get it Bayede if I don't do your hair you complain, if I do your hair still you complain what is it sisi" she asks calmly.

Tears prick my eyes threatening to fall out there's nothing more painful than doing my hair and I hate it.

I am not one for pain and I shouldn't be subjected to it.

*“Please don’t pull hard” I say. She
laughs and ruffles my hair.*

*“Okay but be still I need to finish up and do the laundry”
she says.*

“I can help I don’t mind” I tell her.

I can do with my some breather I think to myself.

“No I need you to focus on your school work” she says.

“Okay” I say.

*So much for wanting a breather too much books can
make you go crazy,so I have heard.*

She starts plaiting my hair and a soft hum follows.

*I close my eyes and smile she’s always had a beautiful
voice reminds me so much of mama.*

*“Bayede” she says softly stopping her humming. I
open my eyes and turn looking at her.*

“I love you” she says.

She’s smiling with her eyes.

I nod my head and watch her frown.

“Bayede” she says softly.

“I love you too sisi” I say.

She turns my head and carries on humming.

*I breathe in and out opening my eyes looking at the
highs walls, I have known these high walls for as long
as I can remember.*

*These walls have kept the world outside these walls know
too much if only they could talk.*

“Bayede” my father shouts.

*He’s drunk again that’s all he ever does nowadays drink
himself to sleep and cause trouble around the house.*

“Bayede where the hell is my food” he shouts.

*If these walls weren’t so high then the whole world would
hear him.*

“Stay I will go” Khethiwe says quickly getting on her feet.

“It’s okay he’s shouting for me let me go” I insist.

“Hayi Bayede!” Her voice snaps but she quickly collects her.

“I will be right back” she says smiling.

She disappears into the house while I go through her phone.

It’s takes a while for her to come back so much to my annoyance,I dust myself up and make my way to the house.

A thudding sound stops me from taking another step.

“Psst psst” a smile spreads across my lips there’s only one person crazy enough to jump that high wall.

I wish Khethiwe had done my hair quickly now I look like some lazy crazy woman who just woke from her sleep without taking a bath the previous day.

“Won’t you look at me” he asks.

I slowly turn and find him smiling.

“Won’t you give me a hug” he asks.

I shake my head damn I should have bathed twice

today.

He moves closer and pulls me into his arms gently lifting me up.

He smells good so much so I close my eyes and subtly inhale him.

I quickly pull away after what feels like forever in his arms.

“He’s around” he asks.

I nod my head sighing.

“I won’t cause trouble I promise I just came to see you and tell you that I am around” he says smiling.

“You could have called” I tell him.

“I wanted to see you, I missed you” he says softly.

“I missed you too Nqubeko” I say hitting him on the shoulder.

“Oh it’s on” he says charging towards me.

“Nqubeko don’t” I say.

“You started it” he says throwing me over his

shoulder.

He twirls around while I scream begging him to put me down.

“Phakathwayo please put me down” I say.

“Bayede” my fathers voice startles me.

I hit Nqubeko so he can put me down.

I fix myself and clear my throat looking at my angry father.

“What is this boy doing here” he asks. I

swallow hard and look at him.

Nqubeko reaches for my hand but I quickly retract it.

“Woza la Bayede” he says.

I remain where I am and look at him.

“I will count to five and if you don’t move away from that boy I will kill you” he says.

I look at Nqubeko and step away from him watching him squint his eyes.

“Bayede” he calls out.

The high walls are listening shielding him from the world only this time Nqubeko is here and sees what the walls hide.

He slaps me across the face, I gasp holding my cheek.

“Move those hands Bayede” he warns.

I slowly move my hands and another slap lands on my face followed by another one.

Nqubeko steps in and pushes him off punching him in the face.

“Nqubeko stop” Khethiwe says making her way to us.

Nqubeko punches him again and looks at me.

“Get up let’s go” he says looking at me. I

look at my father and shake my head.

“Bayede” Nqubeko calls out.

“Hamba Nqubeko” I say.

His eyes widen but this man right here is my father.

“And don’t you ever set foot here you disrespectful

boy” my father says.

Nqubeko drops his head and walks away.

Khethiwe helps me inside the house while baba follows behind us cussing.

“I should have killed you all together with that useless mother of yours” he says.

“I don’t want to see that boy in my house ever again” he shouts.

“But baba he’s my friend” I tell him.

He turns and looks at me baiting me to say another word.

“Let it go Bayede” Khethiwe says calmly.

I open my mouth but she raises her hand shaking her head.

“Please” she says.

I look at her and nod my head she looks so much like mama it brings tears to my eyes.

I wrap my arms around her and rest my head on her chest.

“I won’t stay away from Nqubeko” I say. She laughs softly.

“I know you won’t” she says deeply sighing.

She stands up and goes to the kitchen coming back with a pack of frozen veg.

“Here press this on your face” she says.

I follow her back to the kitchen and watch as she prepares some lunch.

I have never seen her angry in all my life I have never seen my sister angry.

She always has a smile on her beautiful face.

She promises to finish my hair off later in the day.

My father joins us in the kitchen, he places a few notes on the kitchen counter and clears his throat.

“Get me two bottle of Blacklabel and some cold drink for you and your sister” he says.

I look at Khethiwe and she nods her head.

But not without me catching the sadness in her eyes

even though she smiles but her eyes are sad. She walks me out and nudges me leaning close.

“Go past Nqubeko’s house I am sure he would like to see you” she says.

I nod my head leaving the house.

I walk head held up high humming just like my sister, I get to Nqubeko’s house and breathe making my way inside the yard.

His mother gets the door and smiles looking at me.

“Bayede” she says moving aside letting me in.

“Hi ma, I hope I am not disturbing you but is Nqubeko home” I ask.

“He’s in his bedroom” she says smiling. I nod my head smiling back.

“You can go through I will bring you something to eat” she says.

I make my way to Nqubeko’s bedroom bumping into

his sister Phethile.

“Hey future mrs P” she says.

We both laugh as I shake my head.

“Phethile” I say walking past her.

I knock on Nqubeko’s door and wait for his response.

“Phethile not now” he says.

I decide to let myself in and find him on the floor doing his push-ups.

I shut the door and tilt my head looking at him. “Won’t you talk to me” I ask.

He stops and look at me.

“How do you do it Bayede stay with that monster” he asks.

“He’s my father” I tell him.

“The police can lock him away all you have to do is talk to Khethiwe and you two can lay a charge against him. I know he can be put away for good” he says standing up.

“Nqubeko that man you want us to put in jail is my father,he provides for us feeds us what happens when we send him to prison” I ask.

“I can take care of you guys” he says. I chuckle shaking my head.

“What about medical school” I ask moving closer to him.

“How’s your face” he asks changing the subject. I massage my cheek and smile.

“It’s not bad in fact I was sent to get a few beers I was hoping you could come with” I say.

“Hleka phela Nqubeko” I say.

A faint smile spreads across his lips.

My father is a crappy man who drowns himself in alcohol he sometimes beats the hell out of us.

But he’s still my father the only parent we have left,Nqubeko wouldn’t understand he has both parents who love him wholeheartedly.

“Nqubeko” I call out.

He looks at me.

“You can’t save us all doctor Phakathwayo” I tell him.

He closes the gap between us and rubs my painful cheek.

“But I can save you” he says holding my hand.

The door open and his mother walks in holding a tray.

“Don’t mind me I am just here to feed you” she says. “It’s good to see you Bayede” she says.

I take my hand back from Nqubeko’s and smile shyly.

“Behave you two and before I forget I am taking you two to lunch tomorrow on me” she says walking out.

A smile spreads across Nqubeko’s lips as he looks at his beautiful mother, a burning lump forms on my throat as distant memories of my mother come like a wave.

Not a day goes by without me missing her or feeling the void she left.

I feel Nqubeko arms wrap around my waist as he

buries his head on my neck.

“Like I said I don’t want to save them all just you” he says.

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*Hello my peoples hope you are all good here’s to
us starting our new story.*

*You know the rules if it’s not your cup of brandy then do
move along.*

*I should be able to work out a posting schedule once I
have found my feet with this one.*

Bayede's keeper

#2

Seeing Nqubeko did me good although he wasn't talking but being in his company was just as good.

He's here for the weekend and we need to make up for lost time.

He pulls me into a hug and steps away forcing a smile.

"It's not all bad Nqubeko and you know that my father hasn't been the same since mama passed away" I say.

He nods his head and shrugs his shoulders.

"Can I call you later before I sleep" he asks. I nod my head smiling.

"Sure" he says walking away.

I turn and make my way inside the house.

It's too quiet and only when I step closer do I hear baba's radio playing.

"Baba" I call out.

He comes out of the his bedroom fixing his shirt. "What took you so long" he asks.

"I couldn't find them at Mam' Thoko so I had to go somewhere else" I say.

He nods his head and takes his beers walking back to his bedroom.

"Khethiwe" I call out but she doesn't respond.

I step outside making my way to the back of the house looking for her.

"Yeye" she softly calls out.

I run back to the house and find her sitting on the couch.

Her eyes look puffy and her hands are shaking. I mover close and settle down next to her.

"Sisi what's wrong" I ask.

She looks up and smiles breathing out heavily. “I am just tired that’s all” she says.

I nod my head and hold her hand.

“I know that sometimes it’s hard and that I don’t make it easy but I promise everything is going to be okay, let me run you a bath okay and I will cook your favorite” I say.

Her smile grows even more as she blinks her tears away.

“Is it Bandile did he do something to you” I ask.

Bandile is her boyfriend and they have been dating for as long as I can remember.

“No Bandile did nothing we are fine” she says.

“How did it go with Nqubeko” she asks.

“He’s sulking for now but he’ll be fine” I say thinking about how dramatic Nqubeko can be at times.

“Tell me, when are you two officially going to be a couple” she asks.

“You of all people know that me and him are just

friends” I say.

She laughs throwing her her back.

“If you say so” she says.

I clear my throat and lower my voice.

“Sisi he wants us to lay a charge against baba” I tell her.

She tilts her head frowning.

“We are not going to lay a charge against baba and that’s it” she says standing up.

I nod my head and watch her walk to her bedroom. I

deeply sigh standing up heading to the kitchen.

I prepare the pots and a distant memory of my mother cooking Sunday meals flashes, her face is blurry with each year that passes I lose so many parts of her.

Her voice has becomes nothing but a distant memory it hurts not knowing what she sounded like,I seem to be forgetting how she used laughed how it sounded when she sang.

Yes khethiwe sings as beautiful as mama but I wish I could mama's voice one more time.

I chop the onion but miss a step and cut myself, the pain seems to numb the aching that I am feeling right now.

I press my cut finger and watch the blood drip down to the chopping board.

I close my eyes and see my mothers lifeless body on the floor blood coming coming out of her head.

I remember the gunshot and running to my parents bedroom how my father stood over her body and did nothing to help her, how Khethiwe screamed and tried to wake her up but she was already gone. I remember everything but I don't remember crying, I don't remember crying for my mother so much that my heart aches.

I pick up the knife and make a cut on the palm of my hand biting my lip.

I watch as the blood drips on the chopping board. "Bayede what are you doing" Khethiwe shouts.

I drop the knife and hide my hand behind my back.

I didn't mean to hurt myself I don't know what happened.

“Bayede what is this” she asks making me hold out my hand.

“I accidentally cut myself while chopping the onion” I lie.

She reaches for the first aid kit and cleans me up wrapping a bandage over the cut.

She looks at me suspiciously but says nothing more.

“I just talked to Bandile he said he will bring us takeaways you don't have to cook” she says.

I nod my head and take my hand back cleaning the mess I have made.

I finish up and make my way to Khethiwe's bedroom and find her cutting up her favorite dress into shreds with scissors.

I stand by the door and look at her taking out all the

frustration on the poor dress, she finally gives in breathing heavily and slumps to the floor defeatedly.

I don't know what's going on with her but it goes deeper than I can imagine.

I wish mama was here I wish she could make her feel better.

I slowly shut the door and walk back to my room, I change into something else and take out R300 from my piggybank.

The walk to Nqubeko's house has me thinking about a lot of things, he has always been the safest place I can find comfort in and right now I need him.

His family is amazing strict yet understanding they are what we once were at home a loving happy family.

I knock on the door and patiently wait, Phethile opens the door and looks at me smiling.

"I should have known you would be back" she says letting me in.

She closes the door behind us and pulls my hand making our way to the living room.

Mr Phakathwayo senior is occupying the head of the table,I still a glance at him and picture Nqubeko in his prime years.

I know he will make a strong handsome man.

I greet everyone and watch Nqubeko quickly gets on his feet walking over to me.

“Hey” he says.

“Hi” I say.

He holds my hand but I shake my head not in front of his parents.

“I am sorry to disturb but I am looking for you Ma” I say.

She nods gracefully getting up. We both walk back to the kitchen.

“Ma I was wondering if you we can cancel our lunch date and you take Khethiwe instead” I say.

“Is everything okay with Khethiwe” she asks.

“I don’t know ma she says she’s fine but I feel like something is going on with her” I say.

“I will call her and ask her to join me tomorrow and maybe I can take her to the spar for facials and massages” she says.

“I would appreciate that ma thank you” I say.

I reach for the money inside my pocket and hand it to her.

“Bayede I could never take your money sisi” she says softly.

“Your mother was a friend and two are like my very own daughters” she says holding my hand.

“I hope she comes back feeling better” I say. She pulls me into a hug and holds me tight.

“Whatever it is sisi I am sure we can fix it” she says.

Nqubeko clears his throat and his mother pulls away.

“Dish up for Bayede before she leaves” she says walking back to the living room.

Nqubeko moves closer and pulls me into a hug

holding me tight.

His hands settle just right above my arse.

“Talk to me” he says.

“There’s nothing to talk about” I say. “What happened to your hand” he asks.

“Nothing I had an accident but Khethiwe took care of it” I say.

He pulls away and looks into my eyes I drop my eyes to the floor I can never hold a stare with Nqubeko his eyes are just beautiful and that fact that he’s handsome makes it hard to even look at him for long.

He pulls my hand as we make our way to his bedroom.

I settle on the bed and watch as he locks the door,he walks over and helps me out of my shoes taking his off too.

He peels the bed cover as we both get in I lay on his chest as he wraps his arms me kissing my forehead.

Today I don’t want a cuddle I need more than just

that so I move his hand to my breast while I move my hand to his manhood.

“Bayede” he says softly.

“I want you to be my first Nqubeko” I whisper.

I move and sit on top of him and hesitantly kiss him, it takes a while for him to respond but he does hungrily and passionately.

I take off my t-shirt and watch as his eyes grow wide I can feel him grow underneath me.

He gently pulls me by my hair making me lean close and kiss me.

He flips me over and gets in between my thighs kissing me.

He stops and as if coming back to his senses breathing heavily.

He gets off the bed and shakes his head running his hands over his head.

“Get dressed” he says looking everywhere beside me.

“Nqubeko I want this” I say.

“Bayede get dressed it’s getting late and I need to walk you home” he says sternly.

I slowly nod my head and search for my top getting dressed.

He hands me my shoes and sighs.

“I need the toilet I will be right back” he says.

He comes back just as I am about to open the door and shamefully walk out.

“So you’re going to leave without saying anything” he asks.

“I was going to call you when I get home” I say.

He grabs his phone and takes my hand as we both walk out.

“Do I disgust you Nqubeko” I ask.

He turns and look at me.

“No,why would you think that” he asks. “Because you just turned me down” I say.

He stops walking and pulls me close into his arms.

“Bayede there’s more to sex than just having it, I don’t want you to regret ever giving yourself to me. I want your first to be special and I want to make it special” he says.

“I don’t only want to be your first Bayede but I want to be your last too” he says leaning close.

His lips part mine as his hands rest on my arse squeezing it.

“I don’t want to mend you with sex only but I want to mend you with my love too” he says.

I nod my head although I am still gutted and feeling foolish about the stunt that I pulled.

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Bayede's keeper

#3

Khethiwe stood up from her bed and looked at herself in the mirror her clothes no longer seemed to fit.

She sighed looking at how her jeans tucked and held her but and hips.

She reached for her pillow and placed it under her knees and started praying, she prayed for herself and then prayed for her little sister's protection. She prayed for Bayede more than she did herself.

She said her amen and stood up heading for the door, she bumped into her father Sabelo and held her breath.

The man looked at her from head to toe and smiled.

It was disgusting how he could smile and hold her like a like a lover, when he was her father.

“Sawubona baba” she said.

Sabelo pulled her closer and kissed her pushing his long slimy tongue inside her mouth.

Her fist tightened and she blinked as he grabbed her butt and groaned.

He pushed her back into her room and locked the door.

Tears filled her eyes as he laid her on the bed and pulled down her pants followed by her underwear.

He was already hard and his breath smelled so bad she wanted to puke.

He pulled down his pants and stroked himself then parted her legs.

He moves his hand and felt how dry she was then used spit to make her wet.

Khethiwe closed her eyes and imagined Bayede laughing her dimples showing and how she closed her eyes whenever she laughed.

How Bayede always clung to her even now as she was old.

She felt Sabelo stretch her wide groaning at her flesh wrapping around his cock.

He kisses her neck and groped her breast they were overly sensitive so much so the act brought tears to her eyes.

She turned her head and looked to the window it was sunny today and it sure was going to be a beautiful day.

Sabelo violently thrust and stroked going in and out of her small tight hole without a care in the world.

Tears fell from her eyes as the man on top of her finished what he was doing, he pulled out and wiped himself as his semen slid out of her.

He smiled catching his breath satisfied with himself and pulled up his pants.

“I bet Bayede is even sweeter” he said.

Khethiwe blinked she would never forgive herself if Bayede had to go through what she was going through.

“I won’t be home tonight I am visiting a friend I

should be back tomorrow or in a few days time”he said moving to the side of the bed looking at Khethiwe staring into the window.

He pulled her by her hair.

“And make sure you don’t try anything while I am away because I will find you and make you watch while I bury myself deep inside that little sister of yours” Sabelo said letting go.

He walked out and khethiwe finally found the strength to stand up.

No matter how many times this man violated her she could never get used to it.

For the first few years she had fought hard with her might, but he would beat her so hard she wouldn’t be able to do anything for weeks.

Then he would beat Bayede into pulp that was his way of putting her in line and stop her from fighting back.

He would starve them just to teach her a lesson. She got undressed and walked out to the bathroom

where she took a long shower and walked back to her bedroom to clean up and get dressed.

She wore a long dress and looked at herself in the mirror she looked so much like her mother she hated it.

The dress covered up everything it wouldn't bring her any male attention, she had burned all of Bayede's short dresses and skirt she didn't want their father looking at her.

She took her bag and opened her purse finding a R200 note inside, there was only one person who could do this and it was Bayede.

She walked out of her bedroom and locked the door heading out.

She stepped outside the high walls and Mrs Phakathwayo's car stopped.

She looked at the time and realized she was running late.

"Sawubona sisi I decided to come get you seeing that we are running out of time" Nqubeko's mother

said.

Khethiwe smiled and got in the car strapping her seatbelt.

“Hi Ma, I am sorry for being late I didn’t see the time” she says holding her broken smile.

“It’s okay sisi” Nqubeko’s mother told her.

She clasped her legs and looked outside the window she wondered if Nqubeko’s mother could smell the semen and bad breathe her father left on her.

She had been postponing this outing she finally gave in to Bayede’s yapping and begging.

“I was thinking we go for massages and facials and maybe we can talk” Zandile said.

Khethiwe looked at her and smiled.

“I would love that very much Ma” she said.

Zandile drove to the spar and parked her the car as they both stepped out and walked inside.

They were greeted with glasses of champagne. Zandile had called her friend and asked to make the

whole day special.

They walked to the changing rooms and got dressed in their gowns then got directed to the massaging tables.

Oils and hot stones were used to relax them as the masseuse worked on their knots and stiffness.

Khethiwe could feel the hard tension leave her body she closed her eyes and drifted to sleep as her whole body relaxed.

Their massage ended and they moved to the chairs to have to facials and feet and hands done.

A platter of strawberries,cheese and grapes was brought.

Khethiwe looked at Zandile and smiled. “Thank for this ma I needed this” she said.

“Bayede was worried about you and I haven’t seen you in a while so it’s a win for everyone” Zandile said.

Their pampering got done and they stood up and went out to the plaza where lunch for two was prepared.

Zandile looked at Khethiwe and realized how full she had gotten how her breast had grown full.

She watched as Khethiwe plated up and started eating she had an appetite then it finally dawned on her.

“Oh Ma this is so nice” she said reaching for the garlic and chilli prawns.

Zandile sipped her cocktail and watched as Khethiwe ate, then she reached for the ice cream and helped herself.

For a moment she looked at her and in that moment she was the Khethiwe everyone knew.

Zandile cleared her throat not knowing if this was appropriate or not.

“Khethiwe when last did see your period” she asked.

She went silent for a while then the icecream spoon fell back on her bowl.

Khethiwe looked up with eyes filled with tears and blinked.

She had always been careful with Bandile because

she wanted him getting sick, but with Sabelo that man wanted it raw he wanted to feel her every fibre.

She had forgotten about going to the doctor her mind was too busy focusing on Bayede and doing well on her final exams.

Zandile reached for her hand and held it.

“It’s okay sisi talk to me” she said.

Khethiwe shook her head as tears fell down her cheeks.

Zandile moves over to her side of the table and held her close and just like thunder her cries filled the place.

She couldn’t hold back but just cry for all the messed up things she was going through.

How this one one day could be Bayede’s fate.

She held on to Nqubeko’s mother and didn’t hold back as her tears drenched her gown.

Zandile brushed her back and closed her eyes feeling overwhelmed.

“Yini sisi” she asked as her very own throat clogged up.

Khethiwe shook her head she had no words didn’t know where to begin.

She weeped till her well of tears dried up. Zandile grabbed a chair and sat opposite her.

“It’s okay sisi whenever you are ready” She said still holding her close.

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Bayede

The sun is scorching hot and I am walking home alone today, Phethile decided to visit her boyfriend and well I couldn’t tag along her visits always ends up with her screaming Mdu’s name from the top of her lungs.

I think about Nqubeko and smile reaching for my phone in my pocket and dialing him.

He pickes up after a few rings and a female voice comes through.

I get tongue tied and clear my throat.

“Hello” I say.

“Hi” the female voice says.

“Hi,can I speak to Nqubeko please” I say.

“Oh I am sorry but he’s in the shower right now should I take a message” she asks.

“Uhm no” I say ending the call.

I look at the screen one more time to see if I dialed the right person.

I don’t remember Nqubeko telling me about a girlfriend or maybe he did and I never paid attention to it.

I make my home home and find Khethiwe watering her her flowers,she is very fond of that garden and her hand is good everything she plants blossoms beautifully.

I hug her from behind and she gets a freight pushing

me away.

I stagger off and fall on my butt looking at her terrified face.

“Bayede” she says placing a hand over her chest. “I am sorry I didn’t mean to scare you” I say.

She shakes her head helping me up.

“It’s okay I was just lost in my own thoughts, how was school” she asks.

“School is school I can’t wait for next week I am tired of having to go to school” I say.

She laughs raising her eyebrows.

“Come lets go inside” she says.

We walk inside the house and the smell of chicken stock hits my nostrils.

“I made your other favorite chicken feet with dumplings and spinach” she says.

She plates up for the both of us, I wash my hands and settle down my mouth watering.

“How are you feeling today” I ask.

She smiles and sighs.

“I feel good going out is exactly what I needed” she says.

She pulls me into her arms still smiling.

“You know that I love you right more than anything” she says.

I nod my head.

“And that I would anything for you Yeye I would kill for you” she says.

I pull away and look at her smiling placing my hands on her face like Nqubeko does when he wants to get a message across.

“I would kill for you,I would kill anyone that would want hurt or harm you I swear to God I would kill them” I say.

She laughs shaking her head.

“You are not a monster Bayede” she says.

“For you I would be anything” I say.

“Come ok lets eat” she says.

I nod my head and start eating.

My phone rings throughout the meal I look at the screen and see Nqubeko’s name.

I pick the call up and excuse myself.

“Nqubeko” I say.

“Bayede” he says softly.

“I saw your call sorry I couldn’t pick it up” he says.

“Don’t worry about that your girlfriend picked it up for you” I tell him.

He sighs in frustration.

“She’s not my girlfriend Bayede” he says. “I guess she’s your fuck buddy then” I say. He burst into a deep laugh.

“I don’t do fuck buddies Bayede” he says.

“What do you do then” I ask.

“I want to do you and only you” he says.

“Kahle Nqubeko” I say feeling my cheeks burn up.

“I miss you, I miss holding you Bayede and I can’t wait to come home so I can show you how much I miss you” he says.

“I miss you too Phakathwayo” I say.

“Ngiyakuthanda Bayede” he says.

He’s never said these words before they catch me off guard.

“You don’t have to say anything I will call back later then” he says ending the call.

A smile grows on my lips as I think about Naubeko loving me.

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Bayede's Keeper

#4

The creaking sound to my bedroom opens and slowly shuts again.

I feel this heavy weight ontop of my bed and cold hands snake their way inside my my blankets.

I open my eyes and find my father looking at me, his finger is on his lips telling me to keep quiet.

“Baba” I say.

He smiles and shows me a lollipop.

“Mama doesn't want us eating sweets at night” I tell him.

He smiles and brushes my thigh.

“I know but it will be our little secret” he says.

I nod my head and watch as he unwraps the lollipop for me.

I suck on it and watch as he swallows smiling. “Yeye” he says.

I raise my eyes and smile.

“Baba wants to teach you something” he says.

I nod my head smiling

“Okay” I say.

He makes me sit on top of him and lays back closing his eyes.

I lick on my lollipop and take a bite out of it chewing.

“Can you move your waist for daddy like this and jump” he says placing his hands on my small waist moving me.

He breathes heavily as I move and happily jump. “Baba is this a game” I ask.

He nods his head smiling.

“Yes it’s a game between you and I mommy doesn’t have to know okay” he says.

He lifts me up and places me on the side.

Taking off his pants still looking at me.

He takes the lollipop away from me and make me touch his private.

“Don’t be scared just touch daddy” he says. “Do you trust daddy” he asks.

I nod my head hesitantly.

“Okay then go ahead and touch daddy” he says.

I touch him and watch as he closes his eyes breathing heavily.

I have never seen anyone breathe like this.

He places his hand over mine making me tighten my grip over his private.

He tightens his jaws his chest going up and down.

“Remember how you suck on your lollipop” he asks.

I nod my head watching him place another lollipop on the bed.

He sits up straight while his shaft stands stiff. “Daddy wants you to kiss him here okay like a

lollipop” he says.

I look at his private and squint my eyes.

“It’s okay I promise it won’t hurt” He says.

I move closer and lick him but he grabs my head and pushes me down my throat burns as this hard like rod hammers inside my mouth.

I try getting up as I struggle to breathe but he pushes me further up and down till I throw up all over him.

He quickly get on his knees and vigorously touches himself spilling his cum on the bed.

I look at him crying he hurt me.

He moves closer and wipes my tears.

“I don’t want to do that again,I don’t like this game baba” I say.

He remains quiet and places me on the floor while he removes my sheet and puts in another one while rehashing a story.

“If mommy asks what happened what are we going to say” he asks.

I look at him and wonder if all father's play this game with their daughters.

“Bayede” he snaps.

I look up and wipe my tears my throat burning.

“That I peed on myself” I say.

“Good remember this is our little secret okay” he says I nod my head.

He places me on the bed and tucks me in walking out.

I open my eyes to the door shutting and sit up straight breathing heavily I was five when he started just five.

I grab my phone and dial Nqubeko.

It's late but he usually takes my calls he takes time but he finally does.

“Bayede” He says in a groggy voice.

“Hey what's wrong” he asks.

“It’s the nightmares Nqubeko they won’t leave me” I tell him.

He sighs defeatedly.

“I am sorry” he says.

“Why won’t they leave me Nqubeko” I ask sniffing.

“I don’t know but I am sorry that I am not there to hold you” he says.

“Tell me about the nightmares” he says.

I bite my lower lip and hold my tears I can never tell anyone about this not even Nqubeko he would look at me differently, I bet if he learned about the games he would find me repulsive.

“It’s nothing serious I just keep falling into a dark whole” I lie.

“Bayede” he says softly in a pleading voice.

“I am sorry that I woke you I shouldn’t have” I say ending the call.

I get off the bed and head to Khethiwe’s bedroom. I knock before letting myself in she turns her head

looking at me.

“Hey” she says sounding relieved. “I can’t sleep” I say.

“Oh you poor baby come sleep next to your big sister” she says.

I get in next to her and lay my head on her pillow. “I can’t seem to remember mama” I tell her.

She deeply sighs and takes my hand into hers.

“And that’s okay you know why because that’s life and with time we heal and forget” she says.

“Mama was a good person right” I ask feeling a lump form in my throat.

She looks at me smiling.

“Mama was an amazing person she was a good mother and she loved us more than anything” she says.

“I am afraid that one day I won’t remember her face that I will go by with no memories of her with us” I say.

She wipes my tears and laughs softly.

“I am here aren’t I? and I am not going anywhere I will always be here” she says.

I rest my head on her shoulder. “I love you” I say.

“I love you too” she says.

I woke up early in the morning and cleaned then prepared breakfast, with my father gone one can breathe easily.

Khethiwe joins me looking well rested she kept fidgeting and mumbling in her sleep but I held her and she seemed okay throughout the night.

She smiles taking her seat.

“I hope you won’t be late” she says looking at the time.

“I won’t” I say.

“I wish baba gets hit by a buss and dies” I say.

She chocks on her juice and laughs.

“I know you have thought about it too” I say laughing. A knock comes through and Nqubeko walks in.

I get on my feet and fling into his arms holding on tight.

I pull away and look at his tired eyes tilting my head. “I had to come” he says.

“Sbari sam” My sister says already plating up for him.

“Sawubona Makhethi” he says smiling.

I pull his hand and have him settle next to me.

“So what brings you here when you are supposed to be in school having class” Khethiwe says.

He looks at me and squeezes my hand.

“I had to see this one here and make sure she’s okay” he says.

“Then you two should eat because your girlfriend here needs to leave for school” Khethiwe says standing up taking her plate with.

She leaves us alone and Nqubeko looks at me.

“You know that if you don’t talk to me then I can’t help you” he says.

I nod my head and pick up my peanut butter and jam toasted bread.

He smiles shaking his head and takes a bite.

“Thank you for coming it means a lot” I say. He nods and takes a sip of my coffee.

“So that girl who picked up your phone” I say.

“You know I knew you weren’t going to let this go so tell me have you stabbed and cussed me in your mind” he asks.

I laugh out loud because he’s right.

“Just a little” I say.

“And are you feeling better now” he asks. I nod my head smiling.

“Good now eat up so I can drop you off” he says. We finish up and I say my goodbye to Khethiwe.

Nqubeko keeps his hand on my thigh as he drives me to school.

Apart from my father he's the only person to ever touch me in a sexual way.

I have never felt comfortable with any one else but him.

He parks the car outside the gate and sighs. "Do you trust me" he asks.

I remember my father the one person I thought was meant to protect me someone who was a hero in my eyes ask me the same words.

I nod my head smiling.

"Then talk to me Bayede whatever it is that's troubling you please talk to me" he pleads.

"I am okay I just had a nightmare that's all" I tell him. He nods his head.

"If you say so" he says.

"When are you coming back home" I ask.

“As soon as I am done with my exams” he says reaching in the backseat.

“This is for you” he says giving me a box of lindor chocolates.

“I meant what I said I only want to do you and only you and I am sorry that Ginger picked up my phone” he says.

“Ginger? is she a dog” I ask.

He laughs showing off his perfectly aligned teeth.

God sure took his time creating him it’s in the way he laughs and smiles that has me weak in the knees.

“No she’s just a study partner nothing more” he says. I nod my head.

He leans close for a kiss parting my lips.

A knock on the window startles us, we both pull away and look at Phethile making funny face.

“I should go inside” I say.

He kisses my forehead and smiles taking out a few notes from his wallet he shoves the money in my

hands and unlocks the door.

He kisses my forehead still keeping his smile.

“Forehead kisses are the best” Phethile says dragging me inside the school premises.

I turn and see Nqubeko leaning against his car looking at us.

I blow him a kiss and watch as he subtly catches it placing his hand on his chest.

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Bayede's keeper

#5

It's been a week now and my father is nowhere to be seen. My sister laughs more she talks more and she's happy I am starting to think my father is the problem.

I keep praying for a phone call that tells us he died on his way back home or that he got bitten by dogs that shred him to pieces and he died.

I am done with my final exams and it feels good knowing that soon my life is about to change.

I applied at three prestigious universities but at the same time I am hoping to join Nqubeko.

I am hoping for the best when it comes to my result Gods know I have worked hard, Khethiwe's tutoring hasn't gone down the drain if anything I want to make her and Nqubeko proud.

I look at myself in the mirror and smile last night

Khethiwe changed my hairstyle.

I walk to her bedroom and find her sleeping which is odd she never sleeps late.

I wake her and she opens her eyes smiling. “What’s wrong are you sick” I ask.

She shakes her head No.

“I am tired that’s all” she says looking at me.

“Where are you going” she asks.

“Nqubeko called but don’t worry I won’t be long” I say.

She nods her head and just then her phone rings. “It’s Bandile” I say handing her the phone.

She looks at me waiting for me to leave. “I will leave to it then” I say standing up.

“I will fix you something to eat okay just check in microwave” I say.

“Thank you now start walking” she says.

I walk out making my way to the kitchen, there isn’t much food in the house just eggs and Russians.

She's been a selective eater lately so I make my way back to her bedroom and stop on my tracks when I hear her shouting.

I decide not to listen in and head back to the kitchen to make her some food.

I finish up and grab my bag walking out.

I find Nqubeko already parked outside the gate he steps out of the car and pulls me into his arms.

He kisses my cheek and pulls away opening the door for me.

"Thank you" I say.

He gets on his side of the car and drives off.

We get to the mall and make our way to Burger King. We order some milkshakes,burgers and cold drink.

He insists of the milkshake and ordering a meal for Khethiwe and I don't protest.

We settle down on the corner table and have our meal.

"You are beautiful Bayede" he says.

“Thank you Nqubeko” I say.

I look at him taking a bite of his burger and smile every thing he does just puts a smile on face.

“I don’t want you stop looking at me like that” he says.

“I never will” I say.

He reaches for my hand and smiles.

“So how long will your father be gone I was hoping you could spend the time” he says still holding my hand.

I look at him tongue tied with the nightmares going on I am not sure if I can.

“It’s okay if you are not ready” he says softly.

“No I am it’s just that there is something I haven’t told you” I say.

He nods his head looking into my eyes.

“How about we finish here then we can talk in the car” he says.

I nod my head finishing up my meal.

He takes my hand as we both walk out to the car.

A moment of silence passes between us with Nqubeko's eyes on me.

"I never cried for my mother" I tell him.

"I know my mother told me, everyone thought you were the most bravest young little girl" he says.

I shake my head breaking eye contact.

"I wasn't brave I was just angry at her not knowing but now that I am older I cry myself to sleep because I miss her" I admit.

He holds my hand tightening his hold giving me the strength to go on.

"My father would come to my room at night and we would play a game of lollipop" I say.

His hand loosens over mine and my heart breaks. "What game Bayede" he asks.

"He would ask me to touch him and he too would touch me, then he would ask me to play with penis till it got hard and put it in my mouth" I say.

His breathing changes and his hold over the steering wheel tightens.

“I was only five when he started,he said I could trust him that he was my father and we should play the game. He used to bring me lollipop every night he wanted me to play his game” I say.

“I didn’t know that it was wrong that he wasn’t supposed to touch me like that,he was hurting me every night and I would get a mouth infection every month. One day he told me that he is grooming me and I shouldn’t be afraid because all fathers did that with their girls” I say.

I looks at him biting his lips his jaws clenched.

“I am sorry that did that I didn’t know it was wrong”I say.

He looks at me and for the first time ever I can’t seem to read him.

“For how long” he asks.

“Till I was 11 then he stopped after mama died but he said one day he would come back and he would

teach me the real game and I that I would enjoy myself” I wipes tears sniffing.

He nods his head stepping out of the car,he walks over to my side and opens the door pulling me out.

“I am sorry” he says holding me tight.

His strong arms assure me that everything is going to be okay.

“I promise he won’t ever hurt you” he says.

He pulls away and wipes my tears kissing my forehead.

“You were young Bayede that man took advantage of you he molested you when he was supposed to protect you” he says.

“He’s not a man and he deserves to be locked up and have the key thrown away” he says.

“I am so sorry sthandwa sam” he says wiping my tears.

We get in the car and drive back home silent I can

hear him breathe,I can hear him battling the anger and emotions boiling inside him.

I don't know what to say he hasn't looked my way since we got in the car I don't blame him though,sometimes I too can't look myself in the mirror.

He parks the car outside the gate and sighs killing the engine.

“If the offer still stands I would like to come spend the night,we don't have to do anything” I say.

He nods his head faintly smiling.

I step out of the car and rush inside the house.

I drop the takeaway bag upon hearing Khethiwe scream.

I didn't know he was back the kitchen floor is bloody and he keeps on kicking khethiwe on her stomach.

She's no longer crying but whimpering her cries are low it breaks my heart.

“Baba please stop you're hurting her” I say trying to pull him away from her but he pushes me off.

I stand up and reach for the hard steel pan and hit him on the back.

He turns and looks at me just as I am about to hit him one more time.

He slaps me across the face and pushes me against the wall.

“Go to your room Bayede” he warns.

“Bayede run” khethiwe says.

I get on my feet and run towards Nqubeko’s car.

He follows me inside the house and still this man continues kicking her.

Nqubeko pushes him off and punches him in the face, he gets on top of him and throws in punch after punch.

“Nqubeko we need to get her to the hospital please” I say.

I turn and look at Nqubekp still throwing punches.

“Nqubeko stop” I shout.

“This man deserves to die Bayede” Nqubeko shouts.

“Nqubeko please she’s going to die if we don’t get her to the hospital ngiyakucela Phakathwayo” I say.

He pulls away from my father and picks Khethiwe up rushing her to the car.

He drives off making his way to the hospital.

We are attended to as soon as the nurses see Nqubeko carrying a bloody Khethiwe.

They take her to an emergency room while we wait for her.

“I can’t lose her Nqubeko not my sister” I say shaking my head.

“I won’t survive if she leaves me” He pulls me into his arms.

“She’s in good hands she won’t leave you” he says.

A few hours of me pacing up and down the hospital waiting area, the doctor comes out making his way to us.

“How is she” I ask.

“She’s stable, lost a lot of blood due to the pregnancy

but we managed to stop the internal bleeding” the doctor says.

“Pregnancy” I ask.

“Your sister was pregnant but she lost the baby other than that she’s strong and she’s going to be okay” he says.

He walks away leaving me dumbfounded Khethiwe was pregnant and she said nothing.

“I am so sorry” Nqubeko says.

“I need to call Bandile he needs to know that she’s in the hospital” I say.

Nqubeko nods his head still holding my hand.

A nurse accompanied by two police officers walk over to us before I can dial Bandile.

I look at Nqubeko who shrugs his shoulders. “Bayede Mhlongo” one of the police officers asks. I nod my head.

“I am sorry about your sister we were called by the hospital after she was brought in,we managed to

talk to her and she mentioned that your father did this to her since she's in pain and might be mistaken we would like to know from you what happened" the police officer asks.

"I wasn't home but when I got back she was on the floor and our father was repeatedly kicking her in the stomach,I tried helping her but he pushed me off and I hit the wall" I say.

He looks at my forehead where there's a bump and nods his head.

"Can you give us your address as well as the name and surname of your father he says.

I give him everything he needs and watch as they walk away mumbling to themselves.

I settle back down on the bench resting my head on Nqubeko's shoulder.

The waiting is killing me but the nurse tells us that even we see her she won't say much since she's out of it.

“You should go home your parents must be worried” I say looking at Nqubeko.

“No I am not leaving you here alone” he says.

“I will get us something to drink” he says standing up.

He stops and looks towards the door as three police officers walk towards us.

I get on my feet and stand next to him they probably forgot something.

They get closer and I notice one of my father’s police friend.

“Nqubeko Phakathwayo” the one who happens to be my father’s friend says.

Nqubeko chuckles shaking his head,he can be arrogant and smug sometimes.

“Let guess I am arrested for protecting Khethiwe from her monster father isn’t that right Mthembu” Nqubeko asks looking at my father’s friend.

“You are under arrest for the assault to cause grievous harm,anything you say will be used against you in the court of law should you not be able to

*afford a lawyer the state will provide one for you”
Mthembu says handcuffing him.*

*“Call my parents and tell them what happened don’t leave
anything out Bayede okay” I nod my head holding myself
from crying my lungs out.*

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Bayede's Keeper

#6

Nqubeko's father looks at me rubbing his forehead.

I have seen him angry with Nqubeko before but now he's a totally different angry.

Nqubeko's mother tries calming him down but he refuses to even listen to reason.

We are at the police station and Mr Phakathwayo is demanding to see his son and have him released.

Nqubeko gets brought in and it's just me, his parents, my father and the police officers including Mthembu.

"Will someone tell me what's going here" Nqubeko's father asks.

"Your son assaulted mr Mhlongo here as you can see he's bruised and battered" Mthembu says.

"Nqubeko did you do this" His father asks.

He looks at me and nods his head.

“Dammit Nqubeko I didn’t raise a hooligan” Mr Phakathwayo shouts.

“Baba please calm down” Nqubeko’s mother says.

“Baba this man is a monster” Nqubeko shouts.

“See officers that temper right this boy is dangerous and I don’t want him anywhere near my daughters” My father says.

“Your daughters, you have no shame after molesting a five year old for years doing despicable things to her” Nqubeko blurts out.

The room goes silent and Nqubeko’s mother looks at me.

“Yeye” she says.

I nod my head looking at my father who shakes his head.

“That’s a lie” my father says calmly,

“Bayede right” one of the officer asks. I nod my head swallowing.

“Has this man ever touched you in an inappropriate way? don’t be afraid you can tell us” I nod my head looking at Nqubeko, right now he’s my strength.

The officer deeply sighs and looks at my father.

“Sir these are serious allegations child molestation” the officer says.

My father shakes his head and looks at me.

“Officer trust me all this is nothing but a lie, my daughter has always been a troubled young girl when her mother died she never cried nor did she show any emotions.

We took her to a therapist who later told us that she has been traumatized by her mother’s death and that she would sometimes make up stories that weren’t true” he says blinking away tears.

Right there is there devil coming out to play.

“That’s not true he’s lying he would come to my bedroom and want to play” I say.

“And how old were you when this happened” Mthembu asks.

“I was five” I say hesitantly.

“Officers please don’t overwhelm her she’s still very much finding it hard dealing with the fact that her mother died when they were young,I have been taking care of my children since my wife left us and this is not the first time she’s mentioned something as despicable as this” he says wiping his tears.

He looks at Nqubeko’s father and sighs.

“Sizwe I may be many things but I would never hurt my girls like that I would never do that” he says.

“Baba don’t listen to this man he’s nothing but a liar” Nqubeko says.

“I swear he would make me touch him and he would put his penis in my mouth and force me to suck him” I say.

Nqubeko’s mother moves close and holds me comforting me.

“How could you do this to a child Sabelo” she asks.

“Bayede is sick okay she is sick she needs serious help,she’s making all this up like I said my daughter

is a troubled young girl” he says.

“Ma I would never lie about something like this and now he’s hurt my sister” I say.

“The child wouldn’t cry like this if she wasn’t telling the truth” Mr phakathwayo says.

My father nods his head and drops his shoulders.

“If that’s the case then arrest me officers but I will say this I am dropping the charges against this boy”he says sounding like a saint.

The police officer looks at me and deeply sighs.

“I am sorry but until your sister wakes up and collaborates your story then we can’t keep him in custody,as for the other allegations you need to make a full statement and an investigation will ensue”

Mthembu says.

“For now you can all go home it’s been a long night” he continues.

“So you are letting him go home to continue where he left off and rape her” Nqubeko says.

“Nqubeko calm down” his father says looking at me.

His eyes are that's of a father full of concern.

“I will not let Bayede go home with this sick manipulative man” he says.

“Fine but I want you to know this Bayede that when you have calmed down and have seen your errors you can come home,I will be there waiting for you because you are my daughter and I love you and I hate seeing you like this” he says sounding broken.

Tears fall when I look into his eyes how can he lie like this,how can he say all this and still look me in the eye without blinking.

“Come Bayede lets go home”Nqubeko’s mother says helping me up.

The drive to Nqubeko’s house is quiet I can tell everyone is deep in their thoughts. Nqubeko’s father parks the car and steps out with his wife.

“It’s okay baba we will come in,we just need some time alone” Nqubeko says.

His father nods and hold his wife’s hand heading

inside the house.

My hands are shaking I am consumed with anger and rage my breathing sky rockets.

He tries holding my hand but I retract and shake my head.

“He lied Nqubeko,he lied and made me seem like I was lying. I am not lying Nqubeko I swear I am telling the truth” I say.

“I know you’re,sthandwa sam look at me” he says. I turn my head and look at his handsome face.

He smiles and takes my hand kissing it.

“I know what that man did to you,I could see it in his eyes he was lying through his teeth and he won’t get away with it” he says.

“Come here” he says.

He pulls me close and I rest my head on his chest. “I hate him Nqubeko so much” I say.

“I know you do” he says softly.

It takes a while for us to get inside the house, to my surprise his parents are sitting in the living room having what sounds like a private conversation.

Nqubeko holds my hand as we quietly make our way to his bedroom.

“Bayede will sleep in Phethile’s room” his father says.

Nqubeko doesn’t say anything and continues pulling me to his bedroom.

“Nqubeko don’t make me repeat myself” his father warns.

“Ngizwile baba” Nqubeko says.

We part ways with him going to his bedroom and me going to Phethile’s.

She quickly gets up from her bed and gives me a tight hug.

“How’s Khethiwe” she asks.

“She’s fine the doctor said she will be okay” I say. I pull away from her hold and smile.

“I guess baba said you should sleep in my room” she

says laughing. I

nod my head.

“He’s a buzz kill sometimes” she says shrugging her shoulders.

“Here these will fit” she says offering me her nightdress.

She looks at me and tilts her head.

“Are you okay I mean really okay” she asks. “I am okay” I say.

She nods her head and goes back to going through her phone.

I take off my clothes and wrap a towel around my body with Phethile looking at me.

“Has my brother ever seen you naked I mean this naked” she asks.

“No why” I ask.

“Nothing just being curious” she says.

I walk out of her bedroom and head to the shower a

part of me feels numb after everything that happened.

I drop the towel and step inside turning on the cold water.

Everything my father said keeps playing itself over and over again.

The cold water has no effect over what I am feeling.

I turn the water off and step out wrapping the towel around my body.

I bump into a shirtless Nqubeko on my way out and nervously smile.

Had things not gone the way they did we would be in each other arms, for the first time ever this man would be loving me.

He looks around and moves closer stealing a kiss.

“Nqubeko” I say pulling away.

“I am sorry” he says clearing his throat.

I walk past him and head to Phethile’s bedroom.

I change into her nightwear and get in laying next to

her.

My phone goes off and a message from Nqubeko comes through.

**Can I see you please* the text says. A*

knock follows soon after the text.

I slowly slip out of the bed and tip toe to the door.

“Just make sure you come back” Phethile says giggling.

I shut the door and follow Nqubeko to his bedroom. He locks the door as soon as we are both inside.

“I just want to hold you” he says pulling me close with his hands going down to my arse.

He looks me in the eye and leans close for a kiss

The kiss deepens as my hands wrap around his neck pulling him even closer.

My heart skips when I feel his hard on pressing against me.

“Nqubeko we shouldn’t your father” he shuts me up

with a kiss and lifts me up.

My legs cradle him as I rub myself against him.

He places me on the bed and gets in between my thighs.

“Dammit Bayede you’re not wearing any underwear” he says cussing under his breath.

He tries pulling away but I pull him back he takes the lead with his hand going down to my entrance.

I pull down his briefs and have his hard black cork out while he kisses my neck down to my shoulder.

I take a glance at his beautifully vein popped magnificent cork and swallow.

“Don’t stop” I tell him.

He looks at me begging for my permission. “Please”

I say.

He takes off my nightwear and stops to look at me his mouth slightly dropping, a side smile spreads across his lips his eyes blazing with desire and need.

“You are beautiful Bayede” he says kissing me.

I spread my legs wide and feel his cork between my thighs.

He cups my breast kneading them into his hands.

He gently licks my nipples while his fingers work me down there.

He leaves wet kisses down my chest all the way to my navel.

All this gives me goosebumps so much so my heart rate spikes up.

“Relax for me Bayede” he commands.

I ease into his touch as his tongue brushes up against my clit.

His teeth gently graze at my already swollen clit building me up more.

I feel his thumb gently press on my clit and him vigorously shaking it.

“Nqubeko” I whimper being at the mercy of his tongue.

He grabs my arse with his face eating me up.

I scream his name when he again presses on my throbbing clit.

“Oh holy mother” I say cuming all over his face.

He places his hand on my flat belly pressing me down while blowing air.

Tears fall from the corner of my eyes as another orgasim shoots through me.

He comes to my face with a smug smile on his face and kisses me.

I move my hand down to his shaft my eyes widening at the feel of hugeness.

He shuts his eyes and growls clenching his jaws. “Yeye I can’t” he says.

“Phakathwayo please don’t deny me this” I say. I feel his cork press against my wet entrance.

He pushes himself in and swallows as his breathing changes.

I feel this needle like feeling as he slowly pushes himself in stretching me.

“Are you okay?should I stop” he asks.

I shake my head as painful as it is,I want him to do this we both need this.

I need it more and he knows it.

He kisses my forehead and further pushes himself in, a loud scream leaves my mouth when half of him is inside.

He gives me that “if it hurts” I can pull out look but at the same time he’s begging me to let him in.

I pull him close for a kiss and feel my walls expand with each push.

I feel my breath leave me but his gentle look assures me that this is right.

He kisses my forehead again and entwines both our hands as he deeply strokes and thrusts.

“I love you Bayede” he says looking at me. “I love you Nqubeko” I tell him.

He rests his forehead on mine keeping eye contact. Tears fill his eyes as he buries his head on my neck.

I close my eyes shutting everything out and focusing on this moment.

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Bayede's Keeper

#7

It's been days with Khethiwe at the hospital Nqubeko's parents took it upon themselves to make sure that she gets treated better.

Since we checked on her and it didn't seem like a person who getting better.

The police never paid her visit and insisted they would question her once she's out of the hospital.

I am grateful to Nqubeko's parents for being this kind and I am ashamed for disrespecting their house in such a way.

They have been treating me good and I have been repaying their kindness by sleeping with their son under their roof.

I think his mother knows though the knowing looks she gives me say it all.

As for Phethile nothing runs past her and well I couldn't keep this away from her.

She walk in and throws herself on the bed deeply sighing.

"I think Mdu is cheating on me" she says.

I let go of my phone and place it face down after checking on my cupcakes order and look at her.

"Why would you think that" I ask.

She sits up straight and sighs.

"He's been distant Bayede and suddenly his phone has a password,I don't know but my gut feeling tells me that he's cheating on me" she says shaking her head.

I watch as tears blur her eyes.

"After everything we have been through Bayede he goes and cheats on me" she says in frustration.

I nod my head listening.

"The nerve Bayede to cheat on me" she says finding

it to grasp that man cheating on anything and everything.

“Phethile we don’t know that he’s cheating so I suggest you look him in the eye and ask him” I say.

“And what happens if he lies” she asks wiping her tears.

“Phethile you know your man better than anyone else so if you ask him and he lies then you will know” I say.

She nods her head smiling.

“Does my brother lie to you seeing that he’s older and more experienced” she says.

Her question catches me of guard Nqubeko has never lied to me and I have never put him in any position to do so.

“Your brother knows me better than anyone else in this world, and I know him better than anyone else. We are friends first more than anything so if he lies then I will know” I say.

“I wish I could have the kind of connection you two

have” she says.

“One day you will” I say.

She nods her head getting up fixing herself.

“You are right I should face that cheating hoe of a man and demand he tells me the truth” she says reaching for her phone.

“Look if you want answers from Mdu then I suggest you play nice getting all worked up will not help you because he’s going to keep lying” I tell her.

“You are right and besides I need some loving and if I act all crazy he might just send me back home frustrated” she says laughing.

“See right that loving you are talking trying asking him when he’s busy loving you right” I say.

“Great thinking” she says heading for the door. She turns before walking out and smiles.

“Thank you and please tell my brother I said happy birthday will give him his present when I get back” she says walking out.

With Phethile gone I am left alone in the house, Nqubeko had to drop his parents off at the airport his father has a business arrangement and his wife is accompanying him.

I tidy up in Nqubeko's bedroom and set up the perfect indoor's picnic, I take a quick shower and wear one of Phethile's tight short dresses.

Khethiwe would kill me if she saw me now.

It doesn't take long before the cupcakes are delivered.

I asked for them to be written happy birthday with his age in the middle.

I look at the watch I bought and smile I used most of my savings on it and I hope he loves it.

I look at the time and sigh he should be here by now.

I quickly get on my feet when I hear his car outside, my nerves are short what if he thinks all this is cheap.

I change sitting positions trying to look sexy, I settle on a pose and catch a glimpse of myself in the

mirror and shake my head poor guy might think I am crazy or have been hit by a stroke.

I decide to stand and hold the cupcakes waiting for him.

He takes his sweet time but finally shouts for Phethile and I announcing his presence.

His bedroom door open with him paying no attention to the fact that there's someone in the inside.

He turns around and looks at me blushing. "Surprise" I say.

"Happy birthday Nqubeko,22 never looked this good" I say.

He moves closer and looks at the cupcakes.

"Thank you" he says taking one smudging in my cheeks.

"Nqubeko" I say.

He takes the box away from me and wraps his arms around my waist pulling me close to him.

He licks the cream off my cheeks and moves his lips

to my mouth giving me a kiss.

“Had I known you would lick my face I would have done this a long time ago” I say.

“I lick your face because I love you” he says kissing me again.

“And I love you for loving me” I say.

“This is beautiful Bayede ngiyabonga” he says smiling.

I reach for the paper bag and hand it to him.

He pulls out the small black gift box still smiling.

I look at him and wonder if he knows how much he means to me, How I would chose him over everything over and over again without blinking twice.

He pulls out the watch and smiles.

“I know you have many of these but this one is different look at the back” I say.

He looks at the back of the watch then me.

“Wherever you go you will always have me I love you doctor Phakathwayo. Love Bayede”

“I mean it Nqubeko” I say.

He gives me a hug and holds on longer than he should.

“It won’t be always be rosey Nqubeko you will always have me” I say.

He pulls away chuckling and kisses me.

“I am not perfect you of all people know that, I have my shot comings but whenever I look at you I want to be perfect. I want to be the man of your dreams Bayede, a man you will be proud of one day.

Yes we might be young but my heart deep down knows and I don’t want that to change” he says looking into my eyes.

“Doctor Phakathwayo” I say.

“Mrs Phakathwayo” he says leaning for a kiss.

I let him cup my breast and close my eyes as the

kiss deepens.

I think I am getting addicted to Nqubeko being inside me, I melt under his touch one look alone makes me submit to his every need.

I left him home because I needed to talk to Khethiwe privately and tell her that not only do I bear the scars of the daily beatings but other scars too.

I am here for the 3pm visit and I hope to find her better.

I make my way inside Khethiwe's ward and find her bed being the only one empty.

I almost lose balance when my mind starts racing.

I run out and bump into one of the nurses and ask where my sister is.

"Khethiwe is her name she was admitted a couple of days ago" I say.

She gives me a blank stare and for a moment I think I might be crazy.

“Where is my sister” I ask.

“Call down your sister was discharged late last night” she way smiling.

“What do you mean discharged I was with her yesterday morning and no one mentioned her getting discharged” I say.

“Like I said sisi your sister was discharged late last night and your uncle fetched her” she says.

“I don’t have an uncle” I say.

She shrugs her shoulders and gives me a faint smile.

“Sisi I don’t know what more you want me to say but like I said she’s not here” she says.

I run like a mad woman to the outside and make my way to the taxi’s.

I try calling Nqubeko but his phone goes to voicemail,I send him a message instead asking him to meet me at my father’s house.

The taxi drops me off at the corner with other commuters.

I take off my pum and run faster than I have done in my entire life.

By the time I get to the house my chest is dry and burning hot, I use the small gate to enter and slowly make my way inside the house, for the first time ever there's music playing loud in this house.

I try the door but it's locked, I walk to the back of the house and open the meter box taking out the hidden key.

I feel numb from all the running and overthinking, I am here but at the same time I am not it feels like I am in a daze of some sort.

I place the key in the keyhole pushing the other key.

I brace myself as I unlock the door and make my way inside, the music is louder now that I have opened the door.

“Baba ngiyacela uyangilimaza”

I listen carefully and hear Khethiwe's shaky voice come of out our fathers bedroom.

“Please stop” she begs.

I can hear her crying but what disturbs me the most are pleas that come from a broken place.

“Did you honestly think I would starve while you lay in that hospital bed huh” I hear my father disgustingly grunt or is it groan in pleasure.

The music is a bit loud but I know what’s going on.

I walk to the spare room and stand by the bed going down on my knees,I reach for the new axe and make my way to his bedroom.

“I am going to fetch that little sister of yours and I will make you watch while I have my way with her,she’s going to pay for telling lies on me for tarnishing my name in front of a man like Sizwe. I am going to give her to Mthembu once I am done with her that one needs to be broken” he says.

“She’s just a child” Khethiwe says.

Tears fill my eyes when she says that she doesn’t know what this man has done to me.

“Oh no she’s not trust me she’s old enough and she gives the best blow jobs” he says.

His statement takes me back to each and every night I had to go on knees and suck him to he came.

My shaky hands open his bedroom door and I wish I hadn't.

Khethiwe is on the bed with her head facing the door while her legs are spread wide open. Sabelo is onto of her in his vest and briefs hanging over his knees.

He is pumping in and out of her mercilessly while she silently cries not even fighting back.

“Yeye” she says with her lips quivering.

Sabelo pulls out of her with his hard manhood soaked in her blood.

It immediately loses momentum and goes soft.

I fail to hold myself and break down seeing my sister so broken all because of this man.

“Bayede it's not what it looks like” he says taking his eyes of me quickly wiping himself of Khethiwe's blood.

I raise the axe and swing at him, a hard blow hits him on the head and another one unexpectedly.

He staggers back and looks at me falling to his knees blood coming out of his open gash. He tries standing up but my anger gets the better of me, I raise the axe again and hit him on the head.

“You hurt myself sister, you hurt my sister and she never did anything to you” I say.

“Bayede” the words leave his mouth as I raise the axe again and again hacking him and bashing his head in.

“Why would you hurt my sister” A loud sob leaves my mouth thinking about the hurt and scars she’s had to carry over the years.

I sink to the floor still holding the bloody axe in my hands.

“Bayede” I turn my head and find Nqubeko standing by the door looking at me as if I am a monster.

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Bayede's keeper

#8

Nqubeko

I slowly walk back to my car and get my mother sleeping pills, she usually finds it hard to sleep hence the prescription.

I look to the sky and clench my jaws for the longest time my mother told me that existed but today I am finding it hard to believe.

I walk back to the house and lock the door behind me heading to Sabelo's bedroom, Khethiwe is now decent enough and just like me she is staring at a bloodied Bayede.

She looks like a monster her face, clothes and hands are covered in blood.

The scene is gruesome it looks sloppy yet precise

like that of a murder on a killing spree.

His head is barely recognizable his brains are oozing out his head.

“Yeye” she looks at me and tears still fall from her beautiful face.

She looks at her hands then me.

“What happened” I ask looking at Khethiwe.

“She walked in on our father raping me and she attacked him with that axe” Khethiwe says.

“Nqubeko it was an honest mistake, she wasn’t supposed to see that” she says wiping her tears.

I nod my head still looking at Bayede?

“How long has this man been sleeping with you” I ask.

I find myself looking at her waiting for an answer all though I can tell it’s been going on for long.

“Since our mother died” she says in a low tone. “So he moved on from Bayede to you” I say.

She quickly look into my eyes clearly shocked.

“What do you mean he moved on from Bayede to me” she asks.

“He used to go into her room and molest her” I say. Tears fill her eyes.

“I didn’t know” she says looking at Bayede.

“Stop” I say, when she tries going down to her knees to hold Bayede.

“You can’t touch her not untill she’s taken a bath” I say.

She gives me a confused look. “I will help her” I say.

I carefully move the axe from her grip and lift her up taking her to the bathroom. I help her out of her clothes and wipe my tears this is too much to take in.

I place the clothes in a black plastic bag and put her in the shower.

“Khethiwe” I call out.

She limps her way in and looks at me.

“Make sure you scrub everything that says Sabelo on her” she nods her head looking petrified.

I walk to the bedroom and lean against the door looking at Sabelo.

He deserved to die but not at Bayede’s hands.

It takes a while but they both come back with Bayede wrapped in a towel.

“Put her in something clean please” I say. “Nqubeko what are we going to do” she asks.

I look at Bayede and gulp down lumps of air, this one is difficult even I don’t know what to do.

She looks so out of it so much so she hasn’t said a word nor has she blinked.

I look at the sleeping tablets and sigh.

“I don’t know yet but can you give me give your allegex please” she nods her head making her way to her bedroom.

I walk to the kitchen and grab a glass and pour

Bayede some juice.

Khethiwe walks in and looks at me.

“We need to call the police surely they will understand, she’s a child” Khethiwe says.

“That’s not how the law works Khethiwe, Bayede is 18 and she will be tried like an adult.

Your father is a retired cop his friends won’t let this go, they will make an example of Bayede and whatever evidence you guys guys have will be buried” I say.

Before their mother’s death Sabelo was an upstanding police man people loved and respected him. When it was found out Bayede’s mother killed herself using her husband’s service pistol the man was dismissed at work and he later resigned.

A part of me still believes that he killed his wife and made it look like suicide hence the police force had to let him go.

“But he was rapping me Bayede was only protecting me” she says.

“When Bayede walked did he stop” I ask.

She look at me and nods her head.

“See you were no longer in danger, she could have ran out and asked for help or even call those useless police or me but she didn’t” I say.

“Nqubeko” she says.

“That’s what the prosecutor will think and ask” I say.

“What now” she asks.

“Give me those” I say pointing at her allegex.

I crush the sleeping tablets as well as the allegex and pour the powder in the juice and stir.

“Make sure she drinks all of it” I say. “Nqubeko why are we drugging her” she asks. “Leave it I will do it myself” I say.

I walk to Bayede’s bedroom and find her sitting on the floor shaking.

“Hey, drink this it will calm you down” I say.

She holds the glass with my help and gulps down

everything.

“I killed him” she says snapping out of her trance.

She looks at me and shakes her head panicking.

“I killed him Nqubeko,I killed my father” she says getting hysterical.

She gets on her feet and runs out.

I run after her and shout to Khethiwe.

“Lock the door” khethiwe moves to the door and blocks it.

“I am sorry I didn’t mean to kill him” Bayede says coming face to face with Khethiwe.

“I need to call the police I need to tell them I did it” she says looking at me.

“Khethiwe lock that door” I say.

She looks at me and hurriedly locks the door holding the key in her hand.

Bayede looks at me with a soft gaze and wipes her tears.

“I am sorry I didn’t mean to kill him” she says.

“We know you didn’t which is why can’t let you go the police” I say.

She looks at me then Khethiwe her eyes grow wide, she runs for the key but I get to her and lock her in my arms tightly wrapping around her.

“Khethiwe we talked about this get a rope” I shout.

Khethiwe scurries onto the spare bedroom and comes back with a rope.

“Nqubeko what are you doing” Bayede asks.

“Trying to save you from making the biggest mistake of your life” I say.

“No”she says trying to fight me but I hold her tight. “Tie her legs” I say.

“Nqubeko you are hurting me” she says. I block her out and look at Khethiwe.

“Khethiwe tie her feet together”I shout.

“I am sorry sisi” Khethiwe says looking at Bayede.

*Bayede melts in my arms and lets Khathiwe be. I
move her to a chair and tie her up.*

*“Nqubeko please don’t do this” she says tilting her head.
I move closer and get on my knees and wipe her tears.*

*“Ngiyakucela Phakathwayo don’t do this please” she begs.
“If you go to prison I will not survive Bayede, it will kill me”
I say.*

*Her lips tremble as her chest goes up and down. I
hate seeing her like this helpless and in pain.*

*“I want you to know that I love you so much more than
anything in this world, I am doing this because I love you
Bayede” she shakes her head and breaks down.*

*“No I don’t want you to do this for me, angifuni Nqubeko
angifuni” she says running out of breathe.*

I wipe her tears and smile

“If you turn yourself in they will bury you sthandwa sam that place will change you, it will break you and I won’t allow that to happen so please let me do this for you” I say.

“Please don’t break my heart Nqubeko please I am begging you” she says breathing heavily.

I hold my tears and look at Khethiwe nodding my head.

“Yeye you didn’t kill baba Nqubeko did” she says swallowing.

“Why are you lying” Bayede asks looking at us.

“I am the one who axed him to death he was raping you” she says.

Khethiwe shakes her head.

“Yeye that’s not true Nqubeko is one who killed baba you did nothing, you are just tired and saying things that don’t make sense” Khethiwe says forcing a smile.

Bayede looks at me at her eyes involuntarily closing.

“Nqubeko please don’t do this I will never forgive

myself if you do” she says closing her eyes.

I check her pulse and clench my jaws she’s still alive but her heartbeat is faint due to the medication.

I untie her and lift her up heading towards the door.

Khethiwe opens the door and locks behind me.

I get inside the car and drive home, I get to the house it’s empty Phethile is not back yet.

I place her inside my bedroom and get in next to her.

I hold her close and silently cry knowing this might be the last time I get to hold her in my arms.

“I hope you forgive me one day, I love you goodbye” I kiss her forehead and deeply sigh walking out.

I drive back to her house and find Khethiwe staring her father.

I grab the plastic bag with Beyede’s clothes and head outside to burn them, I wait till the fire dies down and the clothes are ashes. I grab a shove and pick up what’s left of everything and pour it down the

drain.

I walk back inside the house and grab the axe cleaning it off Bayede prints.

“Step away Khethiwe” I say.

She moves away still looking at me.

I raise my hand and axe Sabelo all over, his blood spattering all over me.

“Call the police” I say.

She nods her head reaching for her phone calling the police.

I look at Sabelo’s body and make peace with my chosen fate.

I make peace with the fact that Bayede will wake up to news of me being charged with murder.

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Bayede's keeper

#9

I can hear people talking but from a distance my eyes are heavy I can barely keep them open.

“Yeye” my sister’s voice pulls me back towards her. “Open your eyes” she says.

I fight the edge to sleep and slowly open my eyes. “That’s it keep your eyes open” she says.

“I am tired” I say.

My whole body is tired my arms feel sore every joint in me wants to rest.

I look around and notice I am in Nqubeko’s bedroom.

I shut my eyes and open them again the last thing I remember was bring tied to a chair.

“Nqubeko” I say.

“He’s not not here he was taken down to the police

station” Khethiwe says.

“No ..no I need to stop him” I say trying to get off but Khethiwe holds me down.

“Ma” Khethiwe calls.

The door opens and Nqubeko’s mother walks in. “I just told her Nqubeko was arrested” she says. “Ma I need to stop him” I say.

She moves closer and nods her head.

“We know sisi but you are not in the right state of mind to leave the house,you have been rumbling and mumbling in your sleep” she says.

“Nqubeko didn’t kill my father I killed him because...” I run out of words to say as my brain struggles to recollect everything that happened.

Everything is hazy,bites and pieces keep flashing but not in the right order.

“She’s having another one of her episodes” khethiwe says.

“This must be hard I didn’t know she was sick when

Sabelo told us that she gets like this we didn't believe him" Nqubeko's mother says.

I look at my sister tears filling my eyes.

"Why are you doing this Khethiwe why would lie on me like this" I ask.

"No one is lying sisi apparently you had a nasty fall and hit your head" Nqubeko's says.

"Ma they are lying I didn't fall I am not crazy or whatever they told you okay,I killed my father with an axe and he called out my name before he took his last breathe" I say.

She nods her head but the look she's giving me tell me she's doesn't believe a word I am saying.

I sound delusional crazy even but I am telling the truth.

"I hear you sisi but Nqubeko confessed to everything,he walked in on your father raping your sister and killed him" she says.

"We need you to get some rest okay here drink this" she says.

I look at Khethiwe as event of the day day piece themselves together.

“You drugged me” I say.

“Yeye no one drugged you, you didn’t kill baba because I was the one who came here to tell you about it last night before heading to the police station and you collapsed after hearing the news” she says.

“Please drink this it will calm you down” Nqubeko’s mother says.

She hands me a pill and smiles.

I take the pill and thow in my mouth gulping down the glass of water.

She walks out and leaves me with Khethiwe. “Why are you telling people that I am crazy” I ask. She breathes in and out heavily.

“For your own good, Nqubeko said with you like this nothing you say will hold to anyone.

I just need to keep you lucid enough to be aware of

what's happening" she says.

"I love you Bayede and I am going along with this because I love you so much,i endured so much from that man to keep you safe but I was too late because he had already done the damage to you. I am sorry that I couldn't protect you but now I am and I am sorry for doing this to you" she says kissing my forehead.

"Get some sleep" she says.

I close my eyes and drift away to sleep.

I wake up and stretch myself my body still hurts,I look around and I am still in Nqubeko's bedroom.

I get off the bed and walk towards the door opening it.

My legs feel wobbly I feel drained and good at the same time my head is the clouds.

I slowly make my way to the kitchen walking past everyone.

"It's okay I've got this" Khethiwe says.

She holds me and helps me down a chair.

“Don’t touch me” I say, but she holds me still and huffs.

“Let me get you a glass of water” she says. “No I don’t want anything please” I say.

“I don’t want to sleep anymore” I say shaking my head.

I never knew there would be a day I would be afraid of my sister drugging me.

“It’s just water Yeye I won’t poison you” she says.

“You let him go to prison when you know the truth” I say.

“I am going out there and I am going tell the police the truth, I won’t let Nqubeko pay for something he didn’t do.

I love him and I don’t want his future to be ruined because of me” I say.

“It’s starting again” Khethiwe says.

I turn and find Nqubeko’s parents standing behind us.

“We know you love Nqubeko and you want to protect him but this is murder we are talking about, even I can’t make this go away” his father says sounding pained.

They look at me like I am crazy, I nod my head and breath and in and out clearly nothing I say will convince them otherwise.

They already think I am crazy that I am saying all this because I am want take the fall for Nqubeko which is not true.

“Okay can I at least see him” I ask.

“He doesn’t want to see you” His mother says softly.

I look around and reach for the knife placing it over my wrist.

I am still dazed from the medication but I hold the knife steady.

“You might not be able to make this go away but you can have him see me” I say.

Phethile walks in and gasps looking at me. “Yeye put the knife down” she says.

“I just want to see him that’s all I am asking for, I will slit my wrist if you don’t take me to him” I say looking at my sister.

Tears fill her eyes.

“Fine” Khethiwe says.

“Drop the knife” she says.

I shake my head and press it down my wrist making a small incision.

“I will get the car” Nqubeko’s father says. I am dressed in sweatpants and a t-shirt.

“I am sorry” Khethiwe says still looking at me.

She says she’s sorry but the look of shock and pity in their eyes is what registers in my head.

I move the knife and only realize then that maybe just maybe I am unstable.

The drive to the police station is short and quiet I am riddled by so many thoughts. The car comes to a stand still and we all get out I follow his parents with

Khethiwe dragging her feet behind us.

I don't know how to feel about my sister and her going to so many lengths to keep me quiet.

Nqubeko's mother holds me close as police officer Mthembu approaches us.

"Phakathwayo" he says to Nqubeko's father.

I might be half out of it but there's some animosity between the two man.

"I called the station before coming here and I was told I could see my son" Nqubeko's father says.

"What's wrong with her" he asks looking at me.

"She hasn't been fine since she learned the news of her father's death" Mr Phakathwayo says.

Mthembu nods his head and takes us through to see Nqubeko.

I am let in as his parents wait outside.

He raises his head and looks at me standing up.

I don't mean to cry but my tears drop faster than lightning.

“Please don’t cry” he says taking his seat.

“Then don’t do this to yourself” I beg.

“I have to Bayede, to protect you” he says calmly. I

hate how call he is how willing he his.

“I don’t want you to protect me Nqubeko I want you to finish school, to attain your dream of being a good doctor” I say.

“You don’t get it Bayede if you go to prison for killing this man you will never taste freedom ever again, and if you do you won’t be the same ever again. So I would rather be the one behind bars I don’t want to wake up everyday knowing that you are in jail.

I don’t want to move on with my life knowing you aren’t next to me it would kill me sthandwa sam. I am not strong enough to wake up everyday and go on about my life, I am not strong enough to love another woman like I love you I am just not strong enough Bayede” he says having his jaws clenched.

“And having your life on standstill is okay, so you are strong enough to let life pass you by but not strong

enough to carry on and be what you promised yourself to be” I ask.

He smiles and looks at me.

“I am strong enough to face jail time and make it out alive, but I am not strong enough to live without you” he says.

“You won’t survive prison Bayede trust me you won’t” he says.

“Your father can get you a good lawyer” I say.

“I can tell them I killed him protecting Khethiwe that he used to molest me, that my sister was carrying his bastard child” I say.

“And the prospector will say there’s isn’t sufficient proof, Khethiwe lost the child and there’s isn’t proof that he was the father. You say you were protecting Khethiwe but you walked in that house and heard what was happening and fetched an axe. You walked into your father’s bedroom found him ontop of Khethiwe he stopped and he saw you instead of you running and calling for help you axed him to death.

You repeatedly axed your own father to death without an mercy you cold bloodily killed your father” he says.

“Because he was a bad man he was hurting my sister,he deserved to die and pay for what he did to me and my sister” I snap.

“Right there will be the damning statement that takes you down you won’t ever see the light” he says looking at me.

“You can’t fight this Bayede I am doing this and you can’t stop it,I am sorry that I had to drug you but trust me its for your good” he says.

“I don’t want you to wait for me,I want you to live your life and forget that this ever happened. Forget you ever raised that axe and killed him erase those horrible memories from your head” he says.

I look at him stand up and move to where I am. He goes down on his knee and wipes my tears.

“Don’t you ever forget that this man loves you more than anything in this world”he says kissing my lips.

He walks towards the door and knocks.

The door opens and a police officer walks in and takes him away.

My lips quiver as I shut my eyes losing him hurts more than anything.

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Bayede's Keeper

#10

Khethiwe took me home from the Phakathwayo's, the whole house of full of relatives from my father's side.

We don't know half of these people we last saw them on my mothers funeral since then we never saw them again.

My father would leave and visit his family without us not that we minded these people are just as evil as their son was.

My aunt has been making noise all morning.

"Bayede is the Queen of this house she just sits and does nothing" she says shouting from the top of her lungs.

*"Aunty Bayede is not okay this is hard on her"
Khethiwe says.*

“Its not like you two loved my brother so why is it hard for her huh or is because that boy is going to jail for the rest of his life” she asks.

“I know they were dating and I will make sure he pays for what he did to my brother” she says still shouting.

She’s a heavy drinker like her brother and her mouth spits venom.

The door opens and Khethiwe walks in, she settles on the bed and sighs.

“You need to eat something” she says.

I look at her and wonder what she’s thinking off. “I am sorry Yeye I really am” she says.

I nod my head and deeply sigh.

“He thinks I am strong but I am not” I say.

She shakes her head and places the tray aside moving closer.

“Can I” she asks.

I nod my head and let her hold me tight.

“You are stronger than you know” she says.

“Then why am I feeling this way, I feel empty I feel this huge guilt over my head for allowing an innocent person to take the fall for what I did” I say.

“Shh” she says looking at the door.

“I know it seems hard right now but trust me it will get better with time, one day you won’t feel like this because time heals everything” she says.

“I am sorry that he hurt you” I say.

“I am sorry too that I couldn’t protect you hard enough, I am sorry that you are carrying all this heavy burden on your shoulder. You should be looking forward to getting your results to going out there in the real world to being exposed to new and exciting opportunities and meet new people” she says looking alive.

Her eyes sparkle when she speaks about me going out there.

She never got to go to school our father refused to pay for her tuition.

Now I know why he never wanted to her leave his sight she had turned my sister into his wife.

“I love you and I am sorry for acting out,I didn’t mean it when I said I hate you” I say.

She smiles and blinks her tears away.

“That makes me feel so much better knowing you don’t hate me” she says giving me a hug.

“How is the funeral preparations going” I ask.

“Everything is going well” she says shrugging her shoulders.

“I hate aunt Martha” I say.

She laughs and it feels good hearing her laugh.

“I hate her too but we need her to bury her brother” she says.

“Is she going to leave after the funeral” I ask.

She deeply sighs and shrugs her shoulders yet again. “I don’t know” she says.

“We are going to be okay” she says.

I nod my head with my sister by my side I know I will be okay.

“Want me to sing for you” she asks. “Yes please” I say.

She starts singing and rocking me back and forth.

I wake up to Khethiwe not next to me and make my way go the kitchen, the house is full of strangers and I wish all this could be over and done with.

There’s are so many reasons I haven’t left my room partly because everything that happened keeps playing itself in my head.

My cousin walks in and clasp her hands laughing.

“Mama ivukile inkosazana boh” she says screaming from the top of her lungs.

My aunt walks in joining us and looks at me from head to toe.

“Tell me Bayede did you and that boy plan to kill my brother huh” she asks.

“It wasn’t enough that my brother fed and clothed you but still you had him killed so painfully, why?” She asks.

I hold my tongue Nqubeko warned me about my tongue.

“Did he beg him to stop huh? where were you when your boyfriend killed my brother” she asks.

“That’s enough” Khethiwe says walking in

“I was just about to call you” Aunty Martha says.

“How can I help you” Khethiwe asks.

“I need all my brother’s policies details and insurance scheme, we need to start claiming and pay for the funeral” she says .

“Everything is in the safe” Khethiwe says.

“Ma we should go through all his policies and submit the death certificate and start the claim process” Vumile says.

“I will fetch the death certificate tomorrow it’s with the undertakers” Khethiwe says looking at me.

“Okay” Aunty Martha says asking no further questions.

A knock comes through and Phethile walks in.

She greets and only Khethiwe and I greet back.

“Mxm” My aunt says walking away.

Vumile follows behind her mother.

“Don’t mind them” Khethiwe says.

Phethile looks at me and sighs.

“How are holding up” she asks looking at me. “I am okay how are you holding up” I ask.

She shrugs her shoulders.

“It feels like a dream Bayede like all this is just a bad dream and I will wake up from it” she says.

“I will make us something to eat” Khethiwe says. Phethile and I make our way to my bedroom.

I can’t even look her in the eye it’s that how hard having to keep this inside me is.

“My parents are trying but this is hard on them, we

never thought Nqubeko would ever kill anyone in his entire life” She says shaking her head.

She’s frustrated and going out of her mind understandably so.

“How can he be so reckless Bayede, how can he throw his whole future away like that and not even think about us” she asks.

“How can he leave you behind” she asks rubbing her eyes.

“We had plans Bayede huge plans and now everything is gone, nothing will ever be the same” she says.

I of all people know that nothing will ever be the same.

“I know trust me I know” I say.

“I am sorry I shouldn’t be going off at you like this but I am angry at him at the same time I am hurt that he’s gone” she says.

“I miss my brother Yeye I really miss him and Baba tried everything but you know how the law works”

she says tilting her head.

Tears fill my eyes I am the one whose supposed to be there awaiting trial instead of Nqubeko.

I pull her into a hug and hold my self.

The door opens and Khethiwe walks in with array of scones and coffee.

“Thank you” Phethile says.

My phone rings and an unknown number appears. I pick it up and excuse myself walking out.

“Hello” I say.

“Sthandwa sam” Nqubeko’s voice comes through. I hold my chest and bite my lip.

“Nqubeko” my voice comes out soft. “I miss you so much” he says.

I shut my eyes and clear my throat.

“I miss you too sthandwa sam so much” I say. “I just wanted to hear your voice” he says.

“Nqubeko I am not strong” I tell him.

He goes quiet for a while and sighs.

“You are” he says.

“How are feeling” he asks.

“Not good my heart is aching Nqubeko so bad” I say sniffing.

“One day you won’t feel this way” he says softly.

His words hit me hard but I don’t even want that one day, I want today with him and only him.

“I love you Beyede” he says ending the call.

I look at the screen and call the number again but it goes straight to voice mail.

I lean against the wall and put a hand over my mouth as my heart shatters at our reality.

With him away a part me dies and he doesn’t see that.

I get myself together and stand up straight when a few women walk in.

Aunty Martha wails as soon as the church women enter the house.

“Aw mtaka ma oh bambulele ubhuti” she says shouting for all to hear.

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This is for your participation

Bayede's keeper

#11

The past few weeks have been hard on all of us, Nqubeko's mother is falling apart her son is behind bars and there's nothing much they can do about it.

Mthembu is pressing the matter and making things worse, he frequents the house to see Aunt Martha and makes a chore to leave a statement that Nqubeko will rot in jail for what he did.

I am not coping although I am trying but I can not coping.

This thing is eating away at me, I can't even visit Nqubeko's parents seeing his mother that broken hurts me.

I thought I could stomach the thought of him being away since he made it his mission to tell me what and how I am supposed to feel.

But the truth is every time I close my eyes I picture myself in his arms, some how this has been keeping me sane loving him in my thoughts has kept me going so far.

Ever since he appeared in front of the judge he hasn't borrowed anyone's phone to call and I am worried about him.

I walk out of my bedroom and find Khethiwe in the kitchen making some food, things haven't been okay since Aunty Martha told us that she isn't going anywhere.

The funeral was big which was expected everything was grand and polished, men stood tall and spoke about what a great man he was I wanted to puke throughout the whole thing due to the lies.

I wanted to stand up and shout to everyone who wished to listen what kind of a sick monster this man was, but like the good little that I am sat throughout the whole thing and swallowed my words.

The woman doesn't want to leave and she's been spending her brother's money like there's no

tomorrow, she got a huge pay out and is planning on buying a car well that's what she preaches about all day long since the funeral.

"Morning sisi" she says raising her head.

I have been so consumed with my own pain and confusion that I haven't been paying attention to her.

"Morning sisi" I say.

She smiles and goes back to making her food.

"Sisi I was thinking that maybe you should see a therapist" I suggest.

She stops cutting her tomato and sighs looking up.

"Why would I want to see a shrink" she asks defensively.

"Because you need to heal from all the things that man used to do" I say.

"I guess you too need a shrink because he molested you, he used to beat you up into a pulp. Remember when he beat you up you peed on yourself, how he broke your ribs just because you accidentally broke his beer" she says.

“How old were you when this happened” she asks. “13” I say.

“See you also need healing because you are worse than me Bayede, you bottle things up and allow them to eat away at you” she says.

“I didn’t mean to upset you” I say. “I am not upset” she says.

I nod and walk away heading outside.

I walk to the back of the house and take the watering can from the toll shed.

Khethiwe hasn’t been tending to her flowers, they still look beautiful as ever but need a little bit of water.

“Yeye” she calls out.

I dust myself up and walk to where she is.

“How about I do your hair then maybe we can go out tonight just the two of us” she says.

“I would love that” I say.

She walks back to the house and comes back with a

chair and sits me down.

For the first in my entire life I sit still through the pulling and separating of hair.

“I am impressed not even a tiny wincy cry from you” she says.

I let out a laugh and yelp.

“So much for complimenting you” she says going quiet.

Her silence speaks volumes so much so fear creeps in.

“Are you okay” I ask.

“I am okay I was just thinking what I would do if you were to leave me” she says.

“I would never leave you” I say assuring her.

“I mean you are leaving for school soon remember” she says.

“I don’t want to go to school” I say.

She stops and plugs the comb on my hair coming to stand in front of me.

“Why” she asks.

“I am not coping sisi,I have nightmares of that night over and over gain.

I see him and then there’s Nqubeko I just don’t know how to go on about my life when his is on lock down” I say.

“I wish I could wave a magic wand and make all this go away but I can’t” she says.

“But I want you to go to school Bayede and get your education” she says.

“I don’t want to go to school,I want to stay here with you” I say.

“And if I were to go away what then” she asks giving me a faint smile.

“I would go with” I say.

She stands up and lightly pats my thighs.

“Enough about the sad stuff let’s finish this up so we can go out”

I look at myself in the mirror and smile sometimes feeling and looking good numbs the pain a bit.

You see the outer beauty and temporary forget about the inner pain.

Khethiwe looks beautiful she's even wearing makeup and heels something I haven't seen in a while.

I take a few pictures of her laughing and smiling then a video of us making our way to the taxi's.

"I am taking you to that place you like Rocco mama's" she says.

"I meant what I said Bayede I want you to get your education and be better than I am" she says.

"Okay" I say burying the topic.

We get to the place and apart from their daunting menu everything goes well.

An few minutes into our meal Bandile walks in with his hand hanging over another woman's waist.

He whispers something in her ear and the lady giggles.

She's nothing like my sister or maybe this sudden urge of jealous is what's talking, I take a good look at her and conclude she's definitely not like my sister.

Bandile sees us just after taking his sit and quickly stands up walking over to us.

"Hi" he says looking at Khethiwe.

My sister flashes him her beautiful smile and bats her eyelids.

"Bandile" she says.

"I hope I am not disturbing I just came to say Hi" he says nervously laughing.

"Yeye" he says looking at me.

I stare at him till Khethiwe clears her throat. "Bhuti Bandile" I say.

"It's good to see you, I mean you look amazing" he says.

Yeah yeah whatever my inner self snorts.

"You are beautiful Mahlongo" he says genuinely smiling.

“Thank you” she says blushing.

It feels like I am watching some x-rated movie.

“Your date is waiting” I say.

“Oh Mpumi is just a colleague” he says.

“Mhmm” I say.

“I really miss you Mahlongo everyday” he says softly.

His eyes don’t leave hers and his voice carries so much agony it reminds me of myself.

“I miss you too Sibalukhulu” she says.

He clears his throat and slightly nods his head.

“I should go back to my table” he says walking away.

I want to ask what all that was about the look on her face says it,so much hasn’t been said between these two yet at the ask time so much has been said and there’s no going back to what they once were.

“He still loves you” I say breaking the silence.

*“One day we will find our way to each other” she says
says looking at her meal.*

“Let’s order some desert” she says.

I steal glances at Bandile who’s looking this way and sigh.

We spend the rest of the day together bonding and talking about everything that happened.

The walk home is quiet talking has exhausted both of us. we make our way inside the high walls and find the security door locked.

Khethiwe knocks a few times to no avail.

The tv is on meaning there are people inside the house.

“Aunt” she calls out.

“Yey phindelani la ni vele khona” she shouts from the inside.

“Aunty where do you expect us to go to” khethiwe asks.

“I don’t care isn’t it you two are grown women who go out and come back late, then go back to where

you come from you are not sleeping in this house” she says.

“Aunty please” Khethiwe says knocking again.

“Yey! stop making noise like I said go back to where you come from. I will only open this door in the morning now leave us alone my daughter and I want to sleep” she says.

I look at the time and it’s 7:30 in the evening.

If we stay like this we will freeze to death but then if we leave we won’t hear the end of it.

“Come we will sleep in the tool shed” I say.

I watch her subtly wipe her tears careful that I don’t see her.

She slowly stands up from the stoop and follows me.

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Bayede's keeper

#12

Before Nqubeko went to prison I was really looking forward to the new year, but it came and passed and all I could do was sit alone with my thoughts and wonder what his was like.

Thinking about him is hard he's getting sentenced next month, the thought of his life being at the hands of man makes me want to scream.

I got my results and everything went as expected I passed well bagging four distinctions.

If it was any other period of my life I would be happy and excited about the possibility of new things but my heart can't seem to pull at those happy strings.

As for the house the environment keeps getting worse, Aunt Martha is making our lives a living hell especially after learning that the house belongs to her.

My father decided to take the house and give it to his evil sister.

So many things aren't making sense I know he abused us but I didn't know he hated us this much.

I look at Khethiwe going through the cupboards.

We have been living this life for a while now food goes missing around the house, food my sister buys with her money.

"I can't take this anymore Bayede this woman is vile" she says.

"We should move out" I say. She nods her head and sighs.

"I need to try harder nothing seem to be working out, and the fact that I don't have any work experience makes it hard for people to hire me" she says.

"Don't worry something will come up" I say. She smiles and shrugs.

"For the first time in a long while I really miss mama, she was taken from us way too soon" she says

deeply sighing.

“I miss her too” I say.

Vumile walks in and looks at us.

“Hau Khethiwe I thought you make something to eat” she says.

“With what huh you act as if you and your mother don’t hide food in your bedroom and still steal the one my sister buys” I say.

Her eyes widen and she rest a hand on her waist.

“Even if you look at me like that we all know the truth you and your mother are nothing but leeches” I say.

“Bayede calm down” Khethiwe says.

“I will make sure my mother hears about this when she comes home” Vumile says.

“Yeah whatever tell her I don’t care” I say. “Ngizokushaya Bayede” she says.

“Go ahead try me” I say.

She charges towards me and Khethiwe gets in the

middle.

“Not in front of me” she says.

Vumile nods her head and walks away. “Ngizonibonisa aningazi nina” she says.

Khethiwe walks to her bedroom and comes back with a R50 note in hand.

“Go buy us some bread and eggs” she says.

I know this is her last cent and the thought of having eggs makes want to puke, I don’t know why but the last time I bought eggs they all seemed to be rotten.

“I am sorry for being a burden” I say softly. She quickly shakes her head.

“Bayede you are not a burden you are my little sister and I love you” she says.

“No go get us something to eat before your aunt comes back” she says.

I nod my head and walk out.

The walk to the shop is draining with every step that

I take I remember Nqubeko accompanying me.

His silly joke and how he barely smiled with anyone but with me his eyes would come alive.

I get to the shop and buy some white bread, achar and eggs.

Walking back home I am met with a few questionable stares.

I almost feel naked when men start turning with me and eyeing me.

I finally reach the high walls and sigh making my way inside.

The house is awfully quiet but I can hear some sniffles coming from Khethiwe's bedroom.

I walk to her bedroom and knock a couple of times before she lets me in.

“Hey” I say.

She wipes her tears and tries her hardest not to let the tears fall.

“Sisi what's wrong” I ask.

“It’s nothing Yeye I just feel overwhelmed” she says. Her phone keeps going off ping after ping.

“Let me see” I say.

She reaches for the phone before I can. “Khethiwe” I say.

“Just leave me alone Bayede” she shouts.

“Okay I will go to the kitchen and make you something to eat” I say.

“I don’t want the damn food I just want you to leave me alone” she says.

“Okay” I say walking out.

I close the door behind me and walk back to the kitchen to find Vumile beating some eggs.

“You must be kidding me” I say.

“This is my mother’s house and I am hungry” she says.

“I will show you hungry” I say reaching for the bowl. I throw the eggs in the sink and open the tap.

“Sies ukhohlakele Bayede just like that slut sister of yours who seduced my uncle and later on cried rape” she says.

Something inside of me snaps as what she just said slowly repeats itself.

“What” I ask.

“You heard me” she says.

I reach for her braids and pull them hard. “Bayede you are hurting me” she says.

She bends a little while screaming her lungs out.

“You don’t talk about my sister with that fat mouth of yours” I say using my fists to hit her.

“Uyangibula uyangibulala” she screams.

I pull her up and hit her head against the kitchen counter dragging her to the sink.

I open the tap and put the head inside.

“Speak about my sister like that ever again and I will kill you” I say letting go.

“Bayede” Khethiwe says looking at me.

I look at her and click my tongue walking out to the back of the house.

I walk to the garden and start watering her flowers she’s neglecting them with each day that passes.

I sit up straight and dust myself the sun has gone down and it’s now chilly.

I make way inside the house and find my aunt raising her black label.

“Ya Bayede the Goliath of this house” she says. I fold my arms and look at her.

She reaches inside her bra and takes out her phone.

She presses it a couple of times and puts it on the table.

“This is why you beat up my child” she asks.

I reach for the phone and look at the screen, a video of Khethiwe and Sabelo is playing.

He is deep inside her and she is moaning pleasurable sounds.

His face is not showing but I know it's him.

“She seduced my brother opened her legs for him and then cried rape, I have been quiet for too long Bayede you and your sister are sluts just like your mother who gave it to every man she saw” she says.

I swallow hard her words hit me hard.

I place the phone down anyone can tell Khethiwe is out of it, she's not herself even her eyes are closed and her body is just reacting despite the circumstances.

I look at a bruised smiling Vumile so this is what she meant earlier on, I should have drowned her fat face when I had the chance.

“I am housing sluts it's a good thing my husband died a long time ago or you would be opening your thick legs for him like your sister did to your father, sies you kids are disgusting” she says.

I stand there as she throws insult after insult.

“Siphi leseqa mgwaqo sakini Khethiwe” she shouts.

“Delilah weh” she says.

It’s takes a while but Khethiwe walks out of her bedroom and joins us.

She’s too broken and ashamed to even raise her head.

I move closer and pull her into my arms.

“Let it all out sisi” I whisper.

She fails to hold herself and bolts into a loud cry holding me tight.

“So that’s why your mother killed herself because you took your father away from her huh,she was no longer the wife because were now his wife” she says taking sips of her beer.

She looks at us and shakes her head.

“Since you decided to hurt Vumile I guess all the house chores will done by you” she says looking at me.

A knock comes through and Khethiwe pulls away

when the door opens.

*Bandile walks and taking off his beanie. “Evening”
he says.*

I greet back as my aunt looks at him from head to toe.

“Khethiwe may I have a word with you” Bandile requests.

*“Don’t keep your client waiting Khethiwe” Aunt Martha
says laughing.*

*I walk to Khethiwe’s bedroom a pack her an over night
bag walking out.*

*She needs a night away from this house she needs Bandile
now more than ever,I give a hug and head back inside the
house.*

*“Hayike I guess you are going to cook seeing that Vumile
can’t do anything or you want to go prostitute yourself like
your sister” she says.*

*I head to the kitchen and finally breathe blinking tears
away.*

*“Imagine mama sleeping with an old man your father even sies,I bet Bayede has once slept with him too”
Vumile says enough for me hear.*

They both starting laughing and clapping.

“Orphans are trouble that’s why I wanted to kick them out”Aunt Martha says.

I shut my eyes Khethiwe was right I need to go to school and maybe she can crash in at Bandile’s till we both okay.

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Bayede's keeper

#13

Today is a bit cloudy it's six in the morning but it's still dark and misty outside.

I stretch myself and get out of bed slipping into my slippers.

I open the window and sigh suddenly I feel gloomy too just like this weather.

I make my way to the kitchen and start cleaning the house, it's not that big but with four people living in it the work is too much.

Aunt Martha walks in and places a plastic bag on the kitchen counter.

"Today I feel like having some English breakfast" she says.

"And there's some washing that needs to be done" she says still looking at me.

She turns on her heels but quickly turns back.

“And make sure to call that useless sister of yours to come home” she says.

I nod my head and carry on with my cleaning.

I finish up everything and start making their breakfast.

She went all out from the most expensive bacon to the most expensive cheese.

Everything is from woolies,I hear some giggles and I watch as she walks Mthembu out.

I shake my head this woman has no shame.

Mthembu grabs her flat arse from her pink gown and whispers something in her ear.

She giggles like a school girl and reaches inside her breast.

She pulls out a few notes and hands them to Mthembu who then kisses her.

This man is known to be a womanizer who targets widows,and woman who have money in general.

He sucks them dry till they are left with nothing and leaves them once he's done spending their money.

"I hate that you are not staying for breakfast" she says.

"It's okay Bayede and Vumile will eat the food" he says.

She rolls her eyes and for an old person to do this is just childish.

"Will I see you tonight" she asks.

"Of course" he says eyeing me.

I swallow hard and tighten my hold over the knife. She walks past me making her way to the bedroom.

I look at my phone still nothing from Khethiwe, I try calling her but her phone goes straight to voice mail.

I get the door when a knock comes through and find Phethile standing on our doorstep.

She pulls me into her arms embracing me.

"Why didn't you call, I waited all night to hear from you or Khethiwe" she says huffing.

I pull away and conclude she knows about the trending video.

“I didn’t have the strength to do anything last night” I admit.

She nods her head and deeply sighs.

“Everything is falling apart” she says sounding defeated.

“Where did we go wrong” she asks. I shrug my shoulders.

“I don’t know Phethile” I say. She looks at her phone then me.

“I should go I just wanted to see you and make sure you are okay” she says.

“Let me walk you to the gate” I say.

I walk inside the house and turn off the stove.

I walk Phethile to the gate and walk back to the house to carry on my duties.

The day went by with nothing from Khethiwe,I took a nap then woke to take a long bath and headed out to Bandile's place.

I find the gate open but the door locked and it seems like there's no one inside.

I reach for my phone and call Bandile,he picks up after a few rings just as I am about to hang up.

"Yeye" he says.

"Hi, Bhuti Bandile I am at your house looking for Khethiwe but there's no one in the house" I say.

"What do you mean there's no one in the house" he asks.

"The gate was unlocked but the door is locked,did she perhaps leave" I ask.

"No she didn't I left her sleeping" he says.

"Don't move okay I am on my way" he says.

He ends the call and I patiently wait for him to arrive,it takes a few hours for him to get home but he does looking worried as I am.

*“I am sorry I took long there was traffic along the way”
he says.*

*He takes out his key and opens the door walking inside
first.*

*I follow behind and wait in the lounge as he makes his
way to the bedroom.*

“Khethiwe” he calls out coming out of his bedroom.

*He slowly makes his way to the bathroom and opens the
door.*

“No..no ..Khethiwe” he screams.

*I get on my feet and run towards him but he blocks the
way.*

“Let me go” I shout.

“You can’t see this Yeye” he says still holding me.

*I hit him on the chest and fight my way in till he gives up
and lets me through.*

*I stop on my tracks and fall to my knees when I see her
body submerged under water.*

I crawl towards the bathtub and pull her out.

She's cold and pale her eyes are tightly shut and her wrist are slit.

I feel my breathe leave my lungs as I look at her.

"You can't do this to me you can't" I say trying to give her mouth to mouth.

I place my hands on her chest and try to revive her.

"Khethiwe vula amehlo" I say..

She looks so much at peace my heart feels ripped out of my chest.

"Khethiwe" Bandile says letting out a many cry. I pull her close to my chest and shake her.

"Sisi please wake you can't leave me, you can't leave me alone please wake up" I look at her pale face and let out a sob.

"No" a burning lump forms on my throat as I find it difficult to swallow.

I feel Bandile's arms wrap around me as he slowly peels me off Khethiwe.

"Call an ambulance" I say.

He looks at me and wipes his tears.

“Yeye she’s gone” He says.

I shake my head and pull her close to me. “She’s not please call an ambulance” I say.

He reaches for his phone in his pocket and calls for the police and medics.

I cling on to my sister and let out bitter sobs.

Bandile walks out leaving me with Khethiwe I hold her close and close my eyes.

“Yeye” I look up and find Nqubeko’s mother looking at me.

“It’s okay sisi let her go” she says.

I shake my head and hold her even tighter.

I don’t know when she got here but there are two man standing next to her.

“We need to take the body” one of the man says. My aunt walks in and looks at me.

“Hawu kodwa jesu” she says throwing herself on the

ground.

Bandile gets to her side and helps her up.

I look at one of the man and clasp my hands together.

“She’s my sister and she would never leave me alone please help her” I say.

He nods his head and takes a bag going down on his knee.

“Please move your hand for me” I move my hand and watch as he checks her breathing and pulse.

He tries reviving her a few minutes and sighs looking at me.

“I am sorry but she’s gone” he says.

“No ...no ...no you are wrong” I say.

“I am truly sorry” he says standing up.

I feel my heart tear into two as they cover up her body and take her out.

Nqubeko’s mother holds me into her arms while I weep.

The pain shoots straight to the heart,I struggle to breathe and feel the urge to throw up.

“Someone bring her some water” Nqubeko’s mother shouts.

Bandile walks in with a glass of water and helps me drink.

“Why” I ask coiling up holding on to Nqubeko’s mother.

My sister is gone and I have no one else she left me all alone and it hurts.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#14

I feel numb right now detached from everything that is happening around me.

It hasn't fully kicked in yet that she is gone and I am left all alone.

The New Year hasn't fully kick started yet, but I have already lost so much.

Everything is happening so quickly I can't seem to find my feet.

Aunt Martha suggested the funeral be held soon as possible, to her Khethiwe is a disgrace for killing herself.

Although the funeral was rushed it was a beautiful service and send off.

Nqubeko's family as well as Bandile contributed more than enough.

People had so many beautiful things to say about her, but then again we all know people say good things about everyone once they die.

Not forgetting how they emphasized on the fact that she left her sister behind, well that's what her orbutuary stated as if I needed reminding.

All this happens in a space of a week before today I kept think maybe if I shut my eyes tight enough and fall asleep I would wake up and see her.

I kept thinking maybe she would be next to me and all this would be a bad dream.

I want nothing more than for all this to be a dream, for someone to tell me that my sister is alive that all this was just a bad prank.

I look around her bedroom and sigh her things are already missing, her shoes and clothes are already in Vumile's bedroom.

I can't even bring myself to say anything about them using my sisters clothes.

These people killed her and now they are doing as

they please, I blame Martha and her daughter for my sister's death had they not leaked that horrible video none of this would have happened.

The door opens and Aunt Martha walks in she looks at me and settles on the bed.

“Bayede” she says.

I look at her and deeply sigh.

“I am so sorry about your sister” she says. I

know she doesn't mean a word.

“Thank you” I say.

“I found this on the mail box Vumile opened it” she says.

I take the letter and read it I got the full scholarship and space to study.

“Congratulations sisi you are going to university and you will become something great unlike your sister” she says standing up heading for the door.

I grab my phone and look at the many emails in my inbox.

A lot of them pop up but one catches my eye I need to go sign an agreement soon.

I look at the letter Khethiwe wrote me before she took her life.

I don't have the strength to read it so I place it under the mattress and walk out.

The house is slowly clearing everyone is leaving expect for those who are busy drinking out on the lawn.

It's called "after tears" I shake my head and walk to the back of the house, I stand before Khethiwe's garden her flowers are death they have wilted.

A part of me tells they me they were prepared for this and I wasn't.

"Hey" Bandile says.

"I am sorry I shouldn't have left her all alone" he says.

He's been blaming himself since this whole thing happened.

"It's not your fault all the signs were there I was just too blind to see them" I say.

“I promised your sister that I would be there for you no matter what happens,if you ever need anything call me” he says.

“Thank you” I say.

He takes out a few notes from his pocket and gives them to me.

“I mean it Bayede if you ever need anything call me” he says.

I nod my head and smile him and my sister would been good together.

“I should go home” he says.

He walks away and I sit there looking at the garden.

“Bayede” Aunt Martha calls out.

I walk back inside the house and find her waiting for me.

“Here go buy me two beers next door” she says.

Nqubeko’s mother walks in before I can take the money and looks at her.

“Martha the child just buried her sister” she says.

“Hold it right there Zandile this is my brother’s daughter and I can send her to the shop if and when I want to” Aunt Martha says.

“Why don’t you send Vumile” Nqubeko’s mother asks.

“Because she’s busy” Aunt Martha says.

“Well Bayede is not going anywhere” Nqubeko’s mother says.

“Hayi singabuye sithini angithi uyintandane” she says going back to her guests.

I look at Nqubeko’s mother and fling in her arms. “Khala sisi” she says.

I let it all out and cling on to her for dear life. “It’s not fair Ma, it’s really not fair” I say.

She pulls away and wipes my tears.

“You are going to be okay trust me” she says.

“I need you to be strong okay you will get through this” she says.

“Have you read the letter” she asks.

“No,I am afraid to know what’s in there” I say. “Where is it” she asks.

“It’s in Khathiwe’s bedroom” I say.

“Come” she says.

She holds my hand and leads the way to Khethiwe’s bedroom.

“Woza sisi I don’t want you to do this alone” she says reaching for the letter.

She pats the space next to her,I move closer and settle next to her this is it I get to hear his thoughts.

She opens the letter and holds my hand.

“My beautiful Bayede I am sorry for leaving you,I know it’s hard to understand but I couldn’t hold on any longer.

I thought I was strong enough but that video was the last nail to my coffin. I wish I could hold you now and make you understand why I have to go. I wish I could

*hold you now and say goodbye just to fill that empty void
you are feeling right now but I can't.*

*It's the thoughts they finally got to me and I couldn't stop
them. I love you so much more than you will ever know
but I am tired so tired that if I held on I would have
destroyed even you in the process.*

*I don't wish for you to ever experience what I am
feeling, I don't ever wish you to feel this void and darkness
I am feeling.*

*You might not believe it now but I want you to that I love
and I am sorry for leaving you when I promised I
wouldn't.*

*I am sorry for forcing you to be strong when you
shouldn't, that man broke us and I failed you as a big sister.*

*I failed to protect you and I am sorry Yeye, I hope this
doesn't change you my beautiful Yeye.*

Till we meet again I love you Hail"

She folds the letter and looks at me.

“She was in pain sisi and she couldn’t deal with the pain” she says holding me tight.

I can’t stop the tears the my heart aches even more now that I have heard her letter.

“You need to forgive her and let her go” she says. “I don’t know how too” I say honestly.

“I also don’t know how to let my son go but I am trying because that’s life” she says holding me.

I fall asleep in her arms and hold her tight as the pain sinks in.

I wake up to an empty room and yawn getting up,I move to the window and close the curtains putting on the lights.

I remember falling asleep in Zandile’s arms poor woman must have left.

The house is noisy clearly we still have drunks around,I make my way to the kitchen but stop on my

tracks when I hear giggles.

I eavesdrop and hold my breathe.

“Come on Martha” Mthembu says. She giggles even louder.

“What if you taste her and forget about me” she asks.

“Oh come on your brother used to make me taste the other sister” he says proudly.

I feel sick to my stomach hearing that.

“He was saving this one for himself but now that he’s gone I believe I can have her just once, I promise one night with her and I will be yours whenever you need me” he says.

She goes silent for a while and sighs.

“Let me think about it she just lost her sister I am sure she’s still hurting” Martha says.

“Good and if you like I will pay for her” he says.

“How about you convince me first” she says.

“Right here” Mthembu asks hesitantly.

“I don’t see a problem” Martha says.

I swallow hard and go back to Khethiwe bedroom locking it.

So this man too raped my sister and this woman who happens to be my very own aunt wants to sell me.

I take Khethiwe’s framed picture and play a song on my phone.

‘Sobonana kweli linye ilizwe

Kuyabanda ekhaya awukho

Ndingxamele ubona uncumo lwakho

Sihleli siphela sisqhazolo Okwangoku

Lala, lala ngoxolo x3

Okwangoku

Lala, lala ngoxolo x3

Uyabona manje akukho xolo

Bendicimba ndinamandla

Andiykholelwa Inyembezi,

azipheli Akusafani la ma

ungekho

Ubungathe awuyonto, ngaphandle kwami Awuyonto

Kwaphela ubumboza

Andinanto

Joba umkile

Okwangoku

Lala, lala ngoxolo x3

Okwangoku

Lala, lala ngoxolo x3

You used to tell me I would go far, ey You

used to tell me I would be a star, ey

I know you living better where you are, ey

You don't need no ice, you don't need no fancy car,

ey

Ngelinye ilanga sizo bonana...,

.....

Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#15

I haven't been feeling good lately but today I feel worse than any other days.

I have been puking all night and I am running a fever,if I didn't know better I would say my heart decided to tell my whole body to shut down.

Everything hurts not to mention how tired I am and finding it difficult to wake up.

I even missed Nqubeko's sentencing and maybe that's a good thing,I don't think I would have been able to hold myself had I seen him being taken away.

He got 18 years in prison for manslaughter with the possibility of parole.

Thinking about it makes me sick,whenever I think about him a lump forms in my throat.

I haven't heard anything from Phethile or her mother

which is understandable they have lost their son and I am the cause.

They might not know this but my heart knows and I am finding it difficult to even look them in the eye.

Tomorrow I have to go sign my scholarship agreement or I will lose it.

I haven't been okay after hearing what my aunt plans to do with me.

After everything that I have been through she plans to do the same thing her brother did to my sister and that was selling her.

I take refuge in knowing that Mthembu got shot the night he left the house and has been in the hospital every since.

I get up and hurriedly make my way to the bathroom to puke.

I stay on my knees catching my breathe and wipe my mouth after I am done.

I get on my feet and look at myself in the mirror something is definitely wrong and I need to go to the

clinic.

I decide to take a quick cold shower and make way out bumping into Vumile.

She looks at me from head to toe.

“Morning Vumile” I say.

“I thought you were still asleep” she says.

“Well I am not” I say.

She nods her head and folds her arms. “So where are you going” she asks.

“To the clinic or I might just die in the house” I say.

“And just like your sister we will bury you” and move on” she says walking past me.

I sigh and walk back to my bedroom today I am going to see Nqubeko.

I have so much to tell him and as selfish as it sounds I miss him everyday.

I change into a dress and a pair of sneakers with a denim jacket.

I grab my purse and Id Phethile said they don't allow bags or phones inside the prison.

I walk out and lock the door heading to Aunt Martha's bedroom.

I knock and make my way inside, she's sitting down facing the mirror doing her make up.

"Morning Aunty" I say.

"Morning Bayede how are you feeling today" she asks.

"I am still the same but I am headed to the clinic" I lie. She shoots me a look and sighs.

"Okay take all the time you need" she says.

I force a smile and close the door walking out.

I decide against going past Phethile's house and head straight to the taxis.

I get to the taxi rank and ask for the taxi's that go past the prison precent.

Although the windows are open but the drive is stuffy, I open the window just enough for the cool air

to get in.

If I could I would stick my head out but then again the taxi driver would tell me where to get off.

I raise my head at the fully fenced present and gulp down some air, this place is highly guarded and by the look of things that fence is deadly.

The taxi comes to a halt and we all get out and make our way inside the prison.

We go through two gates before being fully inside the hall.

I have never been here before but there are already people seated.

“All those you haven’t put their names down please come this way” one officer says.

I am the first one to follow behind the prison officer.

I provide my Id number, home address and Nqubeko’s name as well his Surname.

“First time visiting” the man asks.

“Yes” I say nodding my head.

“I can tell, you are nervous but don’t worry as you can see prison is harmless” he says handing me back my Id and smiles.

“You can go take your seat, when another officer calls out the name of the person you are here to see just stand up and go through that door” he says.

I nod my head and walk back to the bench.

I look up at the clock and sigh seems like there’s already a group of visitors inside.

The door opens and a male warder makes his way to us holding a list.

He calls out a few names and last calls out Nqubeko’s.

I slowly stand up and follow the others the door shuts as we are ushered into what seems like a changing room.

I step into one and get frisked all over. “Please take off your shoes” the warden says.

I take off my shoes and sock while she picks them up and checks for anything inside.

“You’re clear please go through” she says.

I put on my shoes and step out following other visitors.

It’s a long hall I look to my side and see other visitors seated, apparently these prisoners are still waiting for the outcome of their trial.

I look ahead and see some of the visitors standing in a line.

“Oh this is the tuck shop you can buy them anything something they will eat, preferably some pie, juice and cigarettes they use that to trade inside” the lady in front of me says.

I take out a few notes and buy a pack of cigarettes, pie and juice.

The shop is ran by a prisoner as well as a guard. “This way” one of the guards says.

I turn and take a few steps leading me to the light. There are benches and chairs all around.

My eyes run around and I finally spot Nqubeko in

one of the old benches.

I walk over to him and watch as he gives me a blank look.

“Hi” I say.

“Bayede” the words leaving his mouth are cold.

I take a seat seeing how relaxed he is and is not intending giving me a hug.

I feel emotional seeing him.

I place the things I bought in-front of him and wipe my tears.

“I bought you these” I say.

“Thank you but you shouldn’t have” he say.

He looks a few shades light and the orange jumpsuit hugs his upper body just the right way.

His collar is raised up and his hair is shaved he looks good and sexy.

“What are you doing here Bayede” he asks. “Nqubeko I came to see you,I miss you” I say.

“Didn’t Phethile tell you that I don’t want you coming here” he asks.

Everything about him is cold.

“Nqubeko please” I say.

My voice is low and shaky.

“Khethiwe killed herself” I say.

“I know Ma told me and I am sorry” he says without a hint of emotion in him.

“Nqubeko what is wrong with you” I ask.

“I told you Bayede to live your life and stay away from this place,I told you to move on and forget about me yini ongayizwanga lapho” He asks.

I swallow my saliva and look around then him. “Hamba Bayede” he says.

My eyes widen this is not how I pictured my visit. “Our time is not up” I say.

Tears fill my eyes when he gives me a look. “Bayede” he says softly.

I bite my lower lips and smile.

“I am signing my scholarship agreement tomorrow and after that I am going to school” I tell him.

“Good focus on school and forget about me” he says. I try reaching for his hand but he retracts its. “Nqubeko” I say.

“Like I said go” he says standing up.

“Sboshwa” one of the wardens shouts. “It’s okay fader we are done here” he says.

“Sukuma uhambe Bayede” he says.

I get on my feet feeling like the biggest fool in the entire world and walk away.

Getting home seems to be a struggle I have this banging headache I couldn’t even go past the clinic.

I find Aunt Martha finishing up with with the pots.

I greet her and grab a glass and pour myself some water.

“How was your clinic appointment what did the nurses say” she asks.

“I couldn’t get in it was too full and I am hungry so decided to come back,I will go there some other day” I say.

“I was about to plate for Vumile and myself should I dish up for you” she asks.

“Yes please” I say.

I walk to my bedroom to take off my shoes and come back to find my food on the kitchen counter.

I grab a spoon and start eating one thing they haven’t been denying me is food.

I am grateful for that I look at the glass of juice next to me then the tap.

A part of me is craving both water and juice but I gulp down the juice first and walk over to the sink.

I open the tap and pour some water but not before spotting some white substance.

I take another look but the glass is now filled with some water,I pick the glass up and look underneath

but see nothing.

“What are you looking for” Aunt Martha’s voice startles me I almost drop the glass.

“I could have sworn I saw something in the glass” I say.

“Maybe I didn’t shake the bottle well” she says. “Maybe” I say.

I leave the glass there and cover my food.

“I will just eat when I wake up” I say heading to my room.

I throw myself on the bed and think back to my prison visit.

I wake up sweating and painting with my back burning, I try getting up but some pain shoots through my abdomen area.

I let out a scream and breathe biting my lip.

“Aunty” I shout.

“Vumile” I shout even louder.

I take off my jacket and scream when the burning pain shoots through again.

I fall off the bed and place my hand on back then belly.

“Aunty” I scream.

The door opens and the lights go on.

“Aunty call an ambulance” I say.

Vimile rushes to my aid but her mother stops her. “Myeke”

Aunt Martha says.

“Ma she’s bleeding what if she dies” Vumile asks.

“She won’t die the pills are just cleaning her that’s all” she says.

“Mama what did you do” Vumile asks looking horrid.

“Ngifuna ife lenja oyithwele I want that boy to know how it feels to lose someone you care about, he killed my brother right now I am taking his child” she says folding her arms.

“Mama” Vumile says.

“Yey shut up wena” Aunt Martha says.

“Aunt please don’t this to me” I say seeing the blood between my thighs.

Vumile moves closer but her grabs her her hair.

“Uphashiswa yini wena Vumile huh” she asks pushing her out.

She walk out and closes the door locking it.

I crawl over to the door and hit it so hard screaming my lungs out.

“Vumile please help me” I say.

My screams are later on countered b the loud music that plays.

I lay on the floor and shut my eyes clenching my jaws but no matter how hard I try, the pain ripples through me teasing me up till I let out soft cries.

“I am so sorry Nqubeko I didn’t know” I say.

The pain ripples through me as my heart beat spikes up the roof.

Bayede keeper

#16

I wake up to some humming and open my eyes. I find Vumile next to me with a bucket and cloth.

I look at the blood and swallow hard this is really happening.

I look at the tears coming out of Vumile's eyes and frown.

I cried and begged all night asking them to help me but they didn't.

I have just lost my baby in the most cruelest way all alone.

One will say it was just a clot and nothing more that it hadn't formed.

But it was my baby and she didn't have the right to do what she did.

“I am sorry” Vumile says.

If I could I would laugh but I am too shocked to do anything.

“So you let me scream all night and then come here to clean as if nothing happened” I ask.

She raises her eyes and looks at me.

“At least you didn’t get the hanger” she says chuckling.

It’s sad chuckle, she wipes her tears and smiles.

“I was 16 when it happened my first abortion, she called a friend of hers and I was held down while the woman pushed a hanger inside me and took out my baby” she says.

This comes as a shock considering how close she is to her mother.

“I was only sixteen Bayede” she says cleaning up the blood.

I want to scream at her but I am at a loss of words.

“Hearing you scream so loud and cry broke my heart

it took me back to when I cried and begged them to stopped and they didn't" she says nodding her head.

"Last night I found myself praying for forgiveness for what I did to Khethiwe,I didn't mean for her to kill herself I didn't mean to hurt her like that" she says.

"But you did Vumile and you killed her" I say.

She swallows hard and rubs her eyes.

"And I will never forgive myself for it and I hope that one day you will find it in your heart to forgive me" she says.

"My sister was a good person Vumile,never in her life has she ever hurt anyone but people hurt her.

I will never forgive you for hurting my sister for driving her to edge in the most painful way ever" I say.

Her lips tremble and she nods her head. "I understand" she says.

"Come let me help you up" she says.

Yesterday I felt something pulling and tearing at my lining it felt like needles were poking me.

Thinking about it brings tears to my eyes.

“My mother hated your mother and her hatred is running down on you.

You have a good head on your shoulder Bayede, I don't know how you will survive this loss because mine made me a bitter and angry person” she says.

“Run and never look back” she says helping me sit on the stool but the discomfort is there.

“I will run you a bath after cleaning this up” she says.

I place my one hand over my belly and wipe my tears with the other.

“Did he know” she asks. I

give her a blank stare.

“The guy that impregnated you did he know” she asks

I shake my head.

“I guess you will have to carry this one alone” she says.

I watch her clean the floor and for some reason it

seems like she's fighting her own demons with each scrub.

The door opens and Aunt Martha walks in and looks at Vumile and folds her arms.

“Ngilambe mina Vumile,awusukume lapho uyongenzela ukudla uyeke ukungicasula”she says.

“Ma not today please” Vumile says. Her mother huffs and walks out. “What happened to you” I ask.

“Life” she says going back to her scrubbing.

She cleans the floor and helps to the bathroom,I feel weak and I am running a fever.

“After some painkillers you will be fine” she says.

She leaves me in the shower and takes my bloodied clothes with her.

I open the tap and shut my eyes,you would think I am all out of tears but this was probably the heaviest blow I don't know what to do with myself.

Telling people won't make a difference the baby is

gone.

I slowly sink down to the cold tile and cry.

*I think about my sister, the most precious soul I have met
and heave sigh this is the darkness she spoke about.*

*I wash myself off the blood but images of myself soaked in
it keep flashing before my eyes.*

I can't get the stench of blood from my nostrils.

*I give up on trying and turn off the water and step out of
the shower.*

*I slowly make my way to my bedroom and find a dress
laid on the bed*

*I don't know what my screams did to Vumile but they
definitely did something.*

She walks in with a glass of water and pills in hand.

*I look at the glass and shake my head once bitten, twice
shy.*

She takes one gulp of the water and sticks out her

tongue out after.

“It’s not spiked” she says.

I take the glass and pills drinking them.

“Shout if you need me” she says.

I nod and watch as she goes out and shuts the door.

I settle on the bed and reach for my phone calling Bandile, He picks up on the first ring to my relief.

“Yeye” He says softly.

“Bhuti Bandile” I say holding my sniff.

“What’s wrong Bayede are you crying” he asks.

“I need a place to stay please come and get me” I say.

He deeply sighs and I wait for his response. “I will be there in a few hours okay” he says.

“Thank you” I end the call and look around around deeply sighing.

This room holds so many bad memories as beautiful as it, it’s walls can cry a river and still tell a tale.

“Vumile” I shout.

The door opens and she walks in shutting the door behind her.

“Please help me pack I would do it myself but I am disoriented” I say.

She starts packing my clothes and documents.

I ask her to put in Khethiwe and My mother’s pictures and she does.

“All done” she says.

“Thank you” I say.

Her tears fill her eyes as she looks at me.

“If you ever find it in your heart to forgive me for what I did to you and your sister please call me, because after last night I know I will never know peace in my life until you set me free” she says handing me a piece of paper with her numbers on it.

I tried sleeping but I couldn’t my screams were the only thing I could hear ringing in my ear. I hear some

commotion and then a loud bang as my door burst open.

Aunt Martha runs in following Bandile, he looks at me and frowns.

“What did you do to her” he asks.

“Can’t you see she needs the hospital” he asks. “We did nothing to her” Aunt Martha says.

She is drunk her speech and stumbling says it all.

Vumile grabs my bag while Bandile helps me up. “You are burning up” he says.

“Thank you for coming” I say.

“Yah akahambe vele vezandlebe ndini” she blurts out.

“You are nothing but a slut just like your dead mother and sister, you will never amount to anything Bayede mark my words” she shouts loud enough for everyone to hear,

“Wena Vumile judas Skariot ndini” she shouts. We are now outside with her following behind us

making noise.

I turn and look at her.

“You are not God and no word you say shall have a hold over me or my life, one day you will look back to this time and wish you had been a better aunt.

You will wish you hadn't played a role in my sister's death.

You will look back and think about my baby the one you killed, you will die a slow painful death alone with no one to help you.

You will scream and beg like I did and no one will come to your aid, you will pray to God like I did and he shall turn his back on you because of my tears.

*I am not God but I pray to him and he will answer for me”
I say.*

“Mxm jezabel” she says.

“Good luck” Vumile says.

I nod my head and get in the car I am grateful to Bandile for coming to my rescue.

*I look outside the window as the car drives off this is it
me leaving the high walls.*

.....

Bayede's keeper

#17

Nqubeko Phakathwayo

Its five in the morning and already everyone is up and making their beds.

The cell is a bit crowded well it makes sense since it a communal one.

There's no room to complain here especially when you are new, but one of the wardens said I could apply for a single cell if I choose to study.

I haven't been here long but I am already having it hard, first night was the worst I got beaten and they took my watch.

Didn't care much about the beating I am a man I can take it.

The first few weeks were hard still is but I am getting

a hang of things.

As usual we line up and head to the showers, I am not used to this kind of lifestyle having to shower three times a week.

I am not used to showering with other men too but here I am doing it.

We finish up and head back to our cell.

“Awu ringi vele” one of the inmates asks.

I pay no attention to him and look at Malankane lighting his cigarette.

“Leave cheese boy alone he doesn’t speak to anyone but me” Malankane says.

He’s the tallest one here taller than me even.

“So you and cheese boy are friends vele” the inmate asks.

Malankane laughs and looks at me.

“Awazi wena phela I am the one who hushed cheese boy to sleep on his first night here” he says proudly.

“Watch it Malankane” I say.

“See I got him to talk just not with you” Malankane says laughing.

He goes back to channeling his radio to the right station.

I never asked his story but he’s been there for me since I got here.

He got here a week before me but acts like he’s been here longer than that.

Unlike him I keep to myself and I like it that way.

He grabs the broom and starts sweeping joining other inmates as they clean the cell.

My father warned me that prison is brutal and I guess I had to it with my own eyes to believe it.

He cried and I told him I was going to be okay but I hadn’t experienced prison and now that I have, I know he was telling the truth prison is hard especially when you don’t have friends.

“line up” the warden says

We all get on our feet as the cell doors open wide.

I have learned that by this time the cells need to be clean, beds need to be made and we need to have been showered. It's seven o'clock in the morning known as wake up call the first roll call for the day.

The wardens check the cell and lead us to dining hall.

We are served porridge and juice the food is horrible but like I said one makes do with what they have.

I look at Malankane and sigh he doesn't like the porridge and always has difficulties during breakfast.

I look to my side and catch sight of the old man looking at every table as if inspecting something.

He never eats with other prisoners I heard he has his own cell that has everything he needs.

We finish eating and head back to our cells.

I have two books that I am reading I got them from the prison library.

If I am not outside taking the much needed stroll I am exercising.

Malankane stands up from his thin mattress and gets the kettle,I know he want to fill his stomach with some tea just to be full.

His mother doesn't always put down tucks shop money for him since she's unemployed.

I toss him my key to the locker and smile.

“Two packets of noodles Malakane” I say.

He whistles and dances.

“I made the right choice befriending you cheese boy” he says.

“Just bring back my key” I say.

“Nakanjani,cava cheese boy tha tanga” he says.

*I nod my head and go back to reading the book *Lie On Your Wounds* by Robert Sobukwe.*

A few minutes later Malankane settles next to me and places the key next to my bed.

“What is it” I ask,there's always something with Malankane it just never ends.

He clears his throat and rubs his hands together.

“I was think we could go outside other inmates have already gone” he says.

I might have forgotten to mention that he might be tall but hates conflicts and avoids walking alone should trouble start.

I close the book and place it under my pillow. “Let’s go” I say leading the way.

Half way into our walk the shuffling and huffing of men catches my attention.

“Cheese no don’t do it just stay out of people’s business” Malankane says looking around.

His warning falls on deaf ear as I make my way to the where the noise comes from.

I find the old man and another prisoner chocking him to death.

I tackle the other prisoner and get on top of him throwing punch after punch.

The old man catches his breathe and looks at me as I get up.

“Finish him” the man says.

My eyes widen I have never killed a man before.

“Finish him off or he comes after you and kills you” the old man says.

I look at the man and given the chance he will retaliate and come after me.

My life will be made a living hell Malankane was right I should have just gone about my way.

“Twist his neck” he commands.

I think about my first night in here and think twice, I can't experience that ever again even the treatment at clinic was just inferior.

I hold his head and swallow hard as I snap his neck.

“Good now walk away boy” the man says.

I slowly stand up and walk away bumping into Malankane.

He grabs me by my arm leading us back to our cell.

The days goes with me panicking the prison was under shut down for a few hours.

Word is that a fight erupted on the other wing and an inmate died.

“Phakathwayo” I open my eyes and the prison governor himself is standing outside our cell.

All inmates are on their feet.

I quickly get on my mine and slightly bow my head my head.

“I need a word with you” he says.

My heart races I could be charged with another murder or taken to the hole.

I have heard stories about the hole men fall apart because of the hole.

I step outside my cell and look at this man. “Walk with him boy” he says.

We start walk to the old man’s cell and I know for sure I will never see the light ever again.

He stands by the door and cautions me to walk in.

This man lives on his own world he is at his own comfort.

It's true what they said about him he lives like a king yet he's in jail.

"Thank you Governor" the old man says.

He's about my father's age looks familiar too,I think I have seen and read about him in the papers somewhere.

"This young boy saved my life Mngomezulu" the man says chuckling.

I find it odd that a man would laugh after someone tried to kill him.

"Phakathwayo right" I nod my head.

He gives me a disapproving look, one that intimidates me.

I am already shaking looking at this man and being in his presence.

"Yes sir" I say.

He smiles and nods his head.

“He’s a fast leaner Mngomezulu, did you see that” he asks.

The Governor chuckles and I somehow feel left out of their joke.

“Now tell me what is it that want as a thank you” he asks.

“A double cell and protection” I say, I am doing this for me and Malankane.

He looks at the Governor who nods his head.

“Consider it done Mbomvu” The Governor says walking away.

“Please take a seat” he says still standing.

“I will wait for you to take your seat Skhulu” I say. He smile and takes his seat.

“I like you Phakathwayo and I owe you my life” he says. I stand rooted and listen to him.

“Tell me what brings you to this place” he asks.

“I killed a man” I say.

“No you didn’t so try again” he says.

I clench my jaws and clear my throat.

“I am here for someone I care about deeply” I say.

I think about the coldness I showed towards Bayede on her visit and feel this guilt and pain.

“Love or care” he asks. “Love”

I say.

He nods his head and hands me my watch.

“I had someone bring it back for you” he says. I almost fall apart but hold myself.

“Thanks you so much Skhulu” I say.

He shakes his head.

“Call me Somahhashi” he says.

7 years later.....

Bayede's keeper

#18

The door to my office opens and Tanya walks in smiling, she has a cup of something with her and a file.

Morning boss lady” she says.

I will never get used to the term Bossy lady. “Morning Tiana” I say.

“Before you say anything this is not coffee just chamomile tea and the financial reports you asked for” she says.

“Thank you Tiana” I say.

I take sip of the chamomile tea and smile.

Tanya and I had a rough start she would bring me coffee every morning although I told her I don't drink it.

“Before I forget your brother called and asked that you mustn’t forget your lunch date” she says.

“Thank you Tiana” I say.

“I guess that’s my que to leave then” she says.

I look at the time and sigh Bandile and always wanting to meet up.

I reach for the pills in my drawer and pop one in the mouth then down it with some tea.

I leave everything as it is and head out walking past Tiana flirting with Mike.

If only these two would fuck and just get it over and down with.

Everyone in the office knows they want to do it they are just too chicken to do it,

“Bossy lady” she says catching sight of me. “I am off to lunch Tiana” I shout.

“I will call if you are needed” she says.

I turn and raise my index finger shaking my head.

*“Please don’t, lunch with my brother is always depressing”
I say.*

*I walk out of the Spector Inc building heading to my car.
I drive off to the restaurant we planned to meet at while
playing some music to calm me down.*

“It was the bad old days

*Where the warriors came out to play Where
the visitors outstay their welcome Aspiration
filled with fear and doubt Who's turn to
make the move*

Who's left it all to you

*I'm not ideal in situation of confrontation I
don't prefer to raise my voice*

*I'm still trapped by the cages of my lips And
you hold the key*

So allow me to be free

It's been 24 years

24 years

It's been 24 years

24 years

24 years

And you know now

*That the willow tree knows the sea You
withstand*

Don't you try to get under 'cause you can't set me free

*And if you know what I see I
would like to meet*

But don't worry about your soul

Don't worry about your soul

I was

I was just...

I was just a wallflower,

I reach the restaurant and park my car in the lot and breathe before grabbing my purse and making my way out of the car.

I walk in and spot Bandile already seated, he stands up when he sees me and smiles.

“Yeye” he says giving me hug.

“Bhuti” I say.

We both take it our seat and order some refreshments.

A moment of silence lingers between the two of us till he clears his throat.

“You look good” he says. “I

feel good” I say.

I haven’t felt good in a long time but now I do and it feels good.

“Have you been taking your medication, how’s work” he asks.

I nod my head and that assures him, I see him

breathe out dude he as joking his breathe.

*“Work is good and yes I have been taking my medication”
I say.*

“Good” he says with a wide smile of his face.

*“So tell me when are you coming to the house Kenya
misses you and Thando has been asking about you” he
says.*

I knew he would use the wife and child card on me.

*After what happened to me I realized there was nothing
keeping me home anymore, Bandile got a transfer to
come work in Gauteng and he took me with him.*

*He hasn't deserted me and has kept to his promises till
this day.*

*He met a beautiful lady by the name of Thando, few
months down the line they got married and they now
have a beautiful daughter Kenya.*

*“I miss Kenya too and I will come fetch her over the
weekend” I say.*

He deeply sighs and looks at me.

“I am not pushing you I just don’t want you to spend time all alone when you have a family” he says.

“I am not alone” I say.

He nods his head and huffs giving it another try.

“I was thinking maybe we can go down home and visit” he says.

I shout him a look, he of all people knows that there’s nothing left for us there.

The Phakathwayo long left that so there’s nothing left to go back to.

“There’s nothing left for us there” I say.

“I meant to visit their graves Bayede” he says softly. “I don’t want to visit their graves” I say.

“Yeye it’s been seven years and you haven’t spoken about what happened” he says.

“Because there’s nothing to talk about I have been happy here with you, Thando and Kenya” I say.

“You can’t run away from your past forever Bayede and you can’t rely on those pills forever” he says.

“See this is why I never want to meet with you alone because you always bring up the past, it called the past for a reason Bhuti so please let the past be” I say.

“I am sorry I didn’t mean to upset you” he says. I reach for his hand across the table and smile.

“I am okay really these past years have been good to us” I say.

He nods his head but I can read him he’s not fully convinced that I am okay.

“Is everything okay at home do you need anything” I ask.

He smiles shaking his head.

“No but I would like you to come to dinner” he says.

I nod my head and thank God for the waitress that brings us our food.

Lunch with Bandile always leaves me conflicted.

As much as I want to spend time with them a part of me can’t.

They are not my family and I don't want to get too close.

We eat and laugh in between him telling about Kenya and how she loves her meat more than anything.

I didn't drive straight to office instead had a lot on my mind so decided to follow Bandile back to his house and spend time with Kenya.

She's such a beautiful and bubbly child just like her mother.

I had to leave though and get back to the office to finish up on my financial reports, there was a glitch that needed fixing before the board members sit down.

I look at the time and it's past seven already.

The door opens and a bouquet of flowers follows peeks.

A smile grows on my face when Liam walks in.

"Life of an accountant" he says moving the flower and showing his handsome face.

“If it isn’t mr Spector himself” I say.

*He walks in and closes the door behind him. “Hail”
he says smiling.*

“Mr Spector” I say.

“May I interest you with an offer to dine with me” he asks.

“Is that you asking me out” I ask.

*He chuckles and gives me a side smile. “If
the lady pleases” he says.*

I pack my things and walk over to him.

“These are for you” he says.

I smile hooking my arm over his.

“No clients today” I ask.

He shakes his head.

“No just you and me” he says leading us out.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#19

Liam pours me a glass of sparkling water and shakes his head smiling.

“I still can't believe that you don't drink” he says.

“In all the seven years that I have known you, I have never seen you drink or smelled any alcohol on you” he says proudly.

“I remember how you tried to get me drunk but I stood my ground” I say.

We both laugh thinking back to the memory.

“You were nineteen and I had just taken you on your first ever international trip” he says looking at me.

“You were broken and and fragile I had never been that afraid in my life” he says giving me a sad smile.

“I was just a girl Liam but now I am grown” I say.

He chuckles and reaches for my hand.

He squeezes my hand tight and smiles again that sad smile.

The last time he gave me a smile like this he was going way for a month.

“I need to tell you something” he says. I nod my head looking into his eyes.

“I met someone” he says.

I almost choke on my water but mask it off as me clearing my throat.

“Oh” I say.

Suddenly my throat feels clogged up.

“It’s not that deep Bayede but she’s great and I want to give it a try” he says.

I nod my head still looking at him. “Say something” he says.

“If you’re happy then I am happy for you” I say clearing my throat.

There has last been chemistry on a deeper level between the two of us but we never explored it.

“You are beautiful Bayede, the most thing I have ever seen don’t you ever forget that” he says.

“Thank you Liam” I say.

He calls for the waiter and orders my favorite then his.

I don’t know how to feel about Liam dating we have known each other since I was in varsity.

I met him at a very dark time in my life even Bandile couldn’t pull me out from that place.

He’s older than me but he’s the handsome man, well built and is fit.

When I lost my scholarship Bandile paid for my first year, he struggled but he tried and pulled through.

Then I met Liam at a gentlemen’s club I had been looking for a job as a dancer.

The club turned out to be his and from that day onwards we become inseparable.

He paid for my fees and hired me at Spector, I am who I am today because of this man right here and not once has he ever wanted anything in return.

His brushes his hand over mine bringing me back from my thoughts.

“Are you okay should we go home” he asks.

He’s always been soft spoken and treats me like something that’s about to break.

“No, lets eat then we can go home” I say.

He nods his head and goes back to his meal.

“On second thoughts I think I should go to Zamile’s place” I say.

“Very well” he says.

We finished out meal and he drove me to Zamile’s place, we have standing out for a few minutes now just talking.

“That’s it then” he says.

“Thank you for the ride” I say.

*“I will have your car delivered first thing in the morning”
he says.*

*He then pulls me into his arm and give me a hug kissing
my forehead.*

I inhale his scent and rest my hands on his strong chest.

“Call me” he says.

“I will” I say.

He pulls away and leans close leaning for a kiss.

*I respond and close my eyes as he parts my lips and holds
me firm.*

*I have never tasted his lips before and they are soft just
like his blue gaze.*

“Goodbye Hail” he says.

*That’s my stage name I still get on stage once in a while
for exclusive clients only.*

He pulls away and gets in the car driving off.

*I make my way inside Zamilé’s place and knock on the
door.*

She opens up in her lingerie and smiles when she sees me.

“Practice” she says moving out of the way and closes the door behind her.

“Liam is seeing someone” I say walking past.

“Oh shit what” she says.

I settle on the couch and take off my shoes.

“What do you mean Liam is seeing someone” she asks.

“He said there’s someone and that it’s new but he wants to give it a try” I say.

She comes back with a tub of icecream and two spoons.

“But I thought you two would eventually you know become a thing” she says.

“I guess not” I say.

She gives me a disapproving look.

“Zamile no” I say.

“Maybe its time you move on Bayede,seven years is very long time waiting for someone” she says.

“You don’t understand Zamile” I say.

She shakes her head and chuckles.

“I understand very well Bayede,you are letting go of a man who loves you a man who would do anything for you for a ghost” she says.

“I didn’t realize I felt like this untill he uttered those words” I say.

“I am sorry” she says.

I look at the tub of ice cream and suddenly I am not feeling it,I just want to go home and sleep.

I realize I don’t have my car with me since Liam drove me from work to the restaurant.

A knock comes through and Zamile’s fixes herself getting the door.

“Boss” she says.

Liam walks in and looks at me giving me that mischievous smiles of his.

“I realized you don’t have your car” he says. I look at Zamile who shrugs her shoulders.

“Thank you for the chat I will call you when I get home” I say picking up my shoes.

“Anytime” she says.

Liam and I walk to the car deep in thoughts for the first time ever we have nothing to say to each other.

He opens the door for me and walks over to his side and gets in driving off.

“Liam” I say.

“Yes” he says softly.

“Are you sure you are going to be happy” I ask.

I don’t know where that comes from but it’s out there.

“I don’t know, she’s not you but I am willing to try” he says.

It’s a bitter pill to swallow but I nod nonetheless.

“I hope she makes you happy” I say.

“Why is it that we never dated” I ask finding the courage to do so.

“You once said that if we ever cross that line we can never go back,I couldn’t understand it first but now I do” he says.

The car comes into a halt and it’s only now I realize we are home.

He kills the engine and deeply sighs.

“You are still waiting Bayede and I can’t wait with you” he says.

“Will I lose you” I ask biting my lip.

“Me,never” he says chuckling.

“If that’s the case then I am okay” I say.

We both step out of the car and share a hug. “Call me” he says.

I laugh out loud because he said the same thing after dropping me at Zamile’s place.

“I will” I say.

I make my way inside my place and throw my shoes on the floor, I don't even bother putting on the lights and just head straight to my bedroom.

I pop two pills and undress getting under the covers.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#20

It's been a week now and I have been seeing less and less of Liam.

He's really going all out with this relationship and although a part of me is sad another part is happy that finally he has someone to love him wholeheartedly.

I look at myself in the mirror and smile. maybe Zamile is right, I have been waiting for a ghost of a man.

I don't know when or if I will ever see him again or if he's alive wherever he is.

I have loved Nqubeko all my life but I am afraid I might just have to let him go.

I have been faithful to him all these years because a part of me has been holding to us finding our way to each other.

But the truth is I have been fooling myself waiting for this man. I have been letting life pass me by because of that man.

I slip into my black dress and red bottom black heels and grab my bag heading out.

I drive to the club and make my way inside through the back.

Zamile waves her hand signaling me to come over to her changing room.

She opens the door and leads me in. “She’s thirteen or twelve” Zamile says.

I look at the young girl wearing the shortest leather skirt I have ever seen and a matching crop top.

“I told her we don’t hire young kids and chased her out but minutes later Josh brought her in because she was found walking with a strange man to his car” Zamile says deeply sighing.

Little miss thing looks at me with her arms folded her and her chewing gum.

I look at her and shake my head one painful thrust

and that attitude would be wiped off her face.

“You are the mother here so please deal with her” Zamile says.

“What’s your name” I ask.

She pops the gum and rolls her eyes.

“Sihle” she says.

I place my bag on the couch and settle next to her. “Why are you here” I ask.

She looks at me and says nothing.

“If you don’t talk to me then I have no choice but to call the police” I say standing up.

“I need a job” she says looking at me.

“You are too young to be looking for a job shouldn’t you be in school” I ask.

“Mama says I am too dumb for school and that I should look for a job” she says softly.

I look around Zamile’s room and spot a magazine and hand it to her.

“Find a page and it read it out loud” I say.

She reads a passage beautifully without any stuttering or stumbling on her words.

I look at the fading beating marks on her thighs and sigh.

“Does your mother hit you” I ask.

She pulls down her short skirt and shakes her head.

“Only when I ask to go to school and make a mistake” she says.

I nod my head thinking back to when my father used to beat me.

“Does your father know this” I ask.

“Baba works hard and mama always shouts at him so I don’t want to stress him out” she says.

The door opens and Zamile walks in looking ready for the night.

“Sorry to disturb but your show is about to start as in right now” she says.

“Please stand in for me I need to deal with this first”

I say.

“Bayede this is not like any other exclusive” she says.

“What do you mean” I ask.

“The guy booked to see the great Hail” she says laughing.

I look at Sihle and see myself in her, scared and lost not knowing what to do or who to turn to.

“Well tell him the great Hail is busy and if he wants to see a show then he will wait” I say.

“Okay” Zamile says walking out.

“Let’s get you home” I say.

She quickly shakes her head as tears fill her eyes.

“Sisi please uzongishaya umama if I come back with a stranger” she says.

My heart breaks hearing her plead like this.

“I won’t tell her anything I will just drop you home” I say.

The drive to her home is inquisitive she lights up with each answer that I give her.

She directs me to her house and deeply sighs when I park outside the gate.

I give her my number and smile looking at her beautiful face.

“If you ever need anything call me okay” She nods taking the piece of paper.

A male figure walks up to the car and knocks on the window.

Sihle walks out and hugs him, she hurries inside the house while the man looks at me.

His eyes are kind and soft, he politely greets me and smiles.

“I don’t know where you got her but thank you for bringing her home, excuse the way she’s dressed she normally doesn’t dress like this” he says.

“My name is Vusi, Sihle’s father” he says.

“Please get in” I say.

He looks at me shocked but gets in still.

“I am just a stranger and I don’t mean to stick my head in your business, but I met your daughter at a gentlemen’s club looking for a job.

You baby daughter is dressed like that because she was looking for a job, I don’t know many things but I know she should be in school studying instead of looking for a job.

I have a feeling the person she said is her mother is her stepmother, you might not believe this but your daughter is being abused and denied the chance to be in school.

It’s up to you what you do with this information but I suggest you talk to her make her trust you and open up to you before it’s too late” I clear my throat from breaking into a cry.

“Your child needs you trust me I know” I say.

“I have had this nagging feeling that she’s not herself anymore and I pushed it to the back of my head, I didn’t mean to fail her” he says.

“You haven’t failed her yet” I say.

He breathes heavily and clears his throat. “Thank you” he says stepping out of the car.

I nod my head and watch as he walks inside the house and drives off.

He’s still here

A text from Zamile comes through.

I look for my anxiety pills but can’t seem to find them, I almost lose control of the car and hold the steering wheel steadily.

Martha’s words ring in my head she called me an illegitimate child, at first I didn’t think much of it but over the years I haven’t been able to stop myself from thinking about it.

What if there’s some truth in her statement what if that man wasn’t my father.

I park outside the club and make my way inside

heading to my changing room.

I change into a revealing lingerie and wear my mask.

Being Hail even just for a day frees me somehow.

In that moment I am not Bayede the Orphan, I am just the lady in the mask.

I walk to the show room and find my client already seated with a glass of scotch in his hand.

The energy in room is different I have dined with powerful man before but this one commands the room as well as my attention without even saying a word or turning to look at me.

He looks well built under that suit it's holding him tight in all the right places.

He's alone meaning he's moneyed I only do exclusive dances for powerful man and I guess he's one powerful man.

I stand in the middle of the small stage and turn on some soft music.

He turns and looks at me standing up from where is he seated.

I admire his physique and height so much to my arousal.

The thing about these exclusive dances is that my clients too wear masks for their own protection as well as mine.

He settles on the one couch facing me his legs spread apart.

I start moving slowly channeling my inner Marilyn Monroe.

He clears his throat and takes off his suit jacket rolling up his shirt sleeves.

I watch as he does this slowly and goes back to resting his whole body on the couch.

I miss a step but he swiftly gets on his feet and catches me before I fall off the stage.

“Easy now” he says softly.

His bold voice causes tremors I melt in his strong hold

“Are you okay” he asks.

I nod my head and stand up straight.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#21

I pour myself another glass of orange juice and smile.

It's a weekend and Liam asked to take me out today.

He knows I am usually alone since I don't go to Bandile's place often and just enjoy being alone in my own space.

I look at the sky and smile again somehow the day seems to be just today, the sky is clear blue with a lot of happy white clouds.

I look at Liam's beautiful eyes looking at me and smile.

"Okay now I am getting worried" he says.

"Well don't be" I tell him.

"I have never seen you this happy" he says.

“Promise not to be angry” I say.

He tilts his head and gives me a blank look.

Liam can be scary at times but I know how to work him.

“Liam promise me to be angry” I say smiling.

“Those dimples won’t work” he says.

I get on my feet and move around to his seat and hug him from behind.

I kiss his cheek and hold him tight. “Still not working” I ask.

“Bayede what did you do” he asks.

“Remember that client we had that other night, he’s coming back today and I am excited to see him” I say.

His body tense up and I kiss his cheek one more time and rest my head on his back.

“There something about him I cannot explains as much as I don’t mix business with pleasure but with him I want to cross that line” I say.

He clears his throat.

“I still don’t understand why you dance for these men when you have everything, when I can give you everything” he says in a stern voice.

“You know I love dancing it makes me feel in control of everything that happens in that room” I say.

He’s never liked me dancing for other man not one bit.

“And beside my dancing doesn’t affect my day job, I still kick ass as an accountant you of all people know that” I say he sighs and holds my hand bringing me to sit on his lap.

“Tell me about this guy” he says holding my hand.

“Well that’s the thing, I don’t know much about him and I want to know more” I say.

A smile grows on his lips.

“So you are not mad” I ask.

“All I ever want is to see you happy Bayede” he says. I give him a hug and close my eyes holding him

tighter.

“I love you and thank you for everything” I say. “I love you too Bayede” he says.

I fix his shirt while he holds my waist.

“You are handsome mr Spector” I say.

He chuckles and shakes his head.

“Go back to your seat before people call the moral police on us” he says.

I get back to my seat and look at him.

“So what happens if this guy is married” he asks.

“Then I will walk away from him and beside I don’t think I want a relationship yet” I say.

He chuckles and looks at me.

“What happens if you become more than just what you want and he tells you to stop dancing” he says.

“It won’t get to that trust me” I say.

He nods his head and huffs.

The day goes on beautifully with Liam and I parting ways.

I drive straight to Zamile's place we haven't spoken all weekend and I miss our silly chats.

I persistently knock on the door but there's no answer.

"Zamile" I call out.

I turn the handle and the door just opens, I make my way inside seeing traces of blood on the floor.

I leave the door open just in case I need to make a run for it.

I slowly follow the blood trail to the bathroom and find Zamile laying on the floor with her hands on her abdomen.

She's curled up and breathing heavily suppressing the pain.

"Zamile" I say rushing to her. "Let me call an ambulance" I say.

She shakes her head and holds my hand tight.

“No, don’t call an ambulance” she says through gritted teeth.

“The pain is going away now I just need a moment” she says casually.

I swallow the air on my throat and help her stand up.

“Thank you” she says.

I nod my head and walk out, this is not the first time Zamile has done this.

I think this is her third if not second abortion and it always leaves me gutted that she would rather go through the pain than just have the baby.

Apart from her dancing Zamile likes to offer more services to these man and some of them hate condoms.

I run her a bath and walk out heading to the lounge.

She takes a while and comes out with a bucket in hand to clean the floor.

She mops the stained parts and walks back to the bathroom taking a while, I suppose cleaning the floor.

*Memories of Vumile cleaning my mess come to mind
the memories are still vivid.*

*“Zamile I think I should” I shout standing up. She
walks in the lounge and fixes her robe.*

*She folds her arms and sighs looking at me. “You
are judging me again” she says.*

*“No Zamile, I am not judging you I just don’t
understand why you keep doing this to yourself” I
say.*

*“That’s judging me Bayede but you don’t see me
judging you for having a fancy job and still stripping for
rich man at night” she says.*

*“Like I said Zamile I am not judging you and I think I
should leave before we both say something we might
regret” I say.*

*“And there you go being perfect and calm as always when
we all know you are unstable and that those pills are the
only thing keeping you sane” she says.*

That strikes a nerve but I give her a blank look.

“I don’t know where this is coming from but I won’t take it to heart clearly you are going through something” I say heading for the door.

She chuckles.

“You now what Bayede I am glad Liam finally found someone who appreciates him,I am actually glad he saw through your waiting bullshit and decided to leave you” she says.

I turn and look at her.

“Zamile do you want Liam” I ask.

Her hesitation says it all.

“No but I am glad he’s not with you because he deserves more than your pill popping self and let me tell you that guy you have been waiting for is never coming back deal with it and move on” she says.

I nod my head and sigh.

“It’s clear this whole thing is about Liam and I will tell you this,whatever little crush you have on him squash it because he will never be yours.

I thought you were a friend Zamile but now I see you

been waiting for the right opportunity to take jabs at me” I say.

“I wasn’t taking jabs at you Bayede just reminding you that you not perfect you just like the rest of us” she says smiling.

“Well I don’t need friends who will remind me that I am perfect when I know I am not, goodbye Zamile” I say walking out.

I walk out of the building still confused as hell I don’t know what just happened.

had I known this would happen I wouldn’t have come.

She’s the closest female I have apart from Thando and I didn’t think she thought all those things about me.

I drive straight to Bandile’s house. “Yeye”

Kenya says running towards me.

She hugs and legs and I happily pick her up throwing her in the air.

“Yeye” she giggles closing her eyes when she comes crashing in my arms.

I hold her tight and pull away looking at her parents. “I will fix you a plate” Thando says.

“Thank you” I say.

She smiles and walks to the kitchen.

I give Bandile a hug with Kenya still in my arms. “What’s wrong” he asks.

“Nothing I just missed my big bro that’s all” I say. A smile spreads across his lips.

“I am glad you miss me” he says.

I look at Kenya go through my bag and smile.

I think about the impossible my child would have been six and she probably would have had her father’s features.

I feel a soft hand on my cheek and look at Kenya’s toothless smile.

Bayede's keeper

#22

I haven't heard from Zamile and I think that's for the best, I doubt I want to hear anything from her going forward.

I have been so busy at work that I haven't had time to think of anything else.

There's a new client coming in and I need to be at my best.

The door opens and Tiana followed by Liam walk in.

"Bossy lady the big boss is here to see you" Tiana says.

"Thank you Tiana" I say.

Liam looks at Tiana who blushes.

"Can you bring me some coffee" Liam asks. Tiana smiles.

“Yes sir” she says walking out.

“Keep that charm locked up please I don’t want Tiana going crazy over you” I say.

He laughs and throws his head back handing me the Ngubane file.

I look at the Ngubane Construction file and sigh we have never had such a high profile client before.

Apart from owning a construction company he is a former judge.

I have read about this man and he’s not squeaky clean.

Well all the things I have heard have been ruled out as nothing but rumors.

“Think you can handle their books” he asks. “It might take a while but I can handle it” I say.

“Good because he’s in the boardroom waiting for us” Liam says.

“Okay lets do this” I say standing up.

I grab my files and walk out with Liam following

behind me.

We bump into Tiana and laugh.

“Bring that to the boardroom we have clients” I say. “Yes Mam” she says.

Liam opens the boardroom door.

“Ladies first” he says.

I walk in first with him beside me.

“Mr Ngubane” Liam says giving this man a handshake.

“Mr Spector thank you for seeing us” he says.

“This is my son Netha Ngubane” he says.

“Please to meet you this is my trusted one Bayede Mhlongo” Liam says.

I extend my hand and give both gentlemen a handshake.

We all take our seats and start talking business.

I steal glances at both of them while they go through

their files.

They are both respectable and intimidating at the same time.

Liam has so much faith in me I hope I don't disappoint him.

“Like I said on the phone Liam I need someone I can trust” Mr Ngubane says.

“And like I told you Bhekizizwe she's one of my best employees and trustworthy too” Liam says.

“Very well when can you start” Mr Ngubane asks looking at me.

“As soon as you need me too sir” I say.

“I don't think this is a good idea baba to have our business handled by a woman” Netha the son says looking at me.

He resembles his father they both have faded dimples.

“Netha” Mr Ngubani warns

The son stands up and attempt walking away.

“Netha sit down” his father says.

I look at Liam who warns me not to say anything. Netha stops on his track and look at his father. “Ngithe hlala phansi Netha” he warns.

“Mbomvu”Netha says acknowledging his father and getting back his chair.

We carry on talking business with Mr Ngubane hardly taking his eyes off me.

He clears his throat and smiles.

“You said your name is Bayede right” he asks. “Yes sir,is there a problem” I ask.

“Not at all just making sure I got your name correct” he says.

The meeting ran late with me asking questions that seemed to irritate Netha,he’s as handsome as his arrogant and I have come to learn that his father can put him in his place.

Tomorrow I am going to have a look at their books and see where I can help.

I do the last touches to my makeup and wear my mask heading to the show room.

This is the third time I am seeing this guy and he excites me each time.

Today he's wearing navy formal pants with a crisp white shirt rolled up.

I start the music and start dancing with ease, I can't see his face but his eyes move with him.

He places the glass he has in his hand and pats his lap looking at me.

"Are you going to make wait" he asks.

His voice commands me.

I have never been close and personal with a client before.

I get off stage and sway my hips walking up to him.

He stands up and turns me around grabbing my waist pulling back to him.

He leans close so close I feel his breathe on my neck.

“May I taste your lips”he asks whispering in my ear. I nod my head swallowing hard.

“I can’t hear you” he says kissing my neck.

I turn and look at him breathing heavily placing my hands on his chest.

“You only live once Bayede” I chant to myself. “Ask me again” I say.

“May I taste your lips” he says.

“Yes” I say.

He lifts me up and my legs straddle him this man is strong and I like it.

His lips meet mine causing blood to rush through my veins.

He pulls away but I pull him back in and kiss him again.

He takes charge of the kiss and squeezes my arse.

Things get hot and steamy I feel my clit throbbing.

I rub my self on him when I feel him grow hard underneath me.

“Fuck me” the words leave my mouth so callously

He deepens then kiss and spanks me so hard I wince and get excited at the same time.

“Fuck me” I say looking at him.

”I can’t” he says followed by a grunt.

He puts me down and catches his breathe.

I look at his hard on and feel my clit ache for bad I want to sit on top of him.

“Are you married” I ask.

“No”he says.

I push him back on the couch and go down on my knees going for his belt.

I pull down his pants and reach for his huge cork still looking into his eyes.

I massage his cock and pull down his briefs letting

his beautiful black cork sprung free.

*I lick my lips and blow some air on his hard fully erect
cock.*

*His breathing hitches when my tongue licks the top of
his d*ck.*

*He trembles when I fully take him in and massage his
balls going up and down.*

*I use my tongue and swirl it around the sensitive top part
of his cock.*

*He grabs my weave and pushes me further down groaning
and cussing.*

I use my hand and mouth to go up and down on him.

*He cusses one last time and explodes his cum shooting
straight to my boobs.*

He pulls me up and gives me kiss.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#23

It's a Sunday today and I am spending time with the family.

I left work last night and headed straight to Bandile's house I don't know why but each time I spend with that man from the club.

I end up missing the little family that I have, time with him makes me realize that I need and want more.

I am tired of being alone and spending time alone like I am some old spinster.

I woke up early and cooked, something I don't normally do when I am around.

My life is so horrible that I live on takeouts, energy drinks and pills.

Kenya looks at me as pop one pill in my mouth. "Ngiphe" she says giving me her hand.

I smile at her innocence and reach for the gummy sweets in my pocket and give them to her.

“Thank you” she says resting her head on my lap.

Her parents join us giggling and laughing like kids. I pick Kenya up and place her on my lap.

“Why are you two this happy” I ask looking at them.

“Well we have news to tell you two” they both say.

Thando is glowing her smile is just beautiful and contagious.

“Okay now I am getting worried” I say.

“No please don’t be it’s good news” Thando says.

“So I was sick a while back and your brother decided to take me to a doctor and we found out that I am pregnant” she says.

I almost drop Kenya while standing up.

“Sorry baby” I say laughing.

I place her down and give both of them a hug.

“Congratulations I am going to be a aunt again” I say.

Bandile looks at me and sighs.

“Yeye you know that I love you right” I nod my head.

“But what you don’t know is that you mean the world to us and we would like it if you became the godmother again” he says catching me off guard.

“You are already Kenya’s godmother and you are family it only makes sense,if anything ever happens to us we want you to look after our kids” Thando says.

“Thank you for trusting me again I promise I won’t let you down” I say.

I look at a confused Kenya and laugh.

“Kenya” she looks at me and tilts her head.

“Mommy is having another baby,you are going to be someone’s sister” I say.

“But I don’t want a new baby” she says frowning. “Kenya” her mother says.

She looks at me and sulks.

“Yeye I don’t want to be a sister” she says crying.

I knew kids are dramatic but this one takes the cup.

It's been days and I haven't seen or heard from the mystery man.

I like these encounters so much that I put more effort into my dance and wear.

Thinking about him excites me and although I haven't seen him I am fully booked by him and only him.

The man smells good and he looks well kept I want to reap that mask off his face and see his true identity.

“Wipe that smile off your face” Liam says.

I laugh and throw my head back looking at him.

“The last I saw you this happy Kenya was born” he says making his way in.

I think back to when little Kenya was born and smile even more thinking about the new baby on the way,

I get on my feet and walk over to Liam and look at

him.

“Thank you for everything I might not say it everything but I appreciate you” I tell him.

He smiles shutting his eyes.

“Look at me” I say.

He looks at me and leans close and kisses my cheeks..

“It’s good to see you this happy Bayede” he says. “Are you ready for the meeting” he asks.

I nod my head and grab my things and walk out following him.

We drive to Ngubane construction and get past security peacefully getting in.

Liam decided to have is driver driver ha here.

As much as I am excited about this whole business but I am a bit worried too.

There are so many loopholes in their books money

that doesn't add up money that randomly ends up in the books.

I didn't want to say this to Liam but basically these people want us to cook their books for them which is fraud.

Liam leads the way as we make out way inside the their building.

Their secretary leads us to the their boardroom and offers refreshments.

Liam and I stand up when Mr Ngubane and Netha walk in dressed in expensive suits looking good.

I like this father duo thing going on the mother must be proud.

“Sorry to keep you waiting”Netha says. “We just got here” I say.

He nods his head taking his seat next to his father.

“Bayede” Mr Ngubane says.

“Mr Ngubane” I say.

He chuckles and looks at Liam.

“We had a look at your books and there’s a lot that needs to be done” Liam says.

“I need to look at your financial records for the past five years and see what I am working with because quite frankly some amounts don’t add up” I say.

Netha chuckles and shake his head.

“Kahle Netha let the young lady speak” Mr Ngubane says.

“I might be young but I am not stupid you came to us because you trust Liam and he trusts me, basically you want us to cook your books and keep you out of trouble” I say

“I suspect money laundering not that I am saying you are into money laundering that would be an accusation and slander in it own” I say still look at Netha.

Mr Ngubane laughs and look at Liam.

“Now I see why you trust her this much” he says. He clears his throat and looks at the time.

“May we start” I ask.

“We are still waiting for one more person my right hand man” Mr Ngubane says.

I nod your head looking at another file on the table. The door opens and shuts while I fix my glasses.

“Somahhashi” I recognize the voice from my late night rendezvous.

I raise my head and look to the door, the glass slips from his hand when his eyes land on mine.

I feel my chest close in and hold on tight to Liam’s hand.

“Bayede” he says.

I look at him as tears fill my eyes it’s happening and it’s happening fast.

“I can’t breathe Liam I can’t breathe” I say holding my chest.

“Where are you pills” he asks.

I shake my head as my chest burns up and it feels like I am about to die.

“Call an ambulance” Liam shouts.

Bayede's keeper

#24

I am at the hospital and the doctor has been asking me endless questions about my medication he even drew blood to run tests on them.

The door opens and Bandile walks in followed by Thabdo.

“Your pupils are dilated” the doctor says.

“How many of these do you take” he asks showing me a bottle of painkillers.

“I don't know maybe one or two” I say.

The doctor looks at me and nods his head.

“I would like to have your doctors number to discuss your medicine prescription” the doctor says.

“I don't know my doctors number by head” I say.

“It's okay doctor I know it” Bandile says looking at

me.

“Please follow me to my office” Bandile walks out with the doctor leaving me with Thando.

“Bayede what’s going on” Thando asks.

“Nothing I just had an attack” I say.

“That landed you in the hospital” she says. Bandile walks in and closes the door behind him. He gives me a concerned look and sighs.

“I saw him” he says looking at me.

“When we walked in he was standing with two gentlemen” he continues.

“I don’t want to talk about him” I say.

“Well you do because he’s here and he triggered your attack” he says softly.

“I just want to go home” I say.

“Remember what I told you about the past and having to deal with it” he says.

“Bandile please this is not the time” Thando says.

“If Bayede doesn’t deal with the past she will forever have these setbacks and attacks and she will never heal.

It’s been seven years and she doesn’t want to remember, she shuts everyone out because she fears that she will lose them like she lost her family” he shouts.

“Bandile” Thando shouts.

“Why do you think she doesn’t spend more time with us huh, why don’t you ask yourself why she’s always find excuses and distances herself from us” Bandile asks.

“Because I am afraid that you are going to leave me like that all did, now can you take me home” I say.

Thando hold my hands and looking at her husband.

“It’s her past to deal with not yours so please let her be don’t push her” Thando says.

“Bayede have you been taking more pills than those prescribed to you” he asks now in a softer and calm tone.

I twiddle my thumbs and shrug my shoulders. “Are you a addict Bayede” he asks.

“No” I say.

He deeply sighs and gets my bag.

“Asambeni” he says looking at Thando.

Thando and I follow behind him and bump into Mr Ngubane and Liam.

Liam rushes to me and holds me in his arms. I wrap my arms around his waist and breathe.

“Don’t ever scare me like that ever again” he says. “I am sorry” I say.

“Don’t be sorry” he says putting his hands on my cheek and kisses my forehead.

“I will come by the house later okay” I nod my head and look at Mr Ngubane and smile.

“I am sorry sir” I say.

He holds my hand and smiles.

“It’s okay Liam told me everything I hope you get

*better” he says. “Thank
you” I say*

He let’s go of my hand and steps away.

*Liam gives me another hug poor man is petrified. “I
love you” he whispers.*

“I love you too” I say.

He pulls away and look at me with his blue beautiful eyes.

*“I should go before my brother drags me out of here” I
say.*

“Okay” he says letting go.

I walk out following Bandile and Thando to the car.

*I catch a glimpse of Phakathwayo and Netha leaning
against the car smoking.*

*I hurry to the car before they catch a whiff of me staring
at then.*

*I get in the car and look outside the window as Bandile
drives off.*

He looks different older, matured and more polished.

I didn't know he was out of prison didn't even know he knew the Ngubane's or that he attended a gentlemen's club.

This is not how I pictured meeting him again.

I have so so many question running through my mind.

"He's handsome" Thando says.

"Huh" I say.

She laughs shaking her head.

"I was referring to your man he's handsome well both your men are handsome" she says laughing even harder.

I find myself laughing with Bandile joining in. "Is it Mrs Spector or Phakathwayo" she asks.

"I prefer Phakathwayo, sthandwa sam their love was just beautiful and pure" Bandile says heaving a sigh.

I listen to them debate about who is best for me between Phakathwayo and Liam.

*I think back to go the club and sigh I might be gullible
but Nqubeko is a changed man.*

....

Nqubeko Phakathwayo

*The drive back to the house is quiet I can't wrap my head
around what just happened.*

*I have never seen Somahhashi this worried and it troubles
me.*

*This man has done so much for me after saving his life
he went on to take me under his wing.*

*He wasn't in prison for long like I said that man was
living like a king and he made sure I lived like one too.*

*His kindness came with terms and hard teachings,I
became his fixer and did good in that department.*

*He pulled a few strings from the top and I was released
from prison.*

I have been loyal to this man since that night I murdered a man for him.

He rolls the window and deeply sighs clearing his throat.

“Is that her” He asks looking at me. I nod my head.

“She’s beautiful” he says.

“Liam seems to be very fond of her I wonder if they are dating” he says.

I look at him and raise my eyebrow. “I was just saying Nqubeko” he says.

I clench my jaw thinking back to that hospital scene and how he held her hand throughout her panic attack.

“Awusho Nqubeko do you know anything about this girl’s parents” he asks.

I look at Mbomvu and sigh I never really went into details about who I was protecting and why.

“Her mother died when she was 10 and her father

was murdered when she was 18,I later learned that she also lost her sister when I was in prison” I say thinking back to how cold I was towards her.

She looked broken and in pain when she told me about Khethiwe but I chased her away.

“She had a sister” he asks.

“Yes but she killed herself” I say.

He deeply sighs and looks outside the window.

“Ngabe konke kuhamba kahle Mbomvu” I ask. He flashes me a smile and nods his head.

The car parks outside his driveway.

“Aren’t you coming in” he asks.

“There’s something that I need to take care off” I say.

“Very well” he says stepping out of the car.

I instruct the drive to as I lay my head back. “We are here sir” the driver says.

I look at the time.

“You may go I will call when I need you” I say.

I step out to the car and make my way inside their house.

I knock on the door till I hear footsteps on the other side of the door.

The door opens with Bayede holding a baby girl on her hip.

“Bayede” I say.

Her mouth drops open and her eyes fill with tears.

“Sawubona” I say.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#25

I look at this new Nqubeko sitting in front of me and I don't know what to do or say.

What does one say in such situations the last I saw him he chased me away and told me to never look back.

But I did look back and it stung so bad but still I held on.

He looks good so handsome I want to fling into his arms and tell him everything that I have been through.

I want to lay on his chest and cry till I am all out.

I want him to hold me and tell me that he's back that he came for me.

His eyes are still on Kenya who is holding on to me

tightly.

She didn't want her parents taking her. "Is it yours" he asks.

That deep voice of his again takes me back to when I was on my knees with his cock deep in my throat.

"No, Kenya is Bandile's daughter" I say.

He nods his head and deeply sighs standing up. I place Kenya down and look at him.

"I just wanted to see if you are fine" he says heading for the door.

He walks and shuts the door behind.

"Baby go to mommy and daddy okay" I say.

Kenya runs to her mother's bedroom while I walk out following Nqubeko.

"Just like that" I shout.

He turns around and looks at me.

"What do you want from me to say Bayede you fainted and I came to see if you're fine" he says.

“Seven years Nqubeko and that all you can say” I ask.

“Ufuna ngithini Bayede” he asks.

I run out words hearing him say that.

“Anything” I say.

He shakes his head.

“I don’t know what you want me to say” he says.

“Nqubeko I waited” I say softly.

“It didn’t seem like that back at the hospital” he half shouts.

“I waited Nqubeko and I am still waiting” I say. “I never asked you to wait” he says.

My eyes widen.

“You don’t mean that” I say.

“I should go” he says.

“Nqubeko are you angry at me” I ask.

He shakes his head with his clenched jaw but I can he’s boiling.

“Are you sleeping with that man Bayede” he asks shouting.

“So that’s all you care about if I am sleeping with Liam or not” I ask.

“Are you” he asks.

“You know what Nqubekp leave and don’t ever come back” I shout.

“It’s clear you are not the Nqubeko I knew” I say.

“I don’t get it Bayede what do you want me to say,I went to prison for you gave up my life for you and I come back to find you in another man’s arms” he says.

“I never asked you to go to prison for me Nqubeko I begged you not do it, begged you not to throw you life away and you still did it” I shout.

“Bayede” he says raising his eyebrow.

“You chose to take the fall for me,you roped my sister into your plan and you drugged me to keep me quiet and I begged you Phakathwayo not do it and you did” I say.

“I went to see you and chased me away, a year later I traveled to that very same prison to see you and you still chased me away” I say.

“You left me Nqubeko” I shout.

“As much as you didn’t ask me to wait I didn’t ask you to go to prison for me so you’re right there’s nothing to say between us, hamba Nqubeko and don’t you ever turn back” I say.

“By the way I am one behind that mask” I say.

He looks defeated and mostly gutted by my words.

“This is not how I pictured us meeting but it’s clear you blame me for going to prison” I say.

He looks at me and says nothing.

“Bayede come inside” I turn and find Bandile standing behind me.

“You need to leave Nqubeko” he says.

I walk towards the house and leave him standing there with Nqubeko.

I find Thando in the kitchen making herself some snack.

“You won’t believe this,that man has the nerve to question me after all these of years of being away” I say.

She scoops me some ice cream and hands it to me. “What did he do” she asks.

“He came here to see if I am okay” I tell her.

She gives me a blank stare while taking a bite out of her sandwich.

“I mean I expected more from him that he would atleast say he came back for me,and what’s hurts the most is that it’s clear he’s been out for a while and he didn’t think of looking me up” I say.

She grabs a chair and settles down.

“Your brother never really told me what happened behind between you and your man” she says taking a bite at her pickles.

“But I will say this you two need to fuck then talk about whatever happened in the past,and I want you

to know that there might be a possibility that you won't end up together" she says softly.

"You need to leave room for disappointment you two have been apart for years, you have grown and changed maybe for good or worse I don't know but either way.

You need to understand he's not the same person you knew seven years ago just like you are not the same person he knew when he went to prison" she says.

"I know it sounds crazy and needy but I thought he would be happy to see me" I say.

"I think I need him" she wipes my tears and smiles.

"Let him cool off I think seeing Liam at the hospital threw him off" I nod my head.

"Good now let me make you something that will make you feel better" she says smiling.

I have been tossing and turning all night long thinking about Nqubeko and how we left things off.

I reach for my phone under the pillow and get out of bed making my way to the kitchen.

I pour myself some milk and settle down going through my phone.

I can't believe he's out that he's actually a free man and he looks good too damn good.

I said a lot of things I didn't mean but I did and I regret throwing his good deed in his face.

An unknown call comes through I look at the call and swipe.

"Bayede" I almost fall off the chair hearing his voice.

"Ngila langaphandle ngisacela uphume" he says.

I end the call and head for the door unlocking it.

I find him leaning against his car with his one hand in his pocket.

I stand there admiring him and his handsomeness while he takes one last puff and stomps of the cigarette bud.

He opens the car and reaches for a bottle of water

and pops something in his mouth..

*I fix my robe and cross the street, He raises his head
looking at me.*

“Mamhlongo” he says.

*Although I despise my father’s name him calling me that
turns me on.*

*He stands up tall and and deeply sighs. “Ngiyaxolisa
Bayede” he says softly.*

Tears fill my eyes but I blink them away.

*He moves closer and holds my trembling hands bringing
them to his lips.*

“I am sorry that left you” he says.

He pulls me close and my tears wet his clean shirt.

*He pulls away and wipes my tears still looking into my
eyes.*

*“Ngangi ngaqondile ukukuzwisa ubuhlungu mntano
muntu” he says.*

“Thula phela” he says.

*I shake my head and open my mouth but he shuts me up
with a slowly deep kiss.*

.....

Bayede's keeper

#26

I am seating in the passenger seat with him in the driver's seat holding my hand close to his beating chest.

We haven't said anything much since we got in the car.

"I couldn't go to sleep not after how we left things" he says.

"I couldn't either which is why I was awake" I say.

He looks at me and sighs.

"What happened to you" he asks.

I don't know if he sees the hidden scars or he's just asking.

I remember Vumile's answer to this question and look at him.

“Life” I say.

“What happened to you” I ask him.

“Life” he says.

We both fall into this comfortable silence.

“What really happened Nqubeko” I ask.

“Life on the inside happened when I got there I was no longer Nqubeko Phakathwayo, I was a number like all other prisoner and it cut deep knowing I was away from you and my family” he says.

I swallow hard this man made a huge sacrifice me.

“I had to toughen up and be a man look out for myself and still survive, I did all that but we both know everything comes at a price” he says.

“Mr Ngubane” I ask.

He nods his head.

“I am the kind of my man I am today because of that man, he took me under his wing and has treated me like his own son ever since” he says smiling.

“But he’s a criminal” I say.

He looks at me with a frown.

“Aren’t we all criminals Bayede” he asks.

I nod my head he has a point look at me, I might not be convicted but I am a criminal.

“I respect that man Bayede too much” he says.

I don’t know if that’s a warning or not but I refrain from asking anymore questions about the man.

“How did you end here” he asks.

“Bandile got transferred from work and he took me with him I didn’t have anything left for me there anymore so I left. I lost my scholarship and Bandile chipped in but it was a heavy burden so I looked for a job” I say.

“You mean you ended up selling yourself” he says.

I look at him as the words leave his mouth indeed he has changed the Nqubeko I know would have been careful with his words.

“No, what I mean is I became a dancer but then a few months into it I stopped when Liam took me under his wing and made me who I am today kind of like

what Mr Ngubane did for you” I say.

He scoffs mockingly but I pay not attention to it.

“He paid for my studies and took care off me so that I don’t sleep with any man all in the name of seeking a better life” I say.

“What about him have you ever slept with him” he asks.

I think this is the third time he’s asking clearly this is bugging him.

“No I haven’t slept with him or any other man in the past years I haven’t seen you,you are the last man I slept with” I say.

I deeply sigh truly speaking I never had time to date not when I struggled with depression,anxiety and hallucinations.

“How are your parents and Phethile doing” I ask after a long while of silence between us.

“My mother is fine and so is Phethile”he says chuckling.

“But we lost my father a year ago he got into an accident and died on the spot” he says.

“I am sorry” I say.

“It’s okay” he says.

“Has Bandile been treating you well” he asks.

“Yes he’s the big brother I never had and I am grateful to have him in my life” I say.

“About Khethiwe ..” I shake my head before he can finish his sentence.

“My sister died a long time ago and that’s it” I say.

“Bayede I heard about what led to her death” I shake my head and get out of the car.

“Bayede ngikhuluma nawe” (Bayede I am talking to you” his voice is intimidating but doesn’t stop me taking further steps as I hurry across the streets

“I heard about the video and I am sorry that I chased you away when you need me the most.

I haven’t forgiven myself for that to this day I haven’t” he says catching up with him me.

He pulls me into his arms and locks me in.

“You can’t force me to listen to you talk about my

sister” I say.

“That’s not what I am doing I am apologizing for not being there” he says.

“Ngiyeke Nqubeko”(leave me Nqubeko” I say.

“Wherever you go you will always have me I love you doctor Phakathwayo. Love Bayede”

“Remember those words” he says resting his forehead on mine.

I close my eyes and inhale his cologne,being this close to him works me up.

I feel hot and bothered I can’t even look him in the eyes.

“Wathi uyangithanda”(you said you loved me) he says.

I remember that day perfectly well because it is that same day that changed out lives forever.

“I might not be a doctor anymore but I remember

those words because I have be living by them and I have carried them in my heart for so long” he says.

He unties my robe and exposes me to the cold air looking at my boobs.

He licks his lips and curves into a mischievous smiles.

He leans close and parts my lips kissing me tongue and all.

I balance on my toes and wrap my hands around his neck.

“I want you” he says.

“I want you too” I say pulling away to catch my breath.

“Come inside” I say.

He reaches for the key inside his pocket and locks the car.

I pull his hand leading him to the house.

His lips are on mine the moment the door shuts. He lifts me up and I grind myself on him deepening

the kiss.

He almost drops me when the lights go on.

“Oh it’s you lock the door when you are done” Thando says smiling.

“I am sorry he was just leaving” I say.

“And I am just going back to bed” she says.

She walks back to her bedroom and I turn to look at Nqubeko.

“We can’t disrespect their house and they have a child” I say.

“I understand but he doesn’t” he says taking my hand and placing it on rock hard on.

“We could cuddle” I say.

He chuckles it’s clear he’s past the cuddling stage and wants to tear me up.

“Okay” he says.

I lock the door and pull him to my bedroom and lock the door just in case Kenya decides to come into my room, I move my pills and hide them behind a photo

frame while he takes off his shoes.

I remove my gown and get inside the cover and watch as he peels each and every lay of clothes he has on leaving on his briefs.

I look at his toned thighs and calves and squeeze my thighs together Lord have mercy.

Nqubeko is huge in a good way I swallow hard when he turns and walks towards the bed.

Will I even make it to round two should we fuck like Thando suggested.

It feels both right and weird being in his presence and being comfortable like this after such a long time.

I rest my head on his chest and close my eyes feeling his fingers draw on my shoulders

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Bayede's keeper

#27

I open my eyes to find Nqubeko looking at me, he smiles and kisses my forehead.

The room is still dark but the creaking light through the curtains provides enough light for me to see his beautiful eyes.

I remember how they used to dance whenever they looked at me.

He moves his hands down my thighs and brings me closer kissing me.

"I missed you Bayede" he says.

He's no longer a boy but a grown man. "I missed you too" I admit the truth. "And I am glad that I waited" I say.

I feel his hand inside my shorts while he keeps

staring at me.

That melting sensation again hits me as I close my eyes.

He gets in between my thighs and kisses me slowly as if reading my body for the very first time.

“Nqubeko” I whisper.

“Let me make you happy” he says pulling down my shorts.

I feel exposed when his hand settles on shaved parts.

“I want to make love to you” he says.

I can’t fault him in anything Lord knows I want that too.

I nod my head and he chuckles.

“Khuluma nami Mamhlongo” (talk to me Mamhlongo) he says.

“I want that too” I say.

“And what is it that you want exactly” he asks gently pushing his finger inside me.

I lose my breathe,I have been touched like this in a very long long.

“I want you to make love to me” I say.

He gives me a side smile and leans close to my ear.

“So you no longer want me to fuck you Bayede” he asks.

I shake my head not after I saw his huge cork.

He takes off my pajama top and moves his hand to cup my breast.

He uses his tongue to lick them and gently squeezes my hard nipples.

I moan biting my lower lip wanting to feel him inside already.

His waist is moving in circle making me feel his hard cork against my wet hole.

He leaves wet kisses going down to my navel.

I feel his warm lips on my shaved parts and close me my eyes when his tongue swirls around my folds.

“Nqubeko fuck me” I say.

The aching is too bad I can't control it.

He comes back up and kisses me having me taste myself on his lips.

He strokes himself and holds his black cork brushing it up against my throbbing clit.

I feel this blood rushing moment and hold my breath.

“Relax” he says slowly pushing himself in.

I gasp for for the life of me when I feel the tip of his cork push in.

He swallows hard and hollows his breath further pushing himself in.

“Ahhh” my breathe hitches.

“Should I stop” he asks.

I shake my head still holding my breathe I think I have a tear down there despite being wet.

He looks into my eyes and kisses my forehead.

I get lost in his beautiful eyes and fill a sting when he fully pushes himself in.

I gasp holding on to his shoulders tears coming from the corner of my eyes.

“I am sorry” he says slowly moving inside me. “You are so warm and tight” he says groaning.

He thrusts in and out with his head buried on my neck.

He keeps swallowing catching his breath like a man on a run.

“Dammit Bayede you’re killing me” he says giving me slowly strokes.

I can tell he’s holding back on me he wants to unleash something in him.

“I am yours Nqubeko I have always been yours” I say.

He gives me a kiss and gets on his knees pulling my legs to him.

He humps inside me and grabs on tightly to my thighs deeply stroking.

I almost lose my mind and grab on to the bed as he thrusts in and out.

*Tears fill my eyes when he stops going hard and f*cks me slow looking into my eyes I feel my myself build up and as if he read my mind.*

He moves his hand and places it on my clit and starts to vigorously move his thumb.

“Ohh Nqubeko” I say curling my toes and closing my eyes screaming my release.

He pulls out with his cock covered in my juices and comes up to kiss me.

He turns me around and places a pillow underneath me.

My arse is sticking out.

I feel his tongue licks my butt cheeks and anal hole.

The waiting is killing me he pushes his fingers inside me and starts fucking me.

I am at his mercy and he knows it,he pulls out his fingers and spanks my butt cheeks so hard I whimper.

I turn my head and notice his black dripping cork standing tall and raise my arse for him.

He slowly thrust in and pulls out again spanking my arse,I am trying by all means not to be loud but this man is making it impossible for me.

I grab one of the pillows and bite at it when I feel him deep stroke me.

His one hand entwines with mine while the other wraps around my waist slightly raising me up.

*His lips land on my neck and back as he slowly thrust in deep and f*cks me so good I don't want the moment to end.*

"I love you" I feel his moist cheek as he whispers in my ear.

"Ngiykuthanda Bayede futhi angiyisoli ngalento engayenza" (love you Bayede and I don't regret what I did) given a chance I would do it all over again" he says.

*He sniffs and tightens his hold over me fu*cking me hard.*

He groans so loud I feel another wave hit me,he trembles as he fills me up with his seed.

I break into an sob emotional as pulls out hide my face crying into my hands.

He pulls me into his arms and holds me.

“It’s okay I am here now and I am not going anywhere”he says.

He makes me sleep on my side and raises my leg up sliding back inside me.

I close my eyes when the pleasure takes over me.

“I have never liked seeing you cry and I won’t start now” he says slowly thrusting is and out massage my breast.

It’s difficult to concentrate on my crying while he’s deep inside me.

“Don’t think about it whatever it is don’t think about just allow me to love you” he whispers.

“Okay” I say.

“That’s my girl” he says kissing my shoulder.

“Yeye” Kenya shouts.

I open my eyes and find myself in Nqubeko's arms last night was out of this world.

"Yeye open the door" Kenya says.

I move Nqubeko's arms but he tightens his hold. "Yeye" Kenya shouts even more.

Nqubeko opens his eyes. "Morning" he says pecking my lips.

"Morning please let me go so I can get the door" I say.

He lets go and peels the covers off.

We are both naked and my thighs have marks from his tight grip I bet my arse is marked too.

I put on my robe and watch as he puts on his briefs.

I get the door and find her suckling on her thumb holding her teddy in one hand.

"Morning pumpum" I say.

"I want to sleep with you" she says trying to force her way in.

“Well I am getting dressed and I have made my bed already” I say blocking her way.

She bats her eyelids and drops her mouth

“Yeye please” she says.

“Let the child in” Nqubeko says.

I let her in and watch as she goes straight for the bed but stops on her tracks looking at Nqubeko.

I mouth a thank you seeing that he is dressed in his pants, vest and socks.

She walks back to me and holds my hand pulling me to her level.

“Yeye who is that” she whispers softly.

“That’s my friend” I whisper back.

“Is he a stranger” she asks. “No he’s not a stranger” I say.

“Okay” she says shrugging her shoulders walking towards Nqubeko.

“Hi my name Kenya” she says holding out her hand.

“Hi my name is Nqubeko” he says.

They shake on it Nqubeko having the biggest smile on his face.

He reaches for his ringing phone and walks up to the window.

“Mbomvu” he says.

He keeps nodding his head and deeply sighs.

“I am on my way Somahhashi” he says looking at me.

“Kenya close your eyes” I say.

She giggles and closes her eyes using her teddy. Nqubeko pulls me close and kisses me.

“I have to go Mbomvu needs me” he says.

I nod my head and watch as he puts on his shirts and shoes.

I feel this aches in my heart when he heads towards the door.

Seeing him leave triggers something in me.

It dawns on me that I have this fear of losing him all

over again.

Bandile was right I fear losing people close to my heart because of everything I lost.

I spent most of my day wondering if Nqubeko was fine or not but when he called and told me he was in the hospital I rushed here as soon as I could.

“You didn’t have to come” Nqubeko says. “I was worried about you” I say.

He pulls away from my hug and looks to the side. “Is that Mrs Ngubane” I ask.

He nods his head deeply sighing.

“What’s wrong who is sick” I ask.

“Zamo was in an accident and she needs a blood transfusion but none of us match and the hospital is out of blood” he says.

I look around the fancy hospital and find it hard that such a hospital can run out of blood.

“What’s her blood type” I ask

“AB-“ he says.

I look at Mrs Ngubane and clear my throat.

“I am an AB- too I can give her my blood” he says. His eyes widen but relief washes over him.

“Are you sure” he asks.

I nod my head surely one prick won’t hurt.

The doctor walks over and the whole family stands up, Nqubeko and I move closer as the doctor pleads with the family.

“Mr Ngubane your daughter lost a lot of blood if she doesn’t get a transfusion then she’s going to die” the doctor says.

“Baba do something please Somahhashi” Mrs Ngubane says.

I look at Mr Ngubane and see defeat in written all over his face.

I look at Netha and remember how hard it is to lose a sibling.

“I can help” my voice comes out shaky and low. Everyone looks at me.

“What’s your blood type” the doctor ask.

“Ab-“ I say.

The doctor breathes heavily and looks at the Nqubane’s.

“Your daughter has just been saved mam please come with me” he says.

Nqubeko holds my hand as we follow the doctor.

.....

Bayede's Keeper

#28

The doctor warned me about the fatigue I might experience after the procedure.

I wasn't expecting to fall asleep after but I did and I figured that it's due to my lastnights work out.

Nqubeko held my hand throughout the process it was quick and simple.

I open my eyes and see Mr Ngubane seated looking at me.

I blink in hopes of finding him gone but he's still here.

This is the creepiest thing that's ever happened to me.

I sit up straight and look at him this man has issues who looks at someone while they are asleep.

"I didn't mean to scare you" he says.

He didn't but he did and he can tell yet he's still seated there looking at me.

"Thank you for saving my daughter" he says. "That was nothing I am glad I could help" I say. He nods his head and smiles.

"I don't mean to pry but where is your family" he asks.

"I don't have a family" I say.

He frowns and looks straight into my eyes.

"Even if you look harder you won't find anything" I say.

He looks defeated by my response.

"You say you don't have a family but you had one right" he says.

This man is walking on eggshells if it were up to him he would be demanding I tell him about my whole family tree.

"With all due respect Mr Ngubane why are you asking me these questions" I ask.

The door opens before he can answer me with Nqubeko walking in followed by Netha and his mother.

Nqubeko walks over to me and kisses my forehead. “You did good” he says holding my hand.

This old man keeps looking at me I am starting to think he wants to kill me.

Mrs Ngubane walks over to me smiling.

“Thank you Bayede for saving my child may God bless you sisi” she says.

“I am glad I could help ma I hope your daughter recovers well” I say.

“How are you feeling I hope it wasn’t too painful” she says.

“It wasn’t painful ma it was quick” I say.

She laughs softly and runs her hand down my face.

“I think we should give you some space” she says looking at Nqubeko.

The room clears and Nqubeko lays next to me.

“What’s on your mind” he asks.

“Nothing just that I woke up to Mr Ngubane staring at me that man creeps me out” I say.

He chuckles and shakes his head. “I bet he kills people too” I say.

“Bayede” he warns.

“Fine I won’t speak about your boss” I say. “Thank you for last night Mamhlongo” he says.

“Thank you for being there when I needed you to be” I say.

He smiles and leans close for a kiss.

“I want you to sleepover at my house tonight” he says in between our kiss.

“I would like that very much” I say.

The door opens and Liam walks in Nqubeko lets go of my hand and shakes his head.

“Hey” he says.

“Hi when did you get here” I ask.

“I was on the call with Bhekizizwe when he mentioned that you were here” he says walking closer.

The tension in the room thickens I feel my armpits sweat.

“So I thought I should come check up on you” he says.

“Thank you I am fine” I say.

He looks at Nqubeko and holds out his hand. “Liam Spector” he says.

Nqubeko extends his too and they shake on it.

“Phakathwayo” he says.

“Pleased to meet you” Liam says.

Liam looks at me and clears his throat I can’t let him leave without us properly talking.

“Phakathwayo will you excuse us please” I say. He gets off and walks out.

Liam settles next to me and holds my hand.

“So that’s him” he asks.

“Yes that’s him” I say.

“Bayede” he says softly clenching his jaws. “I know but I am willing to try” I say.

“I don’t want you get hurt Bayede” he says squeezing my hand.

“I won’t get hurt” I say.

He nods his head and blinks.

“I will always be here” he says kissing my forehead. He forces a smile and stands up.

I never meant to hurt him and seeing him this gutted breaks my heart.

This is the second time it feels like goodbye.

I get up from the hospital bed and rush to him he turns and holds me tight.

“I am sorry” I say.

I feel like crap this man did so much for me, I owe him and it feels like I used him and now discarding

him.

“It’s okay you deserve all the happiness and if he can give it to you then I am happy” he says pulling away.

The door opens and Nqubeko walks in.

Liam clears his throat and forces a smile yet again truth be told we never thought it would come to this.

“I will see you at work” he says walking out.

Nqubeko looks at me and heaves a sigh.

“Are you we going to have a problem Bayede” he asks raising his eyebrow.

I look at him and shake my head.

“Then why are you out of your bed and hugging other man” he asks.

I step away from him because of the energy and tone he’s giving me.

He moves closer and pulls me by my waist.

*“Ngeke ngikubeke izindla mina Bayede ngizokushaya ngomthondo”(I won’t lay my hand on you Bayede I will f*ck you) he says.*

I swallow hard and blink looking up.

“Nqubeko what are we” I ask.

“You are my heart Bayede and I hope I am yours too” He says leaning for a kiss.

Nqubeko took me to his house and left me there he mentioned something about attending to some business.

It’s amazing how much he has acquired in these past years clearly working for this man is paying off.

We had to get takeouts on our way here since we were both tired.

I open my eyes when I hear some noise coming from the passage and get out of bed.

“Q” a female voice calls out.

I stand there not knowing what to do.

“Nqubeko” the footsteps further make their way towards the bedroom.

The door opens and the lights go on a slim beautiful lady walks in and looks at me.

“Who the hell are you” she asks. I get tongue tied.

“I asked you a question who the hell are you” she asks.

“Are one of his floozies” she says. “No”

I say.

“Oh it can speak get out of my house” she says.

I go for my bag but she grabs me by my arm and throws me out of the bedroom.

I don't wait to be told twice and rush out of the house.

I am not about to fight and get beaten for Nqubeko. I bump into Netha outside and hug him.

“Please get me out of here” I say.

He looks at me from head to toe and shakes his head.

The crazy lady keeps shouting behind us cussing and calling me names.

I stand behind Netha and cling on to his jacket.

“Come on Zozi really this again what the hell are doing here” Netha asks.

“Stay out of this Netha you are the demon standing between me and my man” she says.

I want to laugh at this embarrassing situation but I hold myself.

“You are one crazy girl” Netha says.

“I see you, you want me Netha that’s why you have been poisoning my man against me” she says.

“Don’t mind her she’s a bit crazy” Netha says laughing.

“Get in the car before she throws something at you” he says.

I get in the car and watch Netha shove Zozi into the house.

“Sit your crazy ass in the house and stop making

noise and I will make sure Nqubeko calls the police on you this time around” Netha says walking towards the car.

He takes off his jacket and hands it to me. “Put this one” he says.

I put the jacket on as he drives off.

We pass by this cute little place and get something to eat and milkshakes.

“Thank you for this” I say.

“It the least I can do after you got kicked out of your man’s house” he says laughing.

I look at him and realize he’s not all bad.

“I wasn’t expecting that but it’s one for the books” I say.

We both laugh the matter off as much as it’s embarrassing it’s funny in a way.

He pulls up outside this beautiful house and opens the gate driving in.

“This is not my house” I say.

“I never asked directions to your house” he says.

“I can’t drive you home Nqubeko said he would personally pick you up”he says.

That’s a lie since he hasn’t picked up his phone. We both get out of the car him leading the way.

This is his home he walks freely once we are inside and calls out for his mother.

I barefooted and in a t-shirt which is embarrassing,both his parents grace us with their presence.

This is a home with two parents something I have longed for.

“Bayede” His mother says.

Her beautiful smile and motherly nature reminds me of Nqunbeko’s mother,I miss that woman so much.

“What happened did someone hurt you? was it Nqubeko?” Mr Ngubane asks.

“Baba calm down Nqubeko did nothing well not directly” Netha says.

The old man calms down and looks at me.

I don't feel comfortable standing here in a t-shirt and Netha's jacket.

"Come let's get you some shoes and something warm"
Mrs Ngubane says.

She holds my hand as we disappear into the passage.

I stop on my tracks when I see a picture hung on the wall.

"That's Zamo" she says.

I look at this Zamo and shut my eyes just for a second.

"Khethiwe" I suddenly hear her voice and picture her in the bathtub.

I hold on to the wall and try to breathe and gather my self but the voice persists.

"No she wouldn't leave me" I say.

"Bayede" Mrs Ngubane says placing her hand on my shoulder.

I shrug her off and place my hands over my ears. “Make it stop” I say.

I slide down the wall and hug my legs rocking myself back and forth.

“Baba” Mrs Ngubane calls out.

“Wake up, please don’t leave me” I say.

My mind plays Khethiwe’s death over and over. I pull my hair trying to make it stop.

“Bayede open your eyes” I open my eyes and find Mr Ngubane looking at me.

“Calm down okay just breathe” he says. “It hurts please make it stop” I say.

He kneels down and holds both my hands. “Squeeze my hands” he says.

I squeeze his hands.

“That’s good now listen to me” he says.

He starts humming a soothing and familiar song.

The voices slowly fade away with everything becoming clearer.

.....

Bayede's keeper

#29

Nqubeko Phakathwayo

I make my way to the doctor's office and deeply sigh before knocking on the door.

I open the door and walk in shutting it behind me. "Mr Phakathwayo how can I help you" he says. "Drop the formalities Marc" I say.

He takes off his glasses and places them on the table.

"What can I do for you Phakathwayo" he asks. I grab a seat and rub my eyes.

"I need to know what you were discussing with Mbomvu" I say.

He blinks like a man who just got caught with his

pants down.

“You of all people know I can’t share that information with you” he says.

“Who the hell vouched for you when Mbomvu wanted your head” I ask.

“You” he says.

“Now start talking” I say.

“Phakathwayo please don’t put me in a difficult position” he says.

“Marc I think you misunderstood me I wasn’t asking you I am telling you to open that mouth of yours and tell me what you discussed” I say.

“He wanted me to run a DNA test on the girl” he says.

“And” I ask.

“Well I drew some blood and took it to the lab we are just waiting for the results” he says.

“Ask the lab to push it up and make it a priority once you get the results call me” I say.

“What about Ngubane he’s going to want to know”

he says.

“Marc when those damn results get back call me first is that clear” he nods his head.

“Good” I stand up and head for the door.

I reach inside my pockets and pull my ringing phone. I look at the screen and see Netha’s name. “Somahhashi” I say.

“I need you to come to the house it’s urgent” he says.

“What’s wrong is it Mbomvu” I ask.

“No it’s Bayede she’s not looking good” he says. I end the call and run out heading to my car.

I drive straight to the Ngubane residence and park my car in the drive way making my way inside.

The thought of something happening to her frightens me.

“Ma where is she” I ask looking at Zamo’s mother.

“She’s in the spare bedroom next to Zamo’s room” she says.

I hurry to the spare room and find Mbomvu holding her hand.

I have seen cruel men but not like this one and Bayede possibly being his daughter frightens the hell out of me.

Mbomvu has enemies all over people gunning for him and if this is true then her life is in danger,

“Somahhashi” I say walking closer to Bayede. He lets go of her hand and moves.

“Yeye” she opens her eye and just look at me. She looks frail and shaken.

“It’s okay I am here now and I am taking you home” I say.

“Let her spend the night she’s not okay” Somahhashi says.

“Baba is right she’s really not okay” Netha says.

I help her out put on the sleepers laid out and lift her up.

She wraps her arms around my neck and rest her

head on my shoulder.

“Nqubeko” He says.

I raise my head and look at him frowning.

“With all due respect Somahhashi I am taking her home, she needs to be home with me” I say.

He gives me a questionable look.

“Which home because the last time I checked that crazy lady is still at your house” Netha says.

I look at Somahhashi and remember what the doctor said it’s clear he thinks Bayede is his.

“She needs the sleep after what she went through” he says.

I place her back down on the bed and ask what happened.

“We don’t know she started screaming and calling out a name asking us to make it stop” Netha says.

“What name” I ask holding her hand.

“She kept calling out Khethiwe don’t leave me” He continues looking at Bayede.

*“Whatever it that happened to her really messed her up”
He says walking over to Beyede.*

*He gently ruffle her already messed up hair and kisses
her forehead.*

*“See you in the morning” he says walking out. “Who
is this Khethiwe” Somahhashi asks.*

*“Khethiwe was her older sister but she killed herself” I
say.*

*He breathes in and out heavily and rubs his eyes. “What
happened to their parents” he asks.*

*“Like I told you Mbomvu her mother died and her name
was Nokwanda” he shoots me a look that leaves me
thinking he knows Bayede’s mother.*

*“She was married to a man name Sabelo Mhlongo and
they had two children Bayede and Khethiwe, Bayede
doesn’t have anyone else because they all died” I say.*

*“Is there anything else you would like to know” I ask. He
shakes his head standing up.*

“Mbomvu” I say acknowledging him.

He walks out and shuts the door behind him.

I turn my focus to Bayede and caress her beautiful face.

“What happened sthandwa sam” I ask. “I just want you to hold me” she says.

I hold her close to my chest and kiss her head.

“Khuluma nami Mamhlongo what’s wrong” (Talk to me Mamhlongo what’s wrong) I asks.

Her eyes well up and she shakes her head.

Spending the night at Mbomvu’s house didn’t feel right but because he insisted I had no choice.

I turn to the other side and find Bayede already dressed with her arms folded looking at me.

“Morning Mamhlongo” I say.

“Morning Muntu ka Zozi” she says calmly.

I clear my throat and sit up straight scratching my

head.

“Sthandwa sam I can explain” I say.

“And I would like to stay and listen but I have work to get to” she says heading for the door.

I quickly get out of bed and hurry to the door and block her way.

“Nqubeko move out of the way” she says.

“Not before you let me explain” I say.

“It’s okay really I understand you have a girlfriend that threw me out of your place” She says.

“She’s not my girlfriend she’s just a crazy ex” I say.

She smiles and heaves a sigh.

“I believe you Nqubeko now move out of my way because if you don’t I will be late for work” she says calmly.

“I know you are not okay in fact you being. this calm tells me you are boiling inside” I say.

“I would be a fool Nqubeko if I actually thought you didn’t have someone because at the back of mind

the thought did cross my mind, and I chose to ignore it because stupid me still loves you and waited and I thought you were still inside” she says.

I nod my head understanding her.

“I am sorry that I didn’t wait Bayede” I say.

“What hurts the most is that there’s a man out there who loves me and has loved me ever since and I chose you even though you were nothing not a ghost. And quite frankly it would be wrong of me to expect you to be single Nqubeko so yes I understand that you have an ex while I don’t” she says.

I pull her close but she resists my advances so I pin her against the door and lift her up.

“I am sorry that I chose to stupidly look at another woman, I am sorry that when I came out I didn’t look for you because the truth is I didn’t know if you would want me as this man you see in front of you” I say.

“Okay then put me down” she says smiling. “Not until you forgive me” I say.

She smiles and shuts her eyes I look at her dimples and lean in close for a kiss.

The kiss deepens as I run my hands up her thighs and squeeze her arse.

The thought of me being the only man whose ever touched her like this turns me on.

I still can't believe she waited she's as tight and sweet as the first time she gave herself to me.

I pull away and look at her.

“May this be the last time we ever speak about that man ever again because he might want you but he will never be me” I say.

She wraps her hands around my neck and kisses me.

“Don't you ever leave me again Nqubeko promise me” she says .

Her voice is pleading coming from a place of need.

Looking at her now lucid I want to ask her so many questions.

I want to look into her eyes and search for answers

unlocking those door and bulldozing these walls she's built so high.

I am not stupid I know she's broken and holding out but I want her to talk to me out of her own free will.

"I promise I will never leave you again" I say.

I walk over to the bed and lay her down getting between her legs.

She giggles and I remember this is the very sweet melody I longed to hear when I was in prison.

I hold her tight and inhale her scent I have missed her so much more than anything.

"I can't breathe Nqubeko you are heavy" she says gasping for air.

I lean close and kiss her nose. "I love you Bayede" I say.

A knock comes through disturbing us.

I get on my feet and slip into my pants getting the door.

"Somahhashi" I say moving out of the way.

He clears his throat and looks at me.

“Morning Phakathwayo, Bayede” he says looking at Bayede.

“Morning Mr Ngubane and thank you for letting me stay the night” she says.

He looks at her and says nothing.

“Mbomvu is everything okay” I say.

“Yes I just came to tell you that breakfast is ready” he says.

“I am afraid I won’t be staying I need to be at work” Bayede says.

I look at Somahhashi slowly nod his head in disappointment.

He turns and walks away.

“Sthandwa sam please stay even if it’s just for coffee” I say.

She hesitantly nods her head forcing a smile.

I look at her and pray she’s not Somahhashi’s daughter knowing she suffered at the hands of a

man who wasn't her father might destroy her.

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Bayede's keeper

#30

Nqubeko

I have been holding on to the DNA results for weeks now, I am still reeling from the shock of the news.

I can't even look Bayede in the eye knowing what I know.

Marc told Mbomvu that the tests got mixed up and that the lab lost Bayede's.

I been looking at the results hoping they changes to 0.00%.

Thinking about it this means that Khethiwe was Mbomvu's daughter but how because Bayede's mother was married.

I have been asking Bayede questions relating to her mother by everything seems to be foggy or maybe

she doesn't want to remember,

Things between us have been so good I would like to keep them that way.

We have been spending a lot of time together and I have noticed how she is reliant on pills I don't to set her off.

I tried speaking to my mother about the issue and she didn't know it was that bad.

I dropped Bayede off at work and drove straight to the Warehouse to meet up with Mbomvu.

I find him seated in his office drinking from his finest bottle.

"Mbomvu" I say.

He raises his head and looks at me. "Phakathwayo" he says taking a gulp of his drink.

"You called Somahhashi is there something you would me to do" I ask.

He shakes his head standing up.

"No I just wanted to see you Nqubeko" he says.

“Walk with me” he says heading out.

I following him as we bump into three of his men.

“Mbomvu what is going on” I ask.

“What does it look like” he asks. I

chuckle and shake my head.

“It looks like an ambush set by you” I say.

“Boys” he says waving his hand.

I give him a side smile and take off my suit jacket and roll up my shirt sleeves.

They all stand ready to charge towards me,one does but I grab him by his head bringing him to the knees.

He goes down while the other holds me from behind,I elbow him on the side hitting his rib cage and twist his arm ready to dislocate it.

“Nqubeko” Somahhashi calls out.

“If you wanted to teach me a lesson then you should have called Netha and Mandlakhe” I say.

“Nqubeko” he says warningly.

I let go of the guys arm and raise my hands in the air.

An unexpected punch hits me in the face with another one on my stomach.

I get on one knee while another punch lands on face repeatedly.

Two of them hold me up while the muscle one hits me on the face and stomach.

“That’s enough” Somahhashi says.

They let go of me and I stagger falling on my knees. I slowly stand up and look at him.

“That’s for going behind my back” he says.

“And I have never had to do that because the Somahhashi I know would never keep anything from me” I say.

“I didn’t keep anything from you Nqubeko” he says.

“You went behind Bayede’s back and did a DNA test on her without her consent” I shout.

“I wanted to be sure Nqubeko” he shouts back.

“She’s been through so much Somahhashi if she finds you that you are her father it will destroy her” I say.

“Keep it to yourself don’t tell her the truth” I say. He shakes his head and deeply sighs.

“I wish it was that simple but I can’t she’s my daughter and she needs to know, she needs to know that she’s not alone that she has a family” he says.

“Where were you when they suffered because knowing Bayede that’s one of things she’s going to ask you” I say.

“Why did you abandon them did you even know they existed” I ask.

“I didn’t know she existed because her mother and I parted ways I assume when she was already pregnant” he says.

“What happened Somahhashi” I ask.

“Nokwanda’s family didn’t want me they thought their daughter deserved only the best and I wasn’t that, they arranged for her to marry a police man a

man who had a steady job and would support her instead of her supporting him.

Had her family waited long enough I would have proven them wrong but they didn't.

I did what any man would do,I took my children and left but my heart stayed behind because Khethiwe was left behind” he says rubbing his eyes.

He once told me that he struggled as an advocate had to start at the bottoms before working his way up to being who he is today.

“I took Netha and left Zamo’s twin because she was a sickly child and I couldn’t take care of her,she needed her mother but then when I came back for her I was told that she died and that Nokwanda left with her husband” He says.

My eyes widen at the revelation that Zamo is Khethiwe’s twin.

“Mbomvu you took two and left one” I ask.

“She was sick Nqubeko and I had to choose,she needed her mother more than she needed me and

there's never a day that goes by that I don't think about my baby girl" he says.

I want to shout at him and tell him all the despicable things Sabelo did to Khethiwe but I am not one to kick a man when he's down.

"Your love for her reminds me of that I had with her mother,I loved her Nqubeko so much but she couldn't fight for us anymore God knows that she tried but her father was one hell of a man" he says chuckling like he's reminiscing.

"Nokwanda was beautiful just like Bayede those dimples that she has,she got them from me" he says proudly.

I look at him and see the resemblance it's funny how long I have known the man but never noticed how he shared features with Bayede then again I too wanted to forget my past.

"I swear to all those came before me her family told me that Khethiwe died,they lied to me and she never told me she was carrying my child" he says.

"I need to tell her Nqubeko I haven't been sleeping

thinking about this matter” he says.

“Does Netha and Zamo know about their mother” I ask.

“I told them that their mother died” he says.

*“You are no different from Nokwanda’s family” I say
grabbing my jacket.*

*“I suppose your wife knows everything” I say. He
slowly nods his head.*

*“Dinner is at 7 tomorrow evening, I will send you
directions to her house then you can tell her the
truth” I say.*

“Thank you Nqubeko” he says.

*“Don’t thank me Mbomvu not when you are going go to
drop a bombshell on her and hurt her in the worst
possible way” I say heading out.*

*“You are about to rip her open her heart and I don’t
know how to feel about that. I never thought I would tell
anyone about this it was meant to be something we take to
the grave.*

You were right the first time you met me I had never killed a man before” I say.

He looks taken aback and clenches his jaws his eyes are bloodshot red.

I leave him there stewing in the bitter truth.

I spend the rest of the day at the bar drinking just to calm my nerves down.

“I couldn’t help notice that your are all alone” I raise my head and see a slim beautiful lady standing beside me.

She’s wearing a black shirt that has slit on her thigh and white shirt tucked in her breast is in the open and she’s wearing glasses.

“Becca” she says smiling extending her hand. “Nqubeko”

I say.

“I promise I don’t bite not unless you ask me too” she says.

I clear my throat when she places her hand on my

thigh running it up my crotch.

I move her hand finish the last of my drink, tempted as I am Bayede would be crushed if I ever do this.

“I should go it was nice meeting you Beccky” I say.

She leans close and shoves a business card inside my pockets.

“It’s Becca and you can call me anytime” she says walking away.

I grab my car keys and walk out heading to my car.

I drove to Bayede’s place and she freaked out seeing the bruise on my face but I lied and said it was boxing thing.

The house smells amazing I lean against the fridge and look at how perfect she is.

“What” she asks turning to look at me.

“Nothing I just love you” I say.

“I love you too” she says going back to dicing her carrots.

I move closer and hold her waist kissing her neck.

I don't think I will ever get tired of making love to her.

“Nqubeko stop” she says.

I move my hands inside her top and squeeze her breast.

She slowly lets go of the knife and softly moans. “Should I stop” I ask.

“No” she says.

I turn her around and kiss her taking off her top while she unbuttons my pants, I fully take them off leaving my briefs on.

I look into her eyes and run my hands down her cheeks and grab her neck pulling her to me.

I pull down her tight followed by her thong with a smile on my face.

She puts her hand inside my briefs biting her lips.

She gently grabs my crotch and that turns me on. I close my eyes at the feel of her soft hands

massaging me.

I lift her up and place her on the kitchen counter and turn off the stove.

“Nqubeko” she says.

“I need you Mamhlongo” I say.

She looks me in the eye and pulls down my briefs nodding her head.

I part her legs and cup her breast massaging them. She softly strokes my cock and pulls me closer.

I brush up against her wet flesh and push tip of my cock in.

She gasps holding on to my shoulders.

“Ahh” she says closing her eyes.

I feel her flesh on mine and tremble clenching my jaws.

Being inside her is amazing the best feeling in the world.

I move side ways and start slowly stroking and

thrusting in and out of her tiny hole.

We are both holding eye contact while I go in and out of her.

I deeply thrust in and she screams out wrapping her arms around my neck holding me tight.

I wrap my arms around her waist moving them to her soft arse.

I walk to the bedroom with her still in my arms.

I lay her on the bed but she pushes me out and turns getting on her knees chest down.

I spank her beautiful arse and stoke myself parting her butt cheeks.

She tries running off but I grab her waist and slowly push myself in.

“Ohh Phakathwayo” she says.

I grab her waist and fully thrust in going in and out.

*Her hands grab on to the bed covers while My hand pushes her down as I f*ck her senseless.*

Her whole arse is in full view sticking out just for me

I think about Mbovu and what's to come tomorrow and go hard.

The room is filled with her moans and screams.

I pull out and look at my stiff cork as I about to cum I can't hold on any longer.

I pushed the tip of my cork and close y eyes slowly stroking her.

She screams hard when I fully thrust in and come inside her.

I pull her up and hold her close against my body grabbing her hair while I pumped all of my seed inside her.

I pull out and turn her around to kiss her sweaty forehead.

I step off the bed and walk out heading to her bathroom.

I fill the bathtub with some water oils and foam.

I walk back to her bedroom and find her sleeping on her side exhausted.

“Baby” I say kissing her shoulder. She lazily opens her eyes and smiles.

“Mmm” she says.

“Come let’s get you cleaned up” I say.

She wraps her arms around my neck when I lift her up taking her to the bathroom.

She shrieks when I place her inside the warm water.

“Phephisa” I say.

“It’s sore” she says pouting her lips.

I get in behind her and bring her closer kissing her head.

“I love you” I say.

“I love you too Phakathwayo” she says holding my hand.

I use the other one to draw circles on her shoulder.

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Bayede's keeper

#31

I have been busy all day long running around trying to work on the data management and analysis of the financial records of Ngubane construction.

I have been moving money to and from different accounts trying to balance their books.

Like I predicted they are in some messy money laundering apparently their accountant stole from them and ran away.

I don't get why Liam wants us to associate with such people.

I am yet to ask Nqubeko what he does for Mr Ngubane because he never told me.

The door of my office opens up and Zamile walks in. I remove my glasses placing them aside.

She walks in and settles down looking

uncomfortable.

“Hi” she says.

“Hey” I say.

She smiles and places her phone on the table next to her bag.

An awkward silence pauses between us till she clears her throat.

“Bayede I miss you” she says.

A part of me misses her too but after what she said I can’t go back.

“I miss you too” I say.

“Great because I really need my friend back and the club hasn’t been the same without” she says.

I nod my head I haven’t been to the club in weeks Nqubeko and work have been keeping me busy.

“Look I know I said a mouthful and I am sorry” she says.

“It’s okay it’s water under the bridge” I say.

“So can we hang out tonight just the two of us” she says.

“I am afraid I can’t tonight I am having this dinner thing with Nqubeko” I say.

She smiles wide and clasps her hands together.

“That’s great maybe I can join you and finally meet him” she says.

“It’s a family thing Zamile so I am sorry” I say.

She slowly nods her head and grabs her bag.

“Okay I see” she says standing up.

“Zamile it’s not like for real I can’t tonight maybe tomorrow” I say.

“It’s okay I understand I mean I should have called before coming here” she says.

“I should leave so you can go get back to work” she says.

“Is it fine if I call you” I ask.

She nods her head.

“Anytime” she says.

“Great” I say.

The whole conversation felt weird and I didn’t want to flat out tell her that I cannot be friends with her anymore.

I left work early so I could prepare for tonight Nqubeko said Mr and Mrs Ngubane would be joining us for dinner.

I don’t know why but seeing that the man is his boss it’s the least that I can do,

I made some lamb curry and basmati rice with chicken fillet in cream sauce and a salad.

I made cheesecake for desert and bought some wine and took a bottle of whisky from Nqubeko’s place.

I set the table and head to the bathroom to freshen up.

I wear simple jeans black top and heels and apply some lipgloss tying my hair.

The bathroom door opens and Nqubeko walks in, he wraps his arms around my waist and kisses my cheek.

“Sthandwa sam” he says turning me to face him.

I wrap my hands around his neck and deepen the kiss then pull away.

He smiles and holds my hand kissing it.

I fix his collar and press my hands on his chest dusting off his shoulders.

“How was your day” I ask. “Just a day and yours” he asks.

“It was interesting thank you for asking” I say.

“You look beautiful” he says putting his hands in the back pockets of my jeans.

“Are they here” I ask.

“Yes” he says.

“And you say nothing we shouldn’t keep our guests waiting, come let’s go and get this over and done with” I say pulling his hand.

We make our way to the living room and find the Ngubane's already seated.

I greet both of them and ask Nqubeko to pour them something to drink.

“Let me help you with the food” The beautiful mrs Ngubane says.

“No it's okay Ma you sit down and I will bring the food” I say.

I bring the dishes and place them on the table settling down next to Nqubeko.

He pours everything a drink and pours me juice. “You don't drink” Mrs Ngubane ask.

I shake my head with the voice and hallucinations and medication I can't risk it.

“No I don't” I say.

“The food looks amazing” Mr Ngubane says. “I hope it tastes good” I say.

Mrs Ngubane plates up for her husband while I do the same for Nqubeko.

Everyone starts eating and complimenting my dishes.

“Sthandwa sam I should just marry you once” Nqubeko says.

Mr Ngubane violently coughs and reaches for a glass of water and takes a sip.

“Baba are you okay” his wife asks.

“I am okay” he says looking at Nqubeko.

“And I guess the Lobola would go to Bandile” I say laughing.

“Is Bandile your father” Mrs Ngubane asks.

“I lost both my parents, Bandile was my brother in law he was dating my sister who passed away and he was kind enough to take me in when we relocated” I say.

“He’s the brother I never had” I say.

We continue eating and talking about family and my work.

I look at mr Ngubane whose plate is empty and

smile.

“Would like more baba” I ask.

He looks at me and smiles shaking his head.

“Ma you should have come with Zamo and Netha the food would have been enough for all of us” I say.

Mr Ngubane clears his throat and looks at Nqubeko.

“Baby” Nqubekp says looking at me.

I look at him and sheepishly smile it feels good having him in my life.

“Yes” I say.

“I don’t now how to say this but there’s something that you need to know” he says holding my hand.

“Sabelo was not your father” he says.

I take my hand back and frown looking at our guests.

“Nqubeko may I speak to you privately” I say.

He can’t just say something this bold in front of our guests.

“Baby listen to me” he says.

“Nqubeko please” I say.

“Bayede” Mr Ngubane says.

I look at him as he struggles to find the right words. “I am your father” he blurts out.

I look at him and then his wife and heave a sigh.

“What is going on here first you tell me that Mhlongo was not father now you tell me that you are my father.

Nqubeko what the hell is going on here why is this man saying he’s my father” I ask.

“Because he is sthandwa sam” he says looking into my eyes.

I chuckle and hit the table laughing.

“Wow that’s really a good one so this man here is my father and Mhlongo wasn’t my father is this a joke because if it is then it’s not funny” I say.

“Swazi please give her the picture” he says.

His wife reaches inside her bag and hands me an old picture.

I look at the picture and it's him and my mother with three kids besides them.

I look at the picture properly and see that the small boy is Netha but I make out the two girls hanging over his arms.

“Nqubeko uMa lona” I say.

“What is she doing with you and who are these two girls” I ask.

“Those are your sisters Zamo and Khethiwe they were fraternal twins” Ngubane says.

“What” my shaky voice comes out low.

I think back to their house and remember the picture I saw on the wall.

“No you are not my father” I say.

“Yes he is sisi. Bhekizizwe is your father and Netha together with Zamo are your blood siblings” his wife says.

I shake my head and look at this man said to be my father.

Tears fill my eyes my nose flaring I stand up from my chair and head for the door opening it.

“Please leave” I say.

They look at me and then each other.

“Please leave my house now before I call the police” I shout.

“Bayede please let me explain” Ngubane says.

“I don’t need you to explain leave” I say trying to stay calm but my hands shake and my tears just prick my eyes falling.

“Bayede calm down” Nqubeko says.

“Stay out of this Nqubeko” I say pointing my finger at him.

“You of all people know how much we suffered staying with that man, he robbed us of our childhood Nqubeko I would come to your house escaping the beatings.

I would leave my sister alone with that monster of a man not knowing he was raping her” I look at Ngubane and wipe my tears.

“Where were you when he was raping my sister for years huh,when he would come into my room and molest me and I was just a child.

When he would starve us and beat us up where were you,When he killed my mother and shot her in cold blood and I stood there watching where were you.

He raped her repeatedly untill she was carrying his child and went on to beat her into a pulp and she lost the baby. I took her to the hospital Nqubeko was there he knows because he spent a night in prison for hitting that man.

Do you know what that monster did afterwards ” I ask looking at his wife wipe her tears.

“Bayede” Nqubeko says.

“He fetched her from hospital and raped her all night,I walked in on him raping her and you know what I did I took an axe and killed him in cold blood” His wife gasps putting a hand over her mouth.

“I killed him for hurting my sister but he wasn’t done with us because a month or two after his death a video of Khethiwe drugged and being raped by him

was leaked” I say sinking to the floor holding my chest.

“She was tired and she couldn’t hold on any longer not even for me.

she killed herself and left me all alone my sister killed herself because of that man whom we thought was our father.

We suffered at the hands of that man whom we thought was our father do you know how scarring that is”

He wipes his tears his wife holding him.

“Nothing you say will make up for what I went through nor will it bring my sister back” I say.

“I wish you hadn’t told me that you are father because now I blame you for her death, had you been there we would have been safe and she wouldn’t have killed herself” I say.

“Somahhashi I think you should leave” Nqubeko says.

“She wasn’t supposed to die Phakathwayo not my sister I miss her so much” he holds me tight as I

break into a sob.

This is the first time I have cried this much since my sisters passing.

Ngubane stands up and looks at me

“I am sor....” he holds his chest before he can finish the words and falls to ground whizzing.

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Its

Bayede's keeper

#32

The ambulance just left with Ngubane the medics tried to stabilise him they weren't specific about the matter but they concluded that he might have had a heart attack. I didn't feel anything when he feel and I don't feel anything now as Nqubeko is holding me calming me down.

I am angry at my mother for saying nothing when she knew the truth, I am angry that Khethiwe died without seeing her twin.

I am sad that she died believing that man was our father when he wasn't, it now makes sense why he

never felt remorsefully for what he was doing to us.

He couldn't, I mean we weren't his kids after all but still that man raised us and with all he still couldn't love us.

I wipe my tears thinking about all the times my sister shielded me from that monster and she took all the physical and emotional pain from that man,

I think about all the other times she was sad and in pain but still smiled and assured me that were going to be okay.

She wasn't supposed to die not like that she was supposed to hold on, but then she was too broken her spirit had long died and I was too gullible to see it.

I wish I could bring her back to life so she can see her twin and see this man who claims to be our father.

I feel Nqubeko's hand on my cheeks wiping my tears.

He pulls me up and makes me sit up straight looking at him.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam”(I am sorry my love) He says.

*“He can’t be my father Nqubeko” I say. He
nods his head and deeply sighs.*

*“But he is sthandwa sam(my love) that man is your father
and now he’s in the hospital fighting for his life” He says.*

*I know he’s worried because he’s been on the call with
Netha asking him for updates.*

“I don’t want him to be my father” I say.

*“Bayede you can’t say that whether you like it or not
Somahhashi is your father” He says,*

*“Uyamkhulumela Nqubeko?”(are standing up for him) I
ask.*

*He shakes his head looking at me with the softness in
his eyes.*

*“Angimkhulumeli sthandwa kodwa sikhona isizathu
sokuthi engakaze wabakhona empilweni yakho ngobo
wayengazi nokuthi ukhona”(I am not standing up for
him my love but there’s a reason why he was*

never in your life , He knew nothing about your existence”) he says.

“khethiwe yena?”(how about khethiwe) I ask. “They told him that she died” He says.

“Why did he leave her in the first place” I ask,

“Because she was a sickly child and she needed you mother’s attention” he says.

“I know Mbomvu and he would never abandon his children that man loves his kids” He says.

“I guess you are going to ask me to forgive him” I say.

He looks at me and says nothing right there I have my answer.

“Nqubeko how do you know all these things” I ask.

“Phakathwayo how do you know that this man is really my father?” I ask.

“Bayede” He says softly.

“Phakathwayo ngiphendule”(Phakathwayo answer me) I shout

“He had a DNA test done on you and the results came back positive” He says.

“When” I ask.

“A few weeks ago” He says.

My eyes widen this man knew all along and said nothing to me.

“Ubuwazi Nqubeko wathula wangasho lutho”(you knew all this time and you kept quiet) I say.

“I didn’t know how to tell you sthandwa sam” he says.

“Yet you were able to sleep next me and make love to me but you couldn’t tell me the truth” I say.

“Bayede that’s not fair” he says.

“What’s not fair is that you kept the truth from me” I shout.

“It wasn’t my truth to tell” He says.

“Phuma Nqubeko” I say.

“Bayed calm down” He says.

I grab his car key and phone throwing them his way.

“Leave” I say.

“I am not going anywhere not when you are like this” He says.

I nod my head and grab a Jacket then my car keys walking out of the bedroom heading to the kitchen.

He follows behind me and grab the car keys then blocks my way>

“Move out of my way Nqubeko” I say.

“Tell me where you are going at this time of the night” he asks.

“I want to get away from you” I say.

He moves closer and kisses my forehead. “Hambo lala Bayede ngiyabona ukhathele” (“Go to bed Bayede I can see you’re tired”) he says calmly. My chest heaves as I bite my lower lip,

“You don’t understand Nqubeko you don’t” I say. “When you hurt I hurt so I understand more than

anyone” he says.

“What if he hurts me like that man did, what if he doesn’t love me because he never raised me I won’t handle that” I say.

He brings me close to his arms.

“I know Somahhashi and he loves you already he felt that love the first time he saw you, baby I am not saying forgive and forget everything now but allow him to explain.

Maybe this is exactly what you need to heal and I will be here holding your hand whatever happens I am not going anywhere” he says.

“And I am sorry for keeping the truth from you” He says.

“Ngicela uyeke lento yokuzizwisa ubuhlungu”(please stop hurting yourself he says).

“I will hold you night long and let you cry your eyes out but you are not leaving the house” he says leading me back to the bedroom.

I woke up to a note next to me Nqubeko left early in the morning to go check up on Ngubane and left me some breakfast in the oven keeping warm.

I took a bath ate and left the house a part of me wanted to pass by the hospital and see how mr Ngubane is doing but I went for the latter and found myself at the club.

I am not sure how his kids will feel seeing me after I caused their father's collapse.

I have been sitting at bar all day long contemplating whether to drink or not the truth is I don't know how to feel.

I want to feel something other than this anger and pain a part of me wishes to understand and let all this go but its not that simple.

“Would you like anything to drink boss lady” The bartender asks.

I feel agitated as it is Nqubeko took my pills I couldn't find anything in the bathroom cabinet or in any of my drawers.

“Please give me a shot just keep them coming” I say.

“Coming right up” He says.

He brings the first one and I gulp it in one go I almost throw up but he hands lemons.

I take a bite of the lemon slice and figure I can handle this shot thing.

I roll my finger cautioning him to bring more.

He lines up another two

“Thank you” I say.

I raise the two and gulp them one after the other.

The feeling is different the alcohol burns my chest and there is this tingling feeling on my tongue.

I rub my eyes when my vision blurs up look at the bartender.

“Give me your finest Scottish bottle” I say giggling.

I have heard these men shout for the whole club to here.

“Mam I think you have had enough” He says.

“Either you bring me the bottle or I get you fired choose” I say.

He brings the bottle and places it in front of me. “Please open it for me” I say.

He opens the bottle and places a glass with some ice cubes.

I raise the bottle and close my eyes when the poisonous liquid hits my throat.

I use my hands to pick the ice and throw it in my mouth.

I suddenly feel light and free I wait for the voices to hit me like a wave but instead I think about my beautiful mother.

I remember her melodious voice and soft gaze, my mind drifts back as I think about my kind sister an angel on earth that she was too good for this world.

This heavy sadness hits me so hard I fail to hold myself.

“Bayede” Liam says.

He looks at the bartender fuming.

“He’s not fired if that’s what you are thinking” I say.

“”Come let me take you to my office” he says helping me up,

he takes me to his office and offers me a glass of water.

“Talk to me what’s going on” he says.

“My life is a mess” I say burping.

He takes a few tissues and wipes my tears. “I have a father” I tell him’

he looks shocked since he knows that my father passed away.

“Okay that’s a good thing right knowing that bastard wasn’t your father” he says.

“Yes” I say.

“Its a good thing” I say.

He smiles and looks at me running his hand down my cheek.

We prolong eye contact and lean close his lips brush against mine.

I close my eyes when his lips part mine and he deepens the kiss.

He holds the back of my head and kisses me passionately I return the kiss and put my hand on his face>

The door opens and Zamile walks in.

“I am sorry I didn’t know you had company” she says shutting the door,

“Dammit” Laim says.

“Stay here I need go fix this” he says walking out.

I hold my lips and grab my bag taking out my phone.

I stand up and walk out of the office heading out the back.

I dial Nqubeko’s number seeing that I have many missed calls from him

He picks up on the first ring.

“Where the hell are you” he asks.

“Whoever invented alcohol should be named president” I say.

“Bayede are you drunk?” He asks.

“Me you know I don’t drink Nqubeko are you accusing of something” I ask.

“Bayede were are you?” he asks no calmer “Do you remember my aunt” I ask.

“That woman hurt me she’s the reason Khethiwe is dead and she’s the reason my baby is gone” I say wiping my tears.

“Ohh I feel hot I want to throw up” I say moving my phone away from from my ear.

I bend over and throw up I look at my phone and put it back inside my bag.

I take a few steps down the alley and put a hand over my eyes when a car blinds my eye sight.

I tilt my head to the side and watch as the car speeds towards me.

It knocks me down to the ground and reverses away.

Bayede's Keeper

#33

Nqubeko

When I got home Bayede wasn't around I called the office and she wasn't there tried calling Bandile and he told me that she wasn't home.

She eventually called me and told me she was at the club then went on to further end the call while she still talking.

She mentioned her aunt and she lost her baby how the woman was the cause of her sister's death.

I have been pacing up and down trying to call her back and her phone goes unanswered.

“Bayede is pissing me she’s acting like a child” I say looking at Bandile.

He got here a few hours ago when I told him the full story about Bayede finding her father.

“Nqubeko calm down” he says.

“Bandile she’s drunk wherever she is she’s bloody drunk” I say.

“Bayede doesn’t drink clearly this thing messed her up and she’s looking for an outlet” He says.

“I don’t care Bayede needs to know that she can’t just throw a tantrum and disappear on us like that” I say.

“Maybe we should call Liam he will know what to do” Bandile says.

“Finally” I say when she answers her phone,

“Hello” Liam says.

I clench my jaws and shut my eyes this man keeps

popping up everywhere.

“Bayede has been in accident we are taking her to the hospital” He says.

“Marc is already on stand by meet us there” He says. I look at Bandile and clear my throat.

“Bayede was in a accident we need to go to the hospital” I say.

I send a message to Neth and watch as Bandile grabs his phone running out.

The drive to the hospital feels like the longest drive I have ever had in my life I have never been this scared in my entire life not knowing what to expect when we reach there.

“She’s going to be okay” Bandile says. I nod my head stepping on it.

We reach the hospital and my heart is already pounding with Mbomvu in the hospital and now Bayede I don’t know what to do.

I park the car and watch Bandile rush inside I drag

my feet following behind him.

The hospital is in mayhem so many injured people are being brought in the fear of losing her gets the better of me I feel my chest tighten as it gets difficult to breathe.

My eyesight gets blurry I feel the need to throw up and make my way to the bathroom, I get in one of the toilets and throw up till my eye sight gets better and my heart stops pounding.

I walk out and look at myself in the mirror and rinse my face I drape the paper towels and wipe my face.

I have never experienced something so intense before and its not a good feeling.

I walk out of the bathroom and look for Bandile till I find him conversing with Liam.

“How is she” I ask?”.

“The doctor is busy with her” Bandile says.

“Thank you for bringing her in” I say looking at Liam, he nods his head.

Marc makes his way to us after a few minutes of us waiting to hear from him.

“Marc how is he” I ask.

“She has a few fractured bones, sprained neck, bruised ribs and some soft tissue injuries’ He says.

“She was lucky and trust me she’s in good hands she’s going to be okay” He says.

“I will take you to her once we are done” Marc says walking away.

The three of us settle down and wait for to see her.

“Nqubeko” I raise my head.

“Bafu” I say standing up.

“I came as soon as I heard what happened” Netha asks.

I look at Liam and shrug my shoulders.

“She was at the club drinking I only left her in the

office for a few minutes when I came back she wasn't there, one of the bouncers found her in the back ally on the ground bleeding" He says.

"So it wasn't a car accident" Bandile says.

"I think someone deliberately hit her with a car and left her there" Liam says.

"Are you telling me that Bayede has enemies" I ask "Not that I know off" Liam says.

I look at Bandile who shakes his head.

"Bayede doesn't have enemies" he says. I turn my focus to Netha.

"I want you to find out who did this Netha before we tell Somahhashi anything" I say.

He nods his head and taking out his phone.

"I will call Mandlakhe right away and let him know that Bayede will be fine" He says stepping aside.

"Thank you" I say.

I look at Liam and he's as worried as I am.

I shake my head Bayede told me that this man has a girlfriend yet he's here waiting on my woman to wake up.

I know Bandile respects the guy for everything he's done for Bayede but I will not respect a man whose after my woman seeing here pissed me off already.

"Liam" We all look to the side when a woman makes her way to us.

She gives Liam a hug holding on to him longer than she should,

"The girls called me Liam what happened" she asks.

"I don't know Zamile one of the bouncers found her on the ground" Liam says.

"I am so sorry I know what she means to you, I still can't believe it you two were just together now now" this Zamile girl says.

Liam clears his throat and looks at me.

"Oh Bandile I am sorry" she says now facing bandile.

"She's going to be fine" Bandile says.

*“This is Nqubeko” Bandile says. she
faces me and smiles.*

“I am Zamile, Bayede’s friend” she says.

*I nod my head acknowledging her presence. “I
need some air” I say walking out.*

I walk to my car and leans against it taking a smoke.

“Nqubeko right” Zamile says

“Can I help you” I ask?

*“No I just wanted to say that Bayede is lucky to have the
both of you in her life” She says.*

*“Is there something in particular that you want to tell me
Zamile” I ask starring down on her.*

She clears her throat and backs away.

*“Nothing just a little warning Bayede is not the saint that
you think she is not when she busy kissing other man” She
says.*

*I grab her by the neck and bring her closer to the car
pinning her against it.*

She grabs my arm gasping for air.

“What did you just say” I ask tightening my hold over her small neck.

“She’s kissing other man behind your back “ She says.

I press hard and look into her eyes.

“It was you wasn’t it you ran her over” I say letting loose.

She shakes her head.

“You are that desperate for Liam’s attention” I say putting two and two together.

“Please don’t kill me” She says. I

lean close to her ear.

“Stay away from Bayede if you ever come anywhere near her I will feed you to the dogs” I say letting go.

She collapses to the ground gasping and coughing.

I walk back to inside the hospital trying to be calm but loose all my cool when I see Liam talking to Marc.

“Nqubeko” Netha calls out.

I walk past him and go to Liam punching him in the face.

He throws one back at me but that lands on my jaw he throws another sucker punch but I block it and and lock him in with my arm around his throat.

“Stay away from Bayede she’s not yours and she will never be yours do yourself a favour and find someone your age” I say.

“Nqubeko let him go this isn’t about you two its about Bayede” Bandile says.

“I don’t care what you did for her that’s money I can pay back without feeling a dent” I say letting him loose.

He looks at me and gives me smirk.

“As much as you don’t want to admit it Bayede loves me and when I kissed her she loved it” He says.

I charge towards him tackle him bringing him down.

*“You son of a b*tch who kisses a drunk woman you took advantage of her ” I say throwing punches.*

Netha pulls me off him with Bandile getting in the middle.

“I will kill you” I say through gritted teeth.

“Phakathwayo that’s enough this is a hospital not a public place” Marc say.

Liam looks at me wiping the blood off his lip.

“I was there for her when you weren’t I stood by her when she needed someone and trust me when I say I am going nowhere and you won’t make me” He says.

I chuckle and look at Netha.

“This guy wants to try me” I say.

“Nqubeko please” Netha says.

“Liam please leave I will call you and let you know how she is” Bandile says.

“Only because you are asking” he says grabbing his jacket walking away.

“You are the reason she’s here you Zamile out her here” I shout.

Bandile looks at me and shakes his head.

“Netha meet Bandile the man who took in Bayede” I say.

Netha smiles and shoulder bumps Bandile. “Its good to meet you” He says.

“It good to meet you too” Bandile says.

We spent the night at the hospital and saw Bayede her face isn't bruised just a bump on the head and a bruised cheekbone.

she looked peaceful in her sleep we didn't want to wake her up so we left her with Bandile and went to check up in Somahhashi.

We haven't told her about Bayede being in admitted the doctor warned us about stressing him.

He looks at me then Netha,

“What are you boys not telling me?” He asks. “Nothing”

Netha says.

he looks at me and raises his eyebrow. “Nqubeko what is going on” he asks.

“Baba Bayede is in the hospital” Netha says. “Why what happened” He asks.

“She was hit by a car but its sorted” I say, he breathes heavily and presses the nurse call button.

The nurse hurried and looks at us. “Mr Ngubane you called” she says.

“Tell the doctor to fix my discharge papers I am leaving” He says.

“Mbomvu you just had a heart attack you can’t leave” I say.

“I have failed my daughter before I will not do it again” He says adamant.

“Very well I will get the car” I say standing up.

“Netha will get the car you stay I need to talk to you” Netha walks out leaving us alone.

“What’s troubling you Nqubeko I can tell something is bothering you? He asks. “Is it Bayede? I can take it you can tell me is it bad” He asks.

I shake my head and think back to her phone call.

“It’s nothing Mbomvu its just that the accident was caused by her friend and I am worried as to what she will think when she leans this” I say.

he nods his head.

“We will cross that bridge when we get to it” he says.

The door opens and the doctor walks in followed by the nurse.

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Bayede's keeper

#34

Nqubeko

The drive to the hospital is short since that the two hospitals aren't that far apart the press is already waiting for us rumours about Somahhashi being in the hospital have been making rounds all day long.

We usher him in with the press shouting behind us for comments I have never seen him this nervous before and the sight is rare and amusing.

Marc walks us through as he explains the amount of

alcohol found in Bayede's system and the injuries she sustained.

He still maintains how lucky she is that there wasn't any serious damages or internal bleeding.

The three of us walk in and find her with the nurse giving her a glass of water.

"I was Just giving her her medicine" The nurse says walking out.

She looks at all three of us and sighs.

"I am sorry" she says twiddling her thumbs. "Hey" Netha says.

"My name is Netha your brother" He says with soft chuckle.

A smile spreads across her lips as she extends her hand.

"Hi, my name is Bayede and I am your sister" she says.

Netha gently gives her a hug and pulls away. "My little sister" He says holding her chin.

“I am sorry” Netha whispers.

She breaks down and wipes her tears.

“I think the old man wants to talk to you” he says moving.

*“I will be outside” Netha says. “Wait
for me” I say.*

*“Hlala Nqubeko(Nqubeko stay)” Bayede says I
lean against the wall and look at them.*

*Mbomvu settles down next to her and clears his throat
he shouldn’t be here but the man is just stubborn.*

*“I don’t know if I should introduce myself like brother”
He says letting out a chuckle.*

A faint smile spread across her lips.

*“Shouln’t you be in the hospital” she asks. “I
should but I had to see you” he says.*

He draws in some air and lets it out.

“I am sorry Bayede for all that you had to go through

while I am still alive, children are not supposed to suffer but you did because of my and your mother's decision" he says.

"Why didn't you take her" she asks.

I have come to realize the only person Bayede truly loved more than anything in this world was her sister.

"I wanted to take her but she was sick and she needed your mother more, I chose to leave her behind because I knew your mother would take care of her. I loved your sister and leaving her behind hurt me but at the same time I couldn't take care of a sickly child on my own" he says.

"Your mother's family cheated me and told me that she was dead and that your mother had left with her husband I didn't look for your mother because she was married to another man.

A man that could take care of her, I never wanted to take the kids away from her but I couldn't let them be raised by another man" he says.

"Had I known that she was still alive and that your mother was carrying you I would have fought hard

and looked for you guys” he says wiping his tears.

“I will never forgive myself for what that man put you through and I am so sorry that he hurt both you and your sister” Somahhashi says breaking down.

I blink my tears away and clear my throat.

He takes Bayede’s hand and places it on his chest.

“I am your father and I love you like I do your siblings all I am asking for is that you give me a chance” Somahhashi says.

Bayede bits her lips and put her arm over her eyes. “Khala

Mbomvu

Somahhashi

Nyoniyezwe

Nomafu,Myaluza

Zikode elimhlophe” He says praising Bayede.

She breaks into a loud sob her chest heaving heavily.

The door opens and Netha followed by the nurses walk in.

“Its okay” I say.

The nurse walks out leaving the four of us in the room

“You are not alone not anymore we the Ngubane’s are here” He says standing up.

He pulls Bayede into his embrace and my poor baby just weeps holding on to her father.

Somahhashi wipes her tears and kisses her cheek pulling away to wipe his own tears.

“I love you and from now on I will never let anyone hurt you” He says.

“Baba I think we should give Bayede and Nqubeko some privacy and I think she’s tired” Netha says.

Somahhashi stands up and walks out leaving me with his daughter I move closer and settle next to her holding her hand with both my hands.

she’s still emotional vulnerable but I need to know.

“MaNgubane” I say.

“Phakathwayo” She says softly.

“What happened at the club” I ask.

“Mhmm” she says.

“Mangubane I won’t ask you again” I say. “I got drunk and got hit by a car” she says.

“Okay so you didn’t kiss Liam” I ask.

She says nothing and sniffs.

“Mangubane” I say softly.

“I am sorry” she says.

I nod my head and let go of her hand I was hopping her friend was lying.

It stings knowing that the first time she got drunk she kissed another man.

“And the phone call what was that about” I ask.

“You talked about a baby Mangubane whose baby were you talking about” I ask.

“Were you pregnant Mangubane” I ask looking at her.

She nods her head and hides her face in her hands crying,

“When” I ask.

she doesn’t answer me and just cries.

“Bayede” I say.

“I didn’t know I was pregnant Nqubeko” she says.

“Bayede when” I shout.

She jumps up screaming.

The door opens and Somahhashi walks in followed by Netha.

“Nqubeko” Somahhashi says.

I ignore him and look at Bayede.

“I found out when you were in prison” she says. “Was I the father” I ask.

She nods her head and feel my heart race. “What happened to the child” I ask.

She looks at me and bite her lip.

“Bayede” I shout when she cries even more.

“That’s enough Nqubeko you are scarring her”

Somahhashi says.

“Aunt Martha killed the baby she drugged me” she says.

I look at hide her face in her arms and cry bitterly. “She killed our baby”She says

I feel weak numb and in disbelief. “I need some air” I say.

“Nqubeko sit down you can’t drive like this” Netha says.

“Leave me alone Netha” I say.

“Nqubeko” I turn and look at Bayede. “I am sorry” she says.

I turn and head for the door I hear her bitter cry and still continue walking making my way to my car.

I drive to the bar and find myself drinking trying to numb the pain I want to scream my pain to the world and burn everything that is my way.

I think about Bayede's the pain and suffering that she's been through she never deserved any of this.

I pull out my wallet and look at Becca's business card I take my phone and dial her number.

I end the call before it rings not the thought of Bayede keeping this to herself gets the better of me.

I dial the number again and wait till she answers. "Becca hello" She says.

"Phakathwayo speaking we met at the bar" I say.

"I guess you're ready to play I will send you my location" she says.

I end the call and wait for the address and pay my bill as soon as it comes through.

I walk to my car and drive out passing by the garage for some condoms.

The drive to her house is not that long i call her when I am the gate and get in after talking to her.

I walk up to her apartment and knock on the door. She takes a while but eventually does wearing

nothing to my amusement,

*She opens the door in nothing but her birthday suit. My d*ck twitch's seeing her naked.*

She pulls me in and shuts the door behind us dropping her silk gown.

“Where do you want me” she asks.

I grab her silk hair and kiss her lips it deepens with each moan that she lets out.

She pushes me down to the couch and goes on her knees moving her hand up to my crotch.

She unbuttons my pants and pulls them down while I grab her breast fondling them.

For the first time ever I find myself wanting to forget everything that's happened leading to today.

She moans and by that I can she's more experienced.

She pulls down my briefs and lick her lips biting them.

“Oh my you are huge” he says.

I feel her warm tongue lick me and her mouth taking me in.

She starts blowing me while I grab her hair pushing her down my shaft.

I let her stand up and get the condoms while I take off my shirt.

She puts in on perfectly with her eyes still on me.

She spreads her legs and sits on top of me easing herself down my stiff shaft.

I shut my eyes eyes when she starts moving her waist showing off her skills.

Her pussy is tight but my mind keeps drifting to best I have ever had.

I stand up still inside her and turn placing her on the couch and pull out.

I make her hold on to the couch as she bends for me.

*I stoke myself and position my d*ck pushing it inside her.*

She screams when it hit her inner walls.

I grab and pull her hair as I deeply thrust in and out without a care in the world.

She taps on the couch but I go harder and slam inside her.

I feel myself close to coming and pull out and go in again fully thrusting inside her pink entrance.

Her loud screams fill the entire house when I hit it hard.

“I am coming oh yeah yeah please don’t stop” she says screaming her release.

I move my waist in circles and stroke faster feeling the edge to explode.

I groan loud filling up the condom as I pump inside her.

She turns and looks at me with this satisfied look on her face.

She spreads her legs wide for me and plays with herself flicking her folds.

I feel myself get another reaction at the sight of her flicking herself and softly moan.

“I am all yours for the night” she says pushing one finger inside her wet hole.

She takes it out and licks it then bite her lip.

“I want you” she says confidently shoving two more fingers inside her.

*I put on the second condom and lean close to kiss her plum lips and brush my hard d*ck against her swollen flesh.*

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Bayede's keeper

#35

Nqubeko

I wake up next to Becca resting her head on my chest.

I reach for my phone and look at the numerous missed calls from Somahhashi it must have been urgent for him to call like this.

I move Becca from my chest and gently lay her down on the pillow.

I get out of bed and walk over to her dressing table taking my pants.

I put them on and watch as she slowly raises her head, she looks at me and smiles getting off the bed.

She walks over to me and wraps her arms around my waist.

“Please stay” she says.

I shrug myself off her hold and put on my shirt.

“You don’t have to be cold” she says.

“Last night was great but I have to go” I say.

“Can’t you stay for breakfast” she asks. “No” I say.

She goes down on her knees and touches my crotch.

“Desperation doesn’t look good on you like I said last night was great don’t ruin it” I say.

“I am sorry” she says reaching for the towel and wraps it around her body.

I put on my shoes then watch and grab my phone.

Last night might have been great but it was a mistake something I feel guilty about now.

I shouldn’t have left the hospital I should have stayed.

But then who am I kidding I would have exploded had I stayed, truth is I needed to calm down and the

thought of Becca screaming my name seemed like a good idea at the time.

I walk out of her building and pass by the house for a quick shower.

I change into clean clothes and make my way out buying flowers on my way to the hospital.

I reach the hospital and stay inside the car thinking of ways to approach this matter.

I don't know if I can look her in the eye after last night.

I put on my sunglasses and make my way inside the hospital, I pass by reception and greet the ladies walking to Bayede's ward.

I open the door and find Mrs Ngubane senior with her.

I take off my glasses and greet them kissing Bayede's forehead.

"Now that your man is here I will go to the cafeteria and look for your father" she says looking to Bayede.

"Behave Nqubeko" She says smiling heading for the

door.

I grab a chair and place the flowers next to her.

“I am sorry about last night I just needed time to myself” I say.

“It’s okay I understand you were shocked” she says holding my hand.

“Nqubeko look at me” she says. I raise my head and look at her.

“I didn’t know I was carrying a child had I known I would have fought and protected my baby” she says.

“I am sorry Phakathwayo I didn’t know” she says.

“There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t think about the baby,if she or he would have taken after me or you.

I sometimes cry myself to sleep because I can hear my own screams from that day” she says sadly smiling.

“What happened Bayede?why did she do it” I ask. “She wanted to hurt you because you killed her

*brother little did she know that I was the one who did it”
She says.*

“How did it happen” I ask.

*“Nqubeko please don’t make relive that night” she says
softly.*

I stand up and lay next to her.

“Please Bayede I just want to know” I say.

*“The day you chased me away was the day she spiked
my juice” she says swallowing hard.*

Tear fill her eyes and I watch as she blinks them away.

*“It started off as cramps then this burning feeling on my
back and then I started bleeding,I cried Nqubeko and
begged her to take me to the hospital but she didn’t.*

*She stood her and watched me bleed then she went to
sleep while I screamed in pain. The following morning
she woke up like nothing happened and went about her
day that’s when her daughter helped me and Bandile
took me in” she says.*

She breathes heavily as I wipe her tears.

“Sekwanele manje Mangubane usukhale kwaba kaningi ngeke uphinde ukhale uyezwa” (It’s enough Mangubane you have cried for too long you will never cry again) I say.

I kiss her forehead and look into her beautiful eyes.

“You will never shed tears of sadness Mangubane ever again because I won’t let that happen” I say.

“I feel lighter Nqubeko like a huge burden has been lifted off me” she says.

“I want to be better I hate feeling like this always crying and feeling this sadness in my heart” she says.

“I spoke to Bab Ngubane and he would like to see Khethiwe’s grave, I don’t know how I feel about going back when that woman is still alive but with you by my side I know I can do anything” she says.

“I love you Nqubeko” she says resting her head on my chest.

I spent the day with Bayede till visiting hours were

over.

She's really not that bad and I am grateful that she coming home in a few days.

I make my way to Somahhashi's office and close the door behind me.

He is standing by the window looking at the view. He's powerful just like he's rich.

With Bayede being his daughter I don't know if things will be the same between us.

He turns and looks at me he looks much stronger today, I think that crying session he had really helped meaning it was of an emotional thing that a physical one.

He moves away from the window and walks towards me.

"Am I a fool Nqubeko" he asks.

I study his face to see if he knows because if he did he would have acted sooner.

"No" I say.

“Then why didn’t you answer my calls” he asks. “I needed time to myself Somahhashi” I say.

He stands in front of me and tilts his head looking at me.

“Would you hurt Bayede” he asks. His question catches me off guard.

“I asked you a question Nqubeko” he says.

“I would never hurt Bayede Mbomvu I love her” I say.

He nods his head and looks straight into my eyes.

“I will kill you Nqubeko pull that stunt you pulled yesterday and I will kill you” He warns.

“If you ever hurt her in any way ngizokubulala mfan’ wam your mother will never find you” he says.

“I will not let another man hurt my daughter” he continues.

“I love you Nqubeko as my son but if you dare hurt her” he says shaking his head.

I nod my nod my head Somahhashi the father is

more dangerous than Somahhashi the business man.

“Bayede and I have known each other since we were kids Somahhashi, you know that I love her more than anything and I wouldn’t hurt her trust me” I say.

He nods his head stepping away.

I know Somahhashi and he always keeps to his threats.

The door opens and mandlakhe walks in.

He greets Somahhashi who walks past him and closes the door.

“What’s up with him” he asks.

“Long story” I say.

“You called Phakathwayo what’s the job” he asks. “I want you burn a house for me” I say.

He frowns looking at my expression.

“Why would you want to burn a house is it for insurance purposes” he asks.

“Mandlakhe I want you to find a few guys who won’t mind having their way with an older woman” I say.

“Phakathwayo you are scaring me does Somahhashi know about this” he asks.

“He doesn’t have to know and you won’t tell him” I say.

I sit on the edge of the table my one leg on the floor with other one is slightly in the air touching the carpet.

“I want the guys to have fun with her till she begs them to kill her when that is done have them pour gasoline or whatever on her then burn the house.

I don’t want you to kill her immediately I want the house set alight with her inside.

Make sure that she’s alone with no one to help her” I say.

“If I may ask Phakathwayo what did she do” he asks.

“Enough to die a slow painful death” I say.

He nods his head.

*“If that’s your wish then it shall be done
Phathakathwa” he says standing.*

“When shall we do it” he asks.

*“I will call you tomorrow with the full details just get the
guys ready on your side” I say.*

*“Intando yakho izokwenziwa Yeyeye” he says walking
out.*

*I have never killed a woman before I close my eyes and
let what I have just put in motion sink in.*

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#36

Nqubeko

It's been over a month now and I haven't been able to sleep,so many things have been running through my mind.

I haven't been at peace with the man that I am.

I haven't felt like this before but having Bayede back in my life has turned things around and lying to her hasn't been sitting well with me.

Bayede and I have been spending more time together which is amazing.

The love she gives me is out of this worlds I am proud to say her love disarms me in ways I can't imagine.

I love her more than anything and I miss being able

to tell her that I love her without feeling guilty about anything.

Somahhashi definitely knows about Becca and I.

I don't want to burn bridges not when I have come this far and achieved so much.

My mother looks at me and holds my hand shaking her head.

I told her everything from the baby, Liam to Becca and Martha.

She wipes her tears and deeply sighs.

"I didn't raise a killer Nqubeko" she says covering her face with her hand.

"Ma I didn't kill her" I say.

"But you wanted to kill her Nqubeko kodwa what is happening to you" she asks.

"Mama please" I say.

"And then after everything Bayede has been through you go ahead and cheat on her" she says sounding

disappointed.

“Your father never cheated on me never” she says. My father was a good and honest man.

“I am sorry ntombi endala” I say wiping her tears.

“Bayede has been through hell Nqubeko and she waited for you surely should count for something.

I don’t understand why you would want to hurt the same person you went to Jail for huh” she asks.

“I was angry Ma and at that time doing what I did made me feel better” I say.

“So what you are telling me is that should you and Bayede have problems you will run it another woman’s arms” she asks.

“Cha Ma I won’t” I say.

“But you did it Nqubeko while she was in the hospital crying thinking about what the truth was doing to you” she says.

Hearing her go off like this makes me feel worse than I do.

“I appreciate everything Mbomvu has done for you and us but ever since you met him you changed” she says.

I shake my head Mbomvu might have played a role but this is all one me.

“You can’t blame Mbomvu not when I am a man who can make his own decisions” I say.

She nods his head and sighs.

“What are you going to do now” she asks. “I am going to tell her the truth” I say.

Her eyes widen.

“Nqubeko it might back fire” she says.

“Ma you don’t know how sweet and kind she is and everytime I look at her I think about my betrayal and it eats me up” I say.

“What if she doesn’t forgive you” she asks.

“I will fight for her and if she doesn’t want me then I will let her go” I say.

“We both know you will never let her go” she says.

“I will try mama” I say.

She nods her head standing up.

“Let me make you some tea” she says.

I raise an eyebrow my mother knows I don’t drink tea.

“It will calm you down and prevent you from cheating” she says.

“It’s too soon Ma” I say.

She laughs and shakes her head.

“Okay muntu ka Becca” she says.

“Really Ma” I say.

“I hope Bayede forgives” she says putting on the kettle.

I spent the rest of the day with my mother then drove home, Bayede has been spending time at my place.

The place now feels like a home having her around just brightens up my days, coming back home to her makes my whole day and waking up next to her is

the best thing ever.

She walks out of the bathroom in nothing but my white t-shirt and socks.

She looks cute and knowing that she's not wearing any underwear makes me hard.

“My father called he wants me to come spend the weekend with them” she says sitting ontop of me.

“And what did you say” I ask.

“I said yes” she says placing her hands on my bare chest.

“I am glad you are giving him a chance” I say. She smiles and leans close giving me a kiss.

“I handed in my resignation at work today” she says faintly smiling.

We talked about her getting work else where but I didn't think she would take my concerns seriously.

“I hate this constant fighting between you and Liam so I decided to part way with him and find a job elsewhere” she says.

“I am sorry” I say.

I know she’s fond of the guy but she loves her job more.

“It’s okay I mean we crossed the line when we kissed and I am sorry that I allowed that to happen” she says still smiling.

“I don’t want to fight with you Nqubeko and I respect you as my man.

I know me working with Liam rubs you off the wrong way and after that kiss I think it’s best this way” she says taking off the t-shirt.

She takes my hands and cups her breast.

“I love you Phakathwayo” she says leaning for a kiss.

I run my hands down her bare back kissing her slowly and deeply.

“Make love to me Nqubeko” she whispers.

She doesn’t need to tell me twice because I gently turn her and get in between her thighs.

I give her breasts the much needed attention leaving

kisses down to her navel.

*Her soft shaven part meets my lips,I use my fingers to part her p*ssy lips and run my tongue down her hole and up to her clit.*

She softly moans when I circle my tongue on her hole trying to push it in.

I press my thumb on her clit and move it slowly while I eat her.

She pushes my head deeper moving her hips side ways.

“Oh Nqubeko” she says screaming loud bring her legs up.

I move up and kiss her soft lips brushing my cock up against her wet hole.

“You taste so good” I say.

She giggles in between the kiss and pulls my head closer deepening our kiss.

I slowly push the tip of my cork inside her and pull out.

Her moans are everything and the way she grabs on tight to me is everything.

I brush my cork against her wet flesh and push in the tip pulling out again.

“Ohh Nqubeko please” she says crying out her plea.

I push myself inside her warm walls and close my eyes resting my forehead on hers.

I look into her eyes as I give her slow strokes.

The moment is sweet and beautiful I wish it could last longer.

I raise my right leg up having hers wrap around my waist.

I move in circles slowly thrusting in and out of her tight wet hole.

Her moans fill our bedroom together with my groaning.

I move my hand and cup her breast massaging them.

“Please don’t stop” she says.

I pull out and watch her bite lip she moves her hand

down to my shaft and strokes me before pulling me back inside her.

I only push in the tip and pull out holding my stiff cork in my hand.

I brush up against her wet hole and tap my cock on her clit then slowly push it inside her.

She wraps her arms around my neck while I hook her leg over my arm.

I know she's about to come so I give her slow strokes to her satisfaction.

“MaNgubane” I say looking into her eyes

She moves her waist meeting my every stroke.

It's difficult to speak when I am this deep inside her. “Yes” she says softly.

“I love you and I am sorry” I say.

“I cheated” I say.

Her body tenses up as she blinks and moves her hands over my neck looking gutted.

She tries pushing me off but I hold both her hands and pin them on the bed.

“Let me make you cum first” I say.

*She bites her lip and eases her body relaxing. I f*ck her slowly seeing the hurt in her eyes.*

I lean in close and kiss her lips. “I am so sorry” I say.

She shuts her eyes and allows me to pleasure her till we both cum.

She holds on to me so dear life while I fill her up.

I pull out and bring the towel closer but she sits up straight and draws her legs in looking at me.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam” I say.

“When” she asks.

“Bayede” I say.

“Nqubeko when” she shouts.

“On the day you told me about the baby” I say. “So instead of going home to cry like a normal

person you went out and cheated” she says. “Is it because I kissed Liam” she asks.

I run out of words because the honest truth is that I cheated for selfish reasons,I can’t even think of one right now.

“Maybe I don’t know I was a mess and I messed up” I say.

“You cheated Nqubeko with another woman slept with her then came back to sleep with me,what are you to make me sick” she asks.

“I used a condom” I say.

She nods head and stands up from the bed wiping herself clean.

“I know me kissing Liam upset you but I didn’t sleep with him and I would never hurt you like that” she says walking towards the closet.

I get on my feet and look at her take out her clothes.

“Bayede lets talk about this” I say.

“There’s nothing to talk about Nqubeko” she says

taking some of her clothes and toiletry bag. “Bayede I am sorry” I say.

“Sorry for sleeping with her or for hurting us” she asks.

“Both sthandwa I didn’t mean to hurt you” I say.

“Nqubeko you are a changed man and no matter how hard I try to turn a blind eye, the truth is staring me in the face and I need to accept it” she says softly.

“I don’t know you anymore” she says shrugging her shoulders.

“I went to prison Bayede what did you expect to happen huh that I would come back the same man” I ask.

“So it’s my fault that you are changed man” she asks.

She shakes her head and takes the bag,I grab the bag and throw it on the bed closing the door.

“You are not going anywhere” I say.

“Usufuna ukungishaya Nqubeko” (You now want to

hit me Nqubeko) she asks.

I look at her and run my hands over my head breathing heavily.

“I want you to hear me out” I say.

“Vula umnyango Nqubeko”(open the door) she says calmly.

“So you can go to him again is that why you want to leave the house so late” I ask tilting my head..

“Nqubeko you are scaring me” she says.

She takes a few steps back when I move closer to her.

Tears fill her eyes as she raises her hands shielding her face.

“Bayede” I say.

She shakes her head.

“I would never hurt you,you have to believe me” I say.

She keeps her hands over her face clearly frightened. “I am sorry” I say.

I step away from her and put on my pants grabbing my car keys and t-shirt opening the door walking out.

I walk out of the house and get into my car driving out.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#37

I look at the time and it's past midnight and still Nqubeko isn't back home.

I reach for my phone and contemplate calling Netha and find out if maybe he's not with him.

I shake my head thinking about my father's reaction should he find out about Nqubeko's infidelity.

Still on my father the man is amazing we are still getting to know each other but I can safely say that I love him together with my family.

I now realize the importance of having a sense of belonging.

Knowing that he loves and accepts me is everything.

I get out of bed and walk closer to the window looking out hoping to see his car.

I deeply sigh when I see nothing and try calling him

again.

He picks up just when I am about to loose all hope.

“Phakathwayo” I say.

“MaNgubane” he says softly.

“Where are you sthandwa sam” I ask.

“At the Garage” he says.

I heave a sigh of relief he’s close by that’s a start.

*“Ngicela ubuye ekhaya phela Yeyeye” (please come home)
I say.*

*“So you are not afraid of me anymore” he asks. “Just
come home” I say ending the call.*

I fix the bed and take a quick shower fixing myself up.

*I know it’s late but I still put on my perfume and fix my
hair.*

*I look at myself in the mirror and laugh the things we do
for love.*

I put on another one of his t-shirt and make my way

to the kitchen.

I open the fridge and take out the left over slices of pizza and throw them in the microwave.

The door opens just after the microwave is done.

I take out the pizza and grab a bottle of coke and sparkling water.

I look at him as he shuts the door.

“Please bring the glasses” I say walking back to the bedroom.

He takes a while but finally joins me.

“Close the door” I say.

He looks at me clearly uneasy.

“I won’t kill you if that’s what you are afraid off” I say.

He frowns but closes the door still and walks over to the bed.

He takes off his shoes and gets on while I pour him some coke.

“Let’s eat” I say.

He looks at the pizza slices and hesitates.

“Ngey’khathi zabathakathi Bayede wena ufuna sidle” (At witch full hours you want us to eat) he says.

I nod my head and drink my sparkling water.

He starts eating failing to look me in the eye.

“Look at me” I say.

He sighs and looks me in the eye.

“Ngiyaxolisa” I say heavily breathing.

“I am sorry that you went to prison because of me, I am sorry that you lost out on your dreams of being a doctor because me. I never said this but thank you for taking the fall for me, thank you for loving me that much that you put your whole life on hold and saved me” I say putting my hand on his jaw.

“I am sorry that I kissed Liam and I kept the truth about the baby from you.

It was never my intention to hurt you Phakathwayo” I say.

“These past few years were hard as much as I had

Bandile I still felt alone, Khethiwe's death really hit me hard and I went crazy and whenever I would think about her I wouldn't be able to handle it.

She was my everything, you my everything and in the short space I had lost both of you and that drove me mad. I was diagnosed with severe depression and anxiety I had hallucinations Phakathwayo I was seeing things that weren't there.

I heard voices that weren't there but the medication kept me sane.

I have been taking pills not because I want to but because I need them" I say.

"I worked at the club as a dancer because it made me feel in control of my emotions, I enjoyed being Hail on that stage because it was an escape from my messy and lonely life.

For a night I could live a fantasy and be the beautiful sexy Hail that man wish to bed and not be the crazy Bayede who always cries and sees things that aren't there" I say still looking at him.

"Then you came back if even if it wasn't for me but

we met and one brick fell from the tower I have built around me.

I know that you have changed and I am making peace with that because I love you so much.

But with being said if you want to cheat Nqubeko then tell me so I don't invest myself in the relationship. If you want to dip your cork in every honey pot then tell me so I can step away and find myself a man who will love me and only me" I tell him.

I feel his jaws clench.

He holds my hand and sighs.

"I don't want to cheat Bayede what happened was a mistake and it will never happen again" he says.

"I know that I hurt you and that it will take time for us to move past this but I am willing to fight for us" he says.

He takes my hands and kisses them.

"I am sorry MaNgubane for lashing out and blaming you for my cheating, I might have changed but I am

still the same man that loves you more than anything.

My heart will always beat to you that will never change” he says.

“I don’t like Liam and I never will because he took advantage of the fact that you were drunk and I can’t trust a man like” he says.

“Why is that you never looked for me” I ask.

“Because I was afraid that maybe you had moved on with another man,I was so afraid of seeing you happy with another I stayed away for as long as I could” he says.

I move the plate and place it on the side of the table. I move closer to him and sit on top of him.

“Let’s talk about her who is she” I ask helping him out of his t-shirt.

“Her name is Becca I met her at the bar” he says.

I shut him up with a kiss and grind myself over his crotch.

I feel the effect of my movement and smile pulling down his pants.

His black cork springs out coming alive when I touch it.

“Uyalamba Nqubeko”(Do you starve Nqubeko) I ask gently stroking him looking him in eyes

He swallows hard and shakes his head.

“Cha ngiyabuza ngike ngakulambisa selokhu kwathi nse” (It’s just a question have I ever sexually starved you)I ask.

“No” he says breathing heavily.

I nod my head lifting up the t-shirt showing off my bareness.

He looks confused probably thought I would kick him to the curb.

*“Woza ngikuphe” (Come let me feed you) I say lifting my arse and rubbing myself over his hard d*ck.*

His eyes widen.

“Angithi wena uyayithanda inquza futhi

*uyayifebela”(Isn’t it you love p*ssy you even cheat because of it” I say.*

*I push myself down his hard shaft and bite my lip
Nqubeko is big and rough when he wants but today I am
in charge.*

*He cups my breast and squeezes them in his huge manly
hands.*

*I move my waist in circles and watch as he his mouth
drops open and his tongue slightly stick out.*

*A part of me wants to laugh but I hold myself and pull
out turning my back and riding him cowgirl style.*

He growls and grabs my breast mumbling to himself.

*“Oh kodwa MaNgubane” he says taking huge gulps off
air.*

*“Dammit woman what are you doing to me” he asks
making sounds I didn’t even know existed.*

“I am about to cum” he says groaning.

I stop moving and pull out turning to face him.

He looks kooks ready to cry as I take his hard cock

in my hand and give a hand job.

“Yini ekwenza ufune ukudla nabanye oskhotheni kodwa ekhaya udla wena” (what makes you want to share another woman when you have yours whom you don’t share with anyone) I ask.

“Yi Demon MaNgubane usathane ebengilinga”(The devil was using me MaNgubane”he says trembling.

I slid back inside and shut my eyes this cheating man is delicious and it hurts that he gave himself to another woman.

He holds me tight and meets me with fast deep strokes.

It doesn’t take long before he explodes and comes inside me.

I have never seen him this vulnerable I tighten my pelvic muscles still looking him in the eye.

“Look at me” I say.

He looks at me and catching his breath. “The next time you think of cheating on me remember that I can also give this up to another

man” I say gently pulling out.

I reach for the towel and clean myself up then gently wipe him too.l

“Bayede” he says.

“Don’t talk to me Nqubeko” I say getting under the covers.

He also gets in under the covers and tries to hold me but I shrug myself off him.

“Ungangithinti”(don’t touch me) I say.

I slept like a baby while he kept tossing and turning.

I made breakfast and set the table then made him fresh pot of coffee.

I have already packed my bag figured I should go to Bandile’s place seeing that we are all going to my father’s house.

“Morning” I say.

“Morning” he says clearing his throat.

“About last night” he says.

“Last night was good we both loved every moment of it and no I haven’t forgiven you” I say.

He nods his head.

“I might have kissed another man but I didn’t sleep with him” I say deeply sighing.

I stand up my chair and walk over to him and sit on his lap.

“I love you Nqubeko but I think we need time apart” I say.

“For how long” he asks.

“I don’t know Phakathwayo I am hurting right now so I don’t know when I will stop hurting” I say.

He nods his head.

“I love you ngane ka Somahhashi” he says. “I love you too” I say.

“We are not over right it’s just time apart” he asks. “We are not over so no sleeping with other woman” I

say.

He chuckles and takes out a watch from his pocket.

“Remember this” he asks.

“Yes I do” I say.

“Hold out your hand for me” he says.

I hold out my hand and have him put the watch on my wrist.

“I want you to hold on to this for me till we find our way back to each other” he says.

I place my hands on his face and pull him for a kiss.

“You are a good man Nqubeko always remember that” I say giving him a hug.

Being away from him will give me time to think and spend more of that time with my family and also find another job.

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Bayede's keeper

#38

I have been at my father's house for days now I miss Nqubeko but then we are both committed to this time apart thing.

He is being a gentlemen about all this and very understanding apart from his small antics here and there of course.

Last night he called and told me that he was sick and needed pampering men are such big babies.

I am in the kitchen with Kenya sitting on the counter keeping me company.

"Yeye" she says looking at me. "Yes Pumpum" I say.

"Did you know that Mkhuli can sing" asks.

“Yes” I say.

She laughs and claps her hands together. “I like Mkhulu” she says smiling.

“I like him too” I say.

“Why didn’t I have him before” she asks with a frown on her face.

“You did have him he just wasn’t here” I say. She nods her head smiling.

Zamo walks in and looks at me grinning, she looks like Khethiwe so much I can’t help fall in love with her.

In her I have gained a sister and more she’s slowly becoming my best friend.

She hugs me from behind and giggles.

“Your man is outside” she says.

“What is he doing here” I ask.

“He told baba that he’s sick and that if he doesn’t see you he will die” she says laughing even more.

“And you let him say all those things to Dad” I say. She shrugs her shoulders and takes Kenya.

“Let’s go outside and see Mkhulu” Zamo says.

Nqubeko walks past them and settles down .

He looks flushed and his eyes are tired. “MaNgubane I am sick” he says.

I move to where he is seated and put my hand on his forehead.

“You are burning up” I say.

He nods his head and holds me close resting his head on my breast.

“I think you should go to the doctor” I tell him.

“You know what I think” he says with mischievous smile on his face.

I shake my head and wait for his dirty mind to start working.

“I think that thing of yours from that other night might help cure me” he says.

I raise my eyebrows and smile.

“And I think the doctor will help you just fine” I say. He deeply sighs and lets me go.

“So you don’t want me feeling better” he asks. I move away from him and put on the kettle.

“Wenzani”(what are you doing) he asks.

“I am making you some chamomile tea it will help” I say.

“Yey angiliphuzi itiyе minа”(I don’t drink tea) he says with a frown

He shakes his head stands up.

“It’s fine Bayede let me die isn’t it you don’t love me anymore” he says walking out.

I laugh throwing my head back Nqubeko is dramatic.

The day goes by with Nqubeko, Netha and Baba spending their time in his study.

Their meeting adjourns and Netha together with

Nqubeko head out without saying anything.

I make Baba a cup of tea and head to the lounge, I place the tray in front of me and settle next to him.

He wraps his arm around me and kisses my forehead, I am getting used to this last born thing it's amazing and addictive.

"I am happy that you are here" he says.

"Baba" he looks at me smiles.

"I love you" I say.

"I love you too MaNgubane" he says.

Zamo walks in and settles on the other side. "My

two favorite girls in the world" Baba says. Kenya

walks in and folds her arms looking at us. "Mkhuli

what about me" she says.

Baba laughs and holds out his arms.

"You are Mkhulu's favorite and beautiful baby girl" Baba says.

"See I am beautiful Mkhulu likes me more" Kenya

says.

We all laugh at her innocence.

It's funny how this family has grown in such a short period of time.

"How was she" Zamo asks.

I know she's referring to our mother.

"She was beautiful just like you had the most melodious voice I had ever heard and her smile, Lord Mama's smile was just beautiful I think you and Khethiwe took that from her.

She loved singing she was kind and loving" I say.

"Baba do you miss her" Zamo asks the one question I have been longing to ask.

"Everyday but the three of you look so much like her it makes missing her bearable" he says.

"I need something to eat Yeye should I get you anything" she asks.

"No I am okay" I say.

Kenya follows behind her leaving me with Baba.

“Bayede what’s going on between you and Nqubeko” he asks.

“Nothing Baba” I say.

“You may not be comfortable talking to me but if there’s anything troubling you I want you to talk to Swazi or your sister” he says.

“I want to talk to you” I say.

He beams proudly and looks at me listening.

“We are taking a break Baba nothing serious” I say. “Did he hurt you” he asks.

“No we just need time apart that’s all” I say. “If did you would tell me right” he says.

I nod my head.

“Thank you for allowing me be your father I know we still have a long way to go but I am grateful to have you in my life” he says.

“Baba don’t cry” I say. He blinks his tears away.

“I am sad Bayede that I didn’t raise you that you came into this world and I wasn’t there to receive you” he says.

I think him not knowing about my existence and missing out on our life hurts and the thought of going to Khethiwe’s grave hurts even more.

“But you will be here for more of my birthdays, my wedding and the birth of my children you will be here” I say.

He shakes his head.

“I don’t want you to get married Yeye I still any you home with me” he says.

I rest my head on his shoulder who knew that this man can be emotional.

We all ate dinner as a family without Netha though it still feels so unreal that I have a family that loves me and the people that I love.

Bandile and Thando have been welcomed into this family with open arms, the love and warmth we have

gotten so far is just out of this world.

Zamo walks into the kitchen followed by mama. We called her here since we both want to go out. “Out with it” Mama says.

“A few friends of mine are hosting and I was wondering if you we can go” Zamo says.

“You two think I was born yesterday okay let me go back to my husband seeing that you are not serious about your request” she says standing up.

“Ma can I go see Nqubeko he’s sick and he claims that he’s going to die if I don’t come see him” I say.

She laughs and looks at Zamo.

“Sizwe asked if I could sleep over and you know how baba gets” Zamo says.

“You may go but by five in the morning I want you back home” she says.

“And use a condom” she says.

We are already packed while Zamo goes about her own way I go about mine.

I drive straight to Nqubeko's and to my surprise the house is empty.

I turn on the lights and change into my nightwear getting under the covers I should have called before coming here.

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Bayede's keeper

#39

I tossed and turned for a few hours thinking about Nqubeko, I even thought of driving back home but then I thought about Baba waking up when my car drives in.

I tried calling him but he wasn't answering his phone and that made me question the possibility of his whereabouts.

I open my eyes and look at the time its already 6 in the morning and ma said we should be back by 5.

I jump up from Nqubeko's comfortable bed and grab my clothes and shoes.

The sound of a glass shattering stops me from doing anything any further.

I drop the pile of clothes on the floor and tiptoe to

the kitchen.

I stop on my tracks when I see Nqubeko standing in front of the open fridge.

For a second I truly thought it was the crazy girl from the other day.

He closes the fridge and I notice the gun in his hand.

My heart skips I never seen a gun at close range before he tries to hide it but it's too late I have already seen it.

I didn't even know that he owned a gun It also doesn't look like he's gotten much sleep and by the looks of things he's just gotten in now.

There are some blood stains on his t-shirt and definitely not the the broken glass.

I swallow hard and try not think much of it but the question inside me is dying to be asked.

“Bayede I didn't know you were here” he says.

“I arrived last night couldn't sleep knowing you are sick” I say.

“You should have called” he says.

“I did call but you didn’t answer your phone” I say.

“I am sorry I had a rough night” he says balancing on the fridge.

The gun is still held behind him.

“Where were you” I ask.

“I was just running some errands” he says. I nod and look at the blood stains.

“It’s not what you think Netha and I had a sparring session” he says.

I know he’s lying but I don’t want to ask any further.

“Are you hungry should I make you something to eat” I ask.

He coughs and shakes his head.

“I need to shower then sleep” he says. “I will just tidy up then leave” I say.

“Please don’t go stay I will drive home” he says. “Okay”

I walk back to the bedroom and make the bed to think I was ready to jump ship without making it.

I lay my clothes on the bed as well as clean clothes for him too.

He walks in and settles on the edge of the bed and slowly takes off his shoes.

I look at him and wonder what jail really did to this man.

I move closer and settle down next to him holding his hand.

He won't talk and I won't ask.

"I will go make you something to eat" I say. "No thank you I just want to hold you" he says.

We both lay on the bed with him holding me tight.

I say a small prayer that Ma doesn't kill me or tell Baba that I left the house.

Nqubeko being the baby that he is woke up to take a bath then he went back to sleep and asked me to

stay.

I look at the time and it 12:30 everyone is up by now knowing Kenya she went to my bedroom looking for me.

I grab my phone and walk out of the bedroom heading to the lounge.

I dial Zamo and she answers on the first ring. “Sisi”

I say.

“Hey sis” she says giggling.

I hear Sizwe’s voice in the background. “You are not home neh” I say.

“No I overslept and you” she asks. “I over slept too” I say.

We both crack into a laugh.

“Baba is going to kill us” she says.

“Not unless we ask Ma go talk to him” I say. She laughs like I have said a joke.

“I bet Ma sold us out the minute she entered her

bedroom, I don't know what baba does but Ma tends to spill the beans" she says laughing.

"Zamo don't joke like that if he find out that I am at Nqubeko's place he will kill both me and my baby" I say.

"Then we better get Bhuti on our side because Ma can't be trusted shame" she says.

"I will call you before leaving the house maybe we can arrive together" I say.

"Sounds like plan I love you last born" she says. "I love you too sisi" I say ending the call.

I hear a thudding sound as soon as I get off the phone with Zamo and rush to the bedroom.

I find Nqubeko on the floor with his hands on his stomach.

I rush to him and notice the blood coming out of his mouth and nose.

"Baby"

I turn him over when he doesn't respond and notice his dilated pupils.

I take my phone and call the ambulance. "Nqubeko don't do this to me" I shout.

The ambulance arrives and takes him allowing me to ride with them at the back.

The medics have an oxygen mask over his mouth and nose monitoring his unstable Bp.

We get to the hospital and the medics rush him in.

I am bare footed and running after the stretcher like a mad person when he said he was sick I didn't know it was this bad.

"What happened" the doctor asks looking at me.

"I don't know he said he was sick but that's all I know" I say.

"Bp dropping" one of the nurse shouts.

"Heart stopping we are losing him" they shout.

“Emergency room now” The doctor shouts.

One of the nurse helps me sit down.

“Do you have anyone you can call” she asks. I

look at my phone and nod.

I dial my father and he picks ups immediately. “Yeye” he says.

“Baba”

My chest tightens as I struggle to breathe.

“Bayede” his voice is stern but at the moment I can’t say anything.

The nurse takes the phone from me and tells my father to come to the hospital.

“It’s just a panick it won’t kill you just breathe” the kind nurse says.

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Bayede's keeper

#40

I haven't heard anything since they took him to the emergency room.

My heart is pounding so many thoughts are rushing through my head.

The fear of losing him wants to get the better of me but I push it to the back of my head.

I want nothing other than to bolt into a cry but he's not dead yet and I shouldn't dare bring that kind of bad luck upon him.

What if he dies and I lose him? the queasiness creeps up on me.

I quickly shake my head and wipe my sweaty palms on my thighs taking another deep breath.

I think about how tired he looked when he dropped by the house, I honestly thought he was up to his old

tricks little did we know he was really sick.

I deeply sigh dammit I should have made sure that he sees a doctor.

“Bayede”

I raise my head and see my father together with Netha standing in front of me.

I stand up and give baba a hug then turn to give Netha one too.

“What happened” my father asks.

“I don’t know baba one minute he was okay and the next he was on the floor bleeding through his mouth and nose” I say.

“You didn’t sleep home” he says.

It’s more of a question than a statement I guess mama kept to her word and said nothing

“Baba now is not the time” Netha says.

The doctor walks up to us as my father is about to bombard me with more questions.

“How is he” I ask.

“He is stable for now but the next few hours are still critical” the doctor says.

“What’s wrong with him” Baba asks.

“We suspect poison we are still waiting for the toxicology report to confirm” the doctor says.

“Poison” I say.

My knees buckle as I slump back on the chair who would want to poison Nqubeko.

“Yes his symptoms are similar to those of poisoning we suspect Thallium poisoning which is slow poison” the doctor says.

“Can we see him” I ask.

“I am afraid you can’t see him like I said his condition is critical and it’s touch and go at the moment” the doctor says.

“Doctor please I won’t be long” I say.

He looks at my father and nods his head.

“Just for a few minutes and please don’t be alarmed by what you are going to see ” the doctor says.

My stomach turns the thought of losing him seems to be the one thing popping up at the top of my head.

“Let me come with you” Netha says. “It’s okay I can do this” I say.

I follow the doctor to Nqubeko’s room and stand by the door looking at him plugged to a machine with a pipe down his throat.

“I will give you a few minutes” the doctor says walking out.

I walk over to the bed and settle down next to him.

He looks a bit pale I swallow hard and hold his hand taking deep breathes.

“Sthandwa sam please don’t do this to us” I say.

I think back to when it was life but without Nqubeko in and feel tears sting my eyes.

“I am not ready to do this life thing without you again Nqubeko I can’t so please don’t make me do it.

I love you Phakathwayo and I want to spend the rest of my life with you, I don’t want anyone else but you

so please don't stop fighting" I say.

I look at his eyes and there's no sign of him moving or waking up.

"Don't make me face this world without you Yeyeye,I am begging you to fight and come back to me okay.

I am scared Nqubeko I don't want to lose you my love so please open your eyes" I say.

I hold his hand tight and close my eyes.

"Dear Heavenly Father I come before you in the name of the lord Jesus Christ please don't take him away from me,I ask that you heal him and bring him back to me please save him in Jesus name Amen" I open my eyes and stand up to kiss his forehead.

"I love you Phakathwayo and you are not going to leave me" I say.

I walk out of his ward and hear some commotion coming from the waiting area.

"Leave" Nqubeko's mother shouts while Phethile tries to calm her down.

"Mama please" Phethile says.

“I don’t care how powerful you are or how many people you have killed I said leave” she says to my father.

I almost drop dead on the floor when the words echo and my father doesn’t flinch one bit.

“Baba I think we should leave” Netha says calmly.

That’s another thing I love about my brother his way of knowing what to say and when to say it.

“I will not leave Nqubeko alone” my father says.

“As if you care about my son all this is your fault” Nqubeko’s mother says.

“My son is laying there because of you, he has blood on his hands because of you and now he’s been poisoned.

If anything happens to him just know that his blood is on your hands” she says turning to face me.

“Ma” I say.

She walks over and gives me a hug.

“I can’t lose my son Bayede not when I have lost his

father” she says crying.

I hold her tight and look at my father maybe all the things people say about him are true.

He looks back at me and I can see the hurt in his eyes my father loves Nqubeko.

I pull away from her hold and faintly smile.

“Ma you of all people know that Nqubeko is strong and he will pull through” I say.

I look at Phethile and smile giving her a hug.

“He’s going to be fine” I say pulling away from her hold and catch Netha’s eyes on her.

“I know and I am sorry about the things Ma just said she’s just hurting” she says.

I nod my head and watch as they both make their way to Nqubeko’s ward.

“Baba are you okay” I ask.

He faintly smiles and nods his head opening his arms.

I slowly fall into his embrace and close my eyes.

“I am not perfect Bayede but I love that boy like he’s my own and I would never hurt him or allow someone to hurt him” he says.

“I promise I will find whoever did this to him and they will pay” he says pulling away.

“Lets get you home there’s no use being here when Zandile is this upset” he says heavily sighing.

He takes my hands as we walk out heading outside.

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Nqubeko

I open my eyes and close them again I have been slipping in and out of consciousness.

I don’t know what happened, the last thing that I remember is me making my way to the bathroom and falling.

My throat is parched I can’t even seem to swallow because of this thing in my mouth.

I try pulling it out but my hands fall back on the bed I feel drained and tired.

My eye sight is blurry but I can tell I am at the hospital their beeping machine sound is irritating.

I hear the door open but with my sight blurry I can't see the person walking in.

The smell of cigar hits my nostrils as the person takes further steps towards me.

“Well well well if it isn't the mighty and feared Phakathwayo ” the stranger says.

I don't recognize the voice but I can tell it's a man.

“You are a hard man to kill after all my efforts you are still breathing” he says laughing.

He heavily sighs as I close my eyes and open them again feeling powerless not being able to do anything or see the man who put me here.

“Let's see if you can survive this last short” he says taking something out of his pocket.

I lay there and think about Bayede and her beautiful smile knowing that she loves me brings so much joy

to my heart.

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Bayede's keeper

#41

The hospital called in the middle of the night to let us know that Nqubeko took a turn for the worst.

I found myself crying so hard my father had to calm me down.

The drive to the hospital was the worst it was silent and somber as if we were mourning him already.

I hated the feeling because it felt so familiar and it left a bitter taste in my mouth.

Life is nothing compared to death you see with life you get so many chances and make so many mistakes and wake up the next day to do better.

But with death it's final, death takes away the people we love it strips us off them and never gives us the chance to see them ever again.

Death is a big deal it's final it's that one thing you

don't wish even though it's inevitable.

We make our way inside Mama walking beside me I am grateful that she's here.

I think about Nqubeko's mother and I can't imagine the pain she's going through.

We meet the doctor half way to his office.

"I am sorry to have called you this late but Mr Phakathwayo had a setback, we are not sure what caused it but his heart stopped" the doctor says.

I almost drop to the floor but Netha holds me. "Bayede" baba calls out.

"He is in the ICU fighting for his life" the doctor continues.

I feel the urge to throw up and fail to hold myself as I spill everything on the floor.

"Nurse" the doctor calls out.

My father lifts me up.

“Ngeke ngifelwe yingane mina nilokhu ninanaz dammit man” (I will not let my child die while you are busy being slow) he says.

“Mr Ngubane please calm down” the doctor says.

I feel another load coming and throw up all over my father.

He doesn't flinch or show any signs of disgust as he walks with me to the doctor's office.

He lays me down on the bed and wipes himself off with the wipes mama hands him.

She moves her focus on me and hands me a bottle of water.

“Drink this it will help for now” she says.

I take the bottle of water and finish it in one go.

I sit up straight once I have regained my strength.

“I am sorry miss I didn't mean to scare you and like I said he's in the ICU and we don't know if he's going to make” the doctor says.

I feel my heart drop to the pit of my stomach if this

man dies then I am afraid I won't survive it.

My father looks at the doctor and click his tongue clearly annoyed by the man.

“Netha call Mandlakhe tell him that we need him” baba says.

“It's clear someone did something to him no one just takes a turn for the worst without something happening” he says looking at the doctor.

The doctor swallows any man would crack under my father's intense stare.

“I was called in by the nurse on duty she saw someone walking out of his room she rushed to Mr Phakathwayo's room and his heart had stopped, we revived him and put him in intensive unit care” the doctor says.

“Baba what does this mean” I ask. He ignores me and faces the doctor.

“Fix his discharge papers we are taking him” Baba says.

“But sir you are not his next of kin his mother is” the

doctor says trying to put up a fight.

“Swazi please take Bayede go to the car I need to have word with the doctor” he says.

His voice is deadly it reminds me of the first time I met him and he warned Netha.

Mama helps up as we head out, Netha shutting them door behind us.

“Ma what’s going to happen in there” I ask. She sweetly laughs.

“Your father is going to have word with the doctor that refuses him to take Nqubeko” she says.

I nod my head and decide not to ask anymore questions.

I stop on my tracks and look at mama. “Ma I need to see before I leave” I say.

She nods her head and walks over to one of the nurses she talks to her and then asks me to follow them.

I am not allowed to get in but I can see him through

the window.

He is plugged into all these machines and he looks helpless.

I look at him and wipe my tears this feels like a nightmare and I want to wake up.

“Come sisi lets get to the car before your father blows a gasket” Ma says.

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It’s been two days since Nqubeko was taken from the hospital to God knows where, baba said they can’t risk having him in the open vulnerable to enemies.

I asked to see him and he refused he even went as far as hiring security for Nqubeko’s mother and Phethile.

Being away from Nqubeko not by choice hurts and knowing that someone is out there trying to kill me doesn’t sit well with me.

I have tried to think of a few people who have it in for

him but I can't seem to figure out anything.

I know Zamile has it in for me but she would never be that stupid.

And Liam he would never hurt me like that I know he would never do that.

My bedroom door opens and Thando walks in holding a tray.

The smell of rotten eggs engulfs me to the point of wanting to throw up.

"Morning" she says.

"Morning sisi" I say.

She places the tray next to me there is dry toast and tea then there's coffee and another plate full of scrambled eggs.

I scrunch my nose at the horrible stench coming from these eggs.

I stand up and open the windows. "How are you feeling" she asks.

"I am okay I just miss Nqubeko that's all" I say.

“I made you something to eat sisi” she says.

“I think I will have the toast and tea please” I say. She lifts her top up and takes out a pregnancy test. I almost burn myself with the tea.

“Sisi” I say.

“Take the test Bayede” she says.

The door opens with Zamo throwing herself in she stops and looks at the test in my hand and slowly shuts the door.

“Okay what’s going on” she asks

“Your sister is pregnant and she’s going to to take a pregnancy test” Thando says.

She’s a nurse so she knows these things and she’s too calm considering that I am might be pregnant.

“Haaaa sis Thando” Zamo says.

“Sukuma Bayede uqonde emthoyi” (stand up and go to the toilet) Thando says.

I get on my feet and walk inside the toilet.

I pee on the stick and walk out placing it on the side of the bed.

My nerves are shot my heart is pounding. “I can’t be pregnant” I say.

“Well you can especially if you have unprotected sex” she says.

“She’s right and you have been sleeping with Nqubeko” Zamo says.

I twiddle my thumbs and sigh.

Thando stands up and takes the pregnancy test reading it.

“Congratulations Bayede you are pregnant” she says slumping back on the bed.

I take the pregnancy test and read it with one eye open.

I see two very visible lines on the stick.

“That’s a lie I am not pregnant” I say.

Zamo snatch’s the test and raises her eyebrow.

“Well the test says you are, meaning you are” she says.

I look at the test again and clasp my hands together.

“Please don’t tell anyone but even Bhuti Bandile please not until I have been to the doctor and made sure ” I say.

She heavily sighs right now I am asking her to keep something from her husband.

“I won’t tell” she says.

I look at Zamo who shrugs her shoulders. “I won’t say anything mina” she says.

“Drink your tea and finish that toast you will feel better” Thando says standing up heading for the door.

“What if I am really pregnant and Nqubeko dies one me ” I ask.

I am ready to do this without him not again.

“Don’t even think that far Nqubeko will make it you just have to trust and have faith now eat” she says

smiling.

I sip of the bitter tea and take bites at the dry toast.

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Bayede's keeper

#42

Another day and I still feel gloomy and tired I didn't get much sleep a part of me wishes that Nqubeko was here so we can face this together even if it's just a scare.

I might be in denial but deep down I know there's a possibility that I am expecting his child.

This brings back bitter sweet memories I lost a child and now I am going to have one and I don't know how to feel about it.

I walk out of my bedroom and find mama in the living room reading her bible.

She removes her glasses and looks at me. "Are you going somewhere" she asks

"I am going to check up on Nqubeko's mother" I say.

"That's kind of you she needs all the support she can

get” she says.

She looks at me and smiles.

“Yeye are you okay” she asks looking at me suspiciously.

“Yes Ma I am okay just feeling a bit tired” I say. She nods her head takes her glasses.

“If you need anything just tell me I am here” she says. I kiss her cheek and grab my car keys walking out.

I drive to the Phakathwayo residence and park in the drive way.

The house is big Nqubeko really did good the house is just beautiful his father must be proud.

I step out of the car and make my way inside the house.

Phethile opens the door letting me in she has this beautiful glow up on her and I have been meaning to ask what products she uses on her face.

“Hey”she says moving out of the way.

I walk in and close the door.

“Mama is in her bedroom” she says grabbing her purse.

She looks in a hurry and excited too.

“Are you going somewhere” I ask.

She smiles well more like blushes.

“I have a meeting and if I don’t leave now I am going to be late” she says.

“Okay” I say.

“I love you bye” she says.

She closes the door walking out.

I make my way to Mrs Phakathwayo’s bedroom and find her sitting on her bed going through an album.

She looks up and smiles when she sees me. “Bayede sisi” she says.

I walk over and settle down next to her she holds my hand and shows me pictures of Nqubeko when he was just a baby.

He was always a good looking baby and mischievous but kind too.

“His father loved taking pictures of him” she says. “Ma he’s not dead” I say.

“I know but I miss my son Bayede and I am afraid that whoever did this won’t stop” she says.

I place a hand over my belly and smile. “Ma let me take you out for lunch” I say. She smiles and shakes her head.

“I don’t think I will be good company” she says.

“It’s okay we don’t have to talk let me make your day” I say.

“I will be in the kitchen waiting for you” I stand up and head back to kitchen.

She joins me after a while looking beautiful in her sunny yellow dress and hat.

We both walk out of the house and lock behind us making our way to my car.

I don't know what I am doing but I want to make this woman happy.

I want to make her day and if doing this makes her her day then so be it.

I had called in the morning making my appointment.

I park outside the doctor's and step out looking at Nqubeko's mother still in the car.

"Ma" I say.

"Bayede's what's going on are you sick" she asks. "Ma I am not sick please step out of the car" I say.

She steps out of the car and slowly follows me inside.

I walk up to the reception area and ask about my appointment.

I am told to take a seat and wait for the doctor.

"Bayede sizokwenzani la" (Bayede are we doing here) she asks whispering and looking around seeing pregnant women.

"Bayede Mhlongo" the nurse calls out.

That surname again I am yet to change it. “Mama let’s go” I say.

She picks up her bag and follows me inside.

The doctor stands up and greets is with a smile it’s a woman.

“Hi,my name is Bayede and this is my mother. I called earlier and made a sonar appointment” I say

I look at Nqubeko’s mother and smile her expression is priceless.

“Yes I remember is this your first pregnancy” the doctor asks.

“No I miscarried my first child” I say.

She nods her head and tells me to lie on the bed.

I move my t-shirt up as Nqubeko’s mother holds my hand.

“This may be a bit cold” the doctor says putting the gel on me.

I lay still and watch as she runs the probe over my belly.

The doctor smiles and points at the screen.

“That small blot right there is your baby” the doctor says.

I look at the small black dot and smile it’s just a dot that’s going to develop into a whole human man.

I wasn’t even sure that the tests were accurate I was just taking a chance but I am happy that I did.

“All done” the doctor says wiping me up.

I ask for a scan just to keep reminding myself that I am carrying precious cargo.

“I will need you to come back again next week so I can see how far along you are and prescribe you some vitamins” the doctor says.

I nod my head and get my bag walking.

“I am going to be a grandmother oh thank you Bayede” she says hugging me.

“I can’t believe my son is going to be a father” she says getting overwhelmed by her emotions.

“Did you tell him before he got hospitalized” she

asks.

I shake my head.

“I didn’t know, I only found out a few days ago” I say.

“You have to tell him Bayede maybe this will help him come back to us” she says.

I nod my head seeing the smile on her face.

“Thank you, you don’t know how much this means to me” she says.

“I think we should go shopping” she says excitedly.

“Ma it’s still early and no one knows about this and I would like to keep it that way till Nqubeko is back” I say.

She nods head.

“I won’t tell anyone until the father knows but I can still buy my gran baby something cute” she says

“Let’s go spoil the little one” she says laughing.

Although I think this is a bit premature but I allow her to be happy.

I drop her off at the house after she spent so much on a baby's not even here.

I leave the clothes with her just up until I am ready to tell the parents.

I appreciate her gesture and hopefully this won't go on for the whole nine months.

I drive home and get a call just as I park in the drive way.

"Hello may I speak to Bayade Mhlongo" the voice on the other end says.

"Yes this she, speaking" I ask.

"My name is Pearl and I am calling from Nzimande accountants with regard to your application.

I am calling to let you know that we have set an appointment for you on Wednesday" she says.

"The full details are already sent to you via email" she says.

"Thank you much" I say.

“It’s a pleasure have a good day mam” she says.

I end the call and smile I had sent my cv to so many consulting companies and finally something comes up.

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Bayede's keeper

#43

With everything that's going on I decided to look up Nzimande accountants, they are a fast growing company quite impressive.

I have heard about them before but never really pictured myself working outside Spector.

I am even grateful that Liam gave me a good recommendation seeing that I am good at my job.

Even though we parted on rocky terms I am thankful that he wasn't spiteful.

I knock on my father study and let myself in. He removes his glasses and looks at me. "Yeye" he says.

I clear my throat and take a seat.

"I hope I am not disturbing you baba but it's been

days now and I haven't seen him" I say.

He heaves a sigh and leans back of his chair.

"Bayede I am not doing this to hurt you or to keep you apart,I am doing this for him to keep him safe" he says.

"I know baba and I am grateful for that but I really miss him" I say.

"Baba please I just want to see him even if it's for a little bit" I say.

"Fine I'll ask Netha to accompany you" he says. "Thank you baba" I say.

He looks at me as if realizing something.

"Where are you going" he asks.

"I got an interview baba and I am headed there right now" I say.

"I will ask Mandlakhe to accompany you" he says.

"Baba I don't need Mandlakhe to babysit me" I tell him.

“He’s not there to keep you company but to keep you safe,I will not argue with you about this Mandlakhe will accompany you and that’s final” he says.

I grumble and stand up almost tipping the chair over. He raises his eyebrow looking at me.

“Ngiyaxolisa baba” I say.

“I hope the interview goes well” he says.

“Thank you” I say.

I close the door behind me and breathe,

Ever since this Nqubeko thing thins haven’t been the same.

My father is always on the phone and there’s extra security everywhere.

I leave the house with Mandlakhe driving me to my interview.

I am led to the board room and introduced to the panelist.

I great everyone and take a seat at their approval.

“Let’s get right to it” one of the female panelist says.

“We got your cv which is impressive we checked with your previous boss and he had nothing but good things to say” she says going through what I presume is my file.

“Thank you” I say.

I look at the one gentleman who hasn’t said anything just observing the whole meeting.

“Miss Mhlongo your work is impeccable and you were working at one of the most successful firms, why did you resign” they ask.

I clear my throat and sit up straight,

“Thank you for the question I can promise you I didn’t leave under sour circumstances in fact I left because of personal reasons that I had to attend too” I say.

“Would you like to share those reasons should we consider to hire” the quiet gentleman says.

I turn and look at him.

“Like I said I left the company due to personal

reasons which had no impact in me doing my job.

Should you hire me just know that not only am I loyal to my employees I am also damn good at my job” I say.

“I am afraid with that attitude it might be difficult to find work even with your track record” one of the panelist says.

“If that’s the case then thank you for time it’s clear with that with my attitude I won’t get this job” I say standing up.

“You are hired” the gentleman says raising his head.

“Shaka” the one female panelist says outraged by his decision.

The gentleman turns and looks at my interviewer.

“I am sorry Mr Nzimande but you can’t just hire anyone I am here to advise you against making rushed decisions ” she says.

The man stands up and walks over to my side.

“Like I said you are hired and my HR team will contact you with regard to your employment

contract”he says.

“Thank you sir” I say.

“Call me Shaka” he says smiling.

I nod my head and shake his hand.

*“Welcome to my family I hope we will work well together”
he says.*

“Thank you for the opportunity” I say.

I passed by their HR and gave them my full details.

Knowing I already have the job brings great relief.

*I notice Mandlakhe taking a different route that I am not
used to.*

“This is not the way home” I say.

*“Somahhashi asked me to take you to see Nqubeko” he
says.*

“What happened to my brother taking me” I ask.

He goes back to concentrating on the road ignoring me.

“Bhuti Mandlakhe I asked you a question” I say.

“Bayede your brother has other pressing matters to attend too” he says.

“Oh” I say.

He turns the radio on and plays so music.

We finally reach a hospital the place is guarded and by the looks of it only the elite get admitted here.

I am shocked I never thought I would say this about a hospital but the place looks posh.

We make our way in and we are led to Nqubeko’s floor the man has his own floor.

I walk inside his room passing security personnel and Mandlakhe staying behind.

He looks better more alive and less pale,he is no longer plugged into any machines just peacefully sleeping.

I walk over and lay next to him like he did with me when I was admitted.

I gently place his hand on my belly.

“It’s still small but it’s there and it ours” I say.

“I miss you Phakathwayo so much although I am trying to be strong but I am afraid.

I recently found out that we are having a baby God has blessed us Nqubeko, but I can’t raise this baby alone please don’t make me ngiyakucela Nqubeko” I say.

I move up and kiss his dry lips. “Nqubeko vuka” (Nqubeko wake up) I say

I feel tears sting my eyes and swallow hard.

“You promised that you would never leave me so don’t go back on your promise sthandwa sam.

I love you Nqubeko and I want you to wake my heart is aching Yeye ngiyakucela vuka umawakho uyakudinga” I tell him.

I look at his closed eyes and bite my lip breaking down the movies make this talking to patients thing easy.

I wipe my tears and kiss his forehead.

“I love you and I will wait for you” I whisper.

I leave the hospital wishing I had powers to wake him from his sleep.

The blue and red headlights bring me back from my gloomy mood.

There’s a police van parked outside the gate, Mandlakhe drives in and park in the drive way while hurriedly step out of the car and make my way inside.

Mama is holding Nqubeko’s mother while the police converse with baba.

I look at my brother and feel my anxiety kick in. “Bhuti what’s going on” I ask.

He bites his lower lip and breathes heavily. “Zamo” I shout.

“Phethile is missing” he says clenching his jaws.

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Bayede's keeper

#44

The room spins round as I hold on to the wall looking at Netha's eyes fill with tears.

I look at Nqubeko's mother and my own eyes fill with tears.

The policeman keeps nodding his head while still talking to my father.

"If we find out anything we will let you know" the policeman says.

"Thank you officer I will walk you out" my father says.

I feel a huge lump form on my throat as much as I try pushing the thought away but its clear that someone is out to get Nqubeko and destroy him.

My father walks back in and helps me sit down. "Baba what is happening" I ask.

“We are under attack Bayede” he says sounding defeated.

“But who would take Phethile she doesn’t have enemies” I say.

“I know but whoever took Khethiwe is the same person who tried to kill Nqubeko” he says heavily sighing.

Netha’s phone rings and silence falls upon us all as we watch and listen on his conversation.

“I am on my way” he says ending the call.

“Baba we have a problem” He says shaking his head.

“What is it” I ask crossing my fingers.

My first thought is Nqubeko it seems like it never rains but pours in this family.

“Netha talk what is it” Baba asks

“The warehouse caught fire” he says closing his eyes.

“What” my father says.

“Everything is burned down baba” Netha says

breathing heavily.

I look at my father and see how defeated he is hearing the news.

“We should leave, Bandile” Baba shouts.

Bandile walks in already dressed and looks at me.

“Sengilungile baba” He says.

Baba nods his head and looks at mama heavily sighing..

I look at my brother and I can't read him he looks lost as if life has been sucked out of him.

“Hey” I say.

He looks at me and faintly smiles.

I pull him into a hug and hold him right.

“We are going to find her” I whisper. “What if we don't” he whispers back.

“Don't think like that baba will make sure that we find her safe and bring her home” I say.

“Baba is not Superman Bayede he cant fix

everything” he says pulling away.

He grabs his phone and walks out following Baba and Bandile.

“Come Zandile lets get you to bed” Mama says.

I look at Nqubeko’s mother and she’s like a walking Zombie.

I make my way to my bedroom and place my bags walking out heading to the kitchen.

Zamo and Thando join me settling down on the high chairs.

I reach from the frozen ice cream and place it on the kitchen counter together with three spoons.

“Nothing makes sense” Zamo says.

“I mean she can’t just disappear right someone must have taken her” Zamo says.

The ice cream is supposed to make us feel better but all this is depressing.

“I am honestly scared and I feel for Zandile imagine the pain she’s going through,her son is in the

hospital and now her daughter is missing that's too much for one person to handle" Thando says.

"How are you feeling Bayede did you manage to get to the doctor" she asks.

"I did and you were right I am carrying Nqubeko's baby" I say.

They both look at me and for a moment the truth sinks in.

We are facing a difficult time and I am pregnant another thing I have to worry about.

"What happens if they find her and it's already too late" Zamo asks.

"Zamo don't go there" I say.

"She's right though so many women and children go missing in the country and end up dead in some ditch" Thando says.

"I don't want to think that far I just refuse to think that she might come up dead" I say.

If Phethile winds up dead then it will break Nqubeko not to mention his mother.

“I went for an interview today” I say braking the silence.

“And how was it” Zamo asks. “I got the job” I say.

“Congratulations at least now you can think of something else other than the drama that’s happening here” Thando says.

“It’s been a long day I think we should go to sleep” Zamo says.

I put the ice cream back in the fridge and turn of off the lights and make my way to my bedroom.

The shattering of things wakes me up from my sleep. I jump out of bed and turn on the lights walking out.

I am not the only one who is awake it seems like the whole house is up.

“Go back to your rooms” mama says.

“Girls you heard ma let’s go back to sleep” Thando says.

I turn on my heels and make my way back to my bedroom and stand by the door.

Zamo and Thando also walk back to the bedrooms closing the doors behind me.

I keep the door open on my bedroom and tip toe all the way to my fathers study.

The door is slightly open and I hear some whispering.

I eavesdrop and take a peak at the mess inside my father in kneeling on the floor with mama kneeling in front of him.

“Mbomvu you can’t fall apart now” mama says.

“They killed him Swazi they killed my boy” Baba says in a shaky voice.

Tears fill my eyes seeing him like this,there was a time I didn’t care about the man but seeing my father hurting hurts me too.

“I know sthandwa sam but you can’t fall apart now we need you,these boys need you to be strong so you can lead them” mama says.

“They couldn’t get to Nqubeko now they have killed

*Mandlakhe what am I going to tell his mother” he says
breaking down.*

Mama holds his hands and sniffs.

*“I can’t hold this family together if you fall apart now
myeni wam.*

*You are one of the strongest men I know,there’s an
enemy out there that wants to destroy you and they will
go to any means possible.*

Don’t let them win please” she says in a shaky voice.

I hold my tears as my father breaks down in mama’s arms.

*They killed Bhuti Mandlakhe I hold my chest and walk
back to my bedroom this is bigger than what any of us
thought.*

*I find my phone ringing and rush to answer it. I
look at the screen and it’s a private number.*

“Hello” I say.

The person on the other end just breathes heavily.

“Who is this” I ask.

The breathing sound persists till I end the call and put my phone down,I switch it off put it under the pillow.

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Bayede's Keeper

#45

Another day and Phethile hasn't been found the police came back and told is that it seems like she disappeared into thin air.

Her car was found in an abandoned area there weren't any signs of a struggle.

It seems like she just left the car there with all her belongings which is so unlike Phethile. I know her and she should would never do anything of that sort.

I told my father about my interview and how I got the job on the spot.

He's not happy with me starting new work especially with everything that's going on.

I don't blame him though things are tough and we still don't know who is doing this.

I couldn't stay at the house I had to get out for some

air.

I went to work to sign my contract and I was told to wait in the CEO's office.

I have been sitting here for over an hour now waiting for Mr Nzimande.

I look at the time and sigh standing up I promised baba that I wouldn't be long.

The door opens just as I am about to touch the handle and Mr Nzimande walks in.

"Miss" he says.

I look at him make his way in.

"Please sit" he says.

"Mr Nzimande as you can see I was already on my way out after spending an hour in your office" I say.

"I was held up in a meeting" he says unbothered.

"And the least you could have done was to let me know and postpone, goodbye mr Nzimande please be kind to ask HR to email me the contract" I say.

I hate peoples who don't respect other peoples time,

I close the door behind me and make my out.

I leave the building and walk across the road to a nearby coffee shop.

I feel drained and tired I honestly thought coming here would take my mind off things but I was wrong.

I grab a seat and order myself some decadent chocolate cake with a cup of rooibos.

The waiter brings my order just in the nick of time.

I look at the creamy rich cake and pick up the fork taking a huge piece in my mouth.

My taste buds come alive and this emotional wave hits me.

My chest heaves and tears just flow I try holding myself but everything comes back to me.

I have come to far to lose all the people that I love. I have come to far to lose Phakathwayo like this.

A handkerchief is waved before me I raise my head a see Shaka standing infront of me.

“Take it” he says.

I take the handkerchief and wipe my flowing tears.

I don't know where this comes from but I just want to cry.

He takes a seat and heavily sighs.

"I am sorry I didn't mean to make you wait" he says. I nod my head even though this isn't about him.

He looks at with this soft gaze that leaves me longing for Nqubeko's look.

I really miss him thinking about him make me more emotional.

"Should I get you home" he asks.

I shake my head and take another bite at the cake and wipe my tears on the other hand.

"Is everything okay" he asks.

I shake my head and take another bite at the chocolate cake.

He reaches across the table and holds my hand.

"Everything is going to be okay" he says.

“You don’t know that” I say.

He gives me a side smile and looks into my eyes.

“Trust me everything is going to be okay” he says.

“Thank you” I say.

“Now wipe those tears away you are too beautiful to be crying” he says.

I wipe my tears and breathe heavily taking another bite of my cake.

Shaka waves his hand in the air and the waiter comes running.

“Can we have another slice of your chocolate cake please” he says.

“Yes sir coming right up” the young man says walking away.

He leans back on the chair and looks at me as I gobble up the last piece.

My driver is one person who isn’t talkative unlike Bhuti Mandlakhe who would answer my questions

this one hasn't answered any of my many questions.

We are burying Mandlakhe this weekend and baba promised to take care of the funeral cost as well his family.

I ended up going back to Shaka's office to sign the contract and I was given a week to report to work.

My heart grows heavier when I see an unfamiliar car standing outside the gate.

The car drives in and parks in the drive way I step out of the car and make my way inside the house.

"Phethile" a loud scream comes from the house.

I walk inside and find the two police officers that were here the other night.

"No not my child" Nqubeko's mother says shaking her head.

"We would like one of you to come with us to identify the body" one of the police officers says.

"Bayede" my father says when he sees me leaning against the wall.

My head is spinning nothing is making sense why are they talking about a dead body.

“I will go” Netha offers.

“Bayede sisi please go with him you know Phethile better than anyone,I know that’s not my daughter please my child go” Nqubeko’s mother says.

I nod my head and follow Netha to the car the police officers follow behind us.

We drive to the morgue and are led inside to view the body.

They move the white sheet covering her up.

My heart shatters into two when I look her,Netha loses his balance but one of the police officers helps him.

“Is this her” they ask.

“Yes this is her” I say looking at her bruised pale face.

“What happened” I ask.

“She was raped then strangled to death” they say.

I feel the air leave my body Phethile is gone just like

life has been snatched out of her.

Netha and I walk out and it's seems like my brother couldn't wait to get out of that place.

He leans against the car ready to pass out but quickly collects himself.

“Netha” I say.

He looks at me with eyes filled with tears and gets in the driver's seat.

I get it on my side and watch as he struggles to put the key in the ignition due to his shaky hands.

He steps out of the car and slams the door sliding down to the ground.

I step out and walk over to his side.

“She's gone Bayede” he says breaking down. I put a hand over my mouth and cry.

“She's gone they killed her”he says burying his head in his hands.

“I am so sorry” I say.

“I loved her Yeye so much and now she’s gone” he says.

My phone rings inside the car,I slowly stand up and walk over to other side of the car and get the phone.

I answer the phone without looking and sniff

“Yeye” I bolt into a cry.

“Baba she’s gone they killed her” I say.

“Sthandwa sam who is gone” I look the phone and wipe my tears making my eye sight more clear.

“Mangubane” he says.

“Nqubeko” I say.

“It’s me my love who killed who” he asks.

I cry even harder he’s awake and his sister is gone,how do I tell him that his little sister is gone.

“Bayede” he say.

“Can I call you back” I say quickly.

I end the call before he responds and walk over to my brother and settle down next to him.

“I am sorry Netha” I say.

He rests his head on my shoulder and painfully breaks down.

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Bayede's keeper

#46

I have never seen Netha like this but then again I have never experienced him lose someone he loved.

His broken and no amount of comforting him helps, I feel like there's more to what was going on between him and Phethile and I don't want to push by asking him questions.

We came back late last night then drove to Mrs Phakathwayo's house.

She wanted to be home and see her daughters bedroom.

She cried all night asking God to bring back her baby girl I am glad that mama is here and she comforted her all night.

I don't know who is doing this and what they will gain by hurting us. This person is faceless and they are coming for us one by one and seeing that they

have already started I don't see them stopping.

The girls and I moved the mattress and prepared the bedroom for all the mourners who are to come.

Although I saw her body it still feels so unreal that she's gone, I have lost a sister and a best friend.

Phethile was going to an amazing aunt and now my baby will never get to experience her beautiful soul.

Thinking about what she went through sends chills down my spine it hurts knowing that she fought and cried but still they took her life like it was nothing.

The house is heavily guarded but even so that won't bring Khethiwe back, I have so many questions running through my head.

What was the meeting about? who was she meeting? where and why was she meeting that person.

A part of me feels like she knew the person she was meeting up with, I could see how happy she was when she left the house.

"You need to get some rest Bayede you have been

up all night” Thando says.

“We need to make sure that when Nqubeko’s relatives come there’s enough food” I say.

“Bayede you are no longer thinking about you but that baby inside you” she says.

“We still need to clean the other bedrooms and make sure everything is in place,I don’t want Nqubeko’s mother worrying about anything” I say.

“Bayede” she says snapping.

I stop what I am doing and look at her.

“You are not doing this not again I will not allow you to fall back into that dark place” she says

“What do you want to me do eat and cry” I ask. “Yes that’s what I want” she says.

“Well I can’t cry because Nqubeko is on his way home and he doesn’t know that his sister is gone,I won’t fall apart because I have to be there for him.

I need to be strong for him because I know this will break him down he will forever blame himself for

Phethile's death" I say.

"But still you are carrying a baby and you should take it easy" she says.

"I will" I say.

She nods her head and stands up. "I will go check on Ma" she says.

I hear a few voices outside and put on the kettle taking out a few cups.

The door opens and Nqubeko walks in followed by my father and brother.

A cup slips out of my hand and shatters.

Our eyes meet and a smile spreads across his lips.

He looks good but I can tell no one has told him about Phethile.

He frowns seeing the doek on my head.

"Yeye" my father says.

I move over and give him a hug ever since that night he broke down in mama's arms I have been worried

about him.

I look at my brother and feel his pain it's too raw his eyes tell a painful story.

His eyes are red meaning he's been crying.

I clear the mess and chuck everything in

“I will make you some tea”. I say moving out of the way clearing the mess I made.

“Wazi kahle ukuthi angiliphuzi i tiye” (You know very well that I don't drink tea) Nqubeko says.

I guess no ones knows how to tell him the news. “Netha lets go see your mother” Baba says.

Nqubeko moves closer and wraps his arms around me and kisses.

“I missed you” he whispers in my ear.

“I missed you too sthandwa sam” I say pulling away.

“You don't look happy to see me” he says looking into my eyes.

I hold his hand and pull having him settle down on a

chair.

He chuckles and shakes his head.

“What” I ask.

“I had the most bizarre dream ever I dreamt about Phethile giving me a baby and turning her back on me, she started walking away even though I tried calling her back” he says rubbing his eyes.

“I need to see my mother maybe she knows what the dream means” he says.

I bite my lip this is the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my entire life.

“I didn’t know me coming home was a big deal seeing that everyone is here” he says.

“Baby” I say.

He looks at me and smiles.

“MaNgubane” he says softly.

“Uhm something bad happened” I say. He nods his head.

“I know your father told me about Mandlakhe. I want you to know that I will find whoever is doing this to us and they will pay” he says.

“Phethile akesekho emhlabeni”(Phethile is gone). I say. He frowns and looks at me slightly tilting his head.

“Angizwa”he says.

I hold his hands but he draws them back and raises his eyebrows.

“Bayede musa ukunginyanyisa uthi kwenzekani”(Bayede don’t annoy what is going) he asks.

“Bayede” he snaps hitting the kitchen counter. I jump out of my chair and stand by the fridge.

“Phethile went missing a few days ago and they found her body,she was raped and strangled to death” I say.

His gives me a blank look and shakes his head. “Woza la”(Come here) he says.

I move closer and stand in front of him. He sniffs me.

“Udakiwe Bayede” he asks.

I shake my head and just then his mother’s wailing cries fill the house.

He hurries to the bedroom.

I slowly follow him to the bedroom and stand by the door.

“Mama” he says breathing heavily his chest heaving.

“Nqubeko” his mother says covering her face.

He walks over to the mattress and kneels down as his mother takes him into her embrace.

The room clears and I stay behind looking at him break down in his mother’s hold like a little boy.

I think this is the first time I have heard him cry this bad.

“Ngiyaxolisa mama bekungamale uPhethile asishiye” (I am sorry mama Phethile shouldn’t have died) he says.

“They killed my child Nqubeko they took her away from me” she says.

I wipe my tears and swallow hard.

His mother pulls away and wipes his tears.

“I want you to find whoever did this to my daughter and kill them.

Make them pay all of them” she says looking at Nqubeko.

I wish she didn’t say that knowing Nqubeko he will not stop until he kills every last of them.

He stands up and wipes his face and collects himself.

He bumps into me on his way and I rushes out following him.

“Where are you going” I ask.

“To see my sister” he says coldly. He turns and heads for the door.

“I am coming with you” I say running after him.

He starts the car once we are both inside and drives off.

I look at him battling with his emotions he doesn't know what to do with himself.

We finally reach the morgue after he struggled finding the place, his head is all over the place understandably so.

“Stay in the car Bayede” he says. “No” I say stepping out of the car.

He takes huge steps walking in this man is angry and I fear what he might do.

I grab his hand and hold him tight.

He looks at me but I tighten my hold over his hand.

We make our way inside and are led to where they keep the bodies.

He stops walking and breathes heavily.

“You can do this Phakathwayo” I tell him.

He walks over and I let go of his hand as he views

Phethile's body.

"We examined the body and it turns out she was pregnant" the man showing us the body says.

I close my eyes and hold my belly.

"I will leave you alone" the man says walking out.

Nqubeko looks at Phethile's pale cold body and tears fall from his beautiful eyes.

He brushes her hair and sniffs.

"I am sorry ngane ka mama" he says.

"I should have been here to protect you and I wasn't. I am sorry thumbu ka mama" he says.

He takes deep breathes and closes his eyes

"Wongikhonzela ko Phakathwayo" he says closing the sheet.

He holds my hand as we make our way out heading to the car.

He drives to his place instead is of his mother's. He parks in the drive way and makes his way to the

back and comes back to open the door.

He walks inside and I watch as he makes his way to the mini bar.

He drinks from the bottle and stops putting it down.

“She was pregnant Bayede, those bastards raped and killed a pregnant woman” he says throwing the bottle to the wall.

The liquor splats all over and the bottle shatters.

I try moving closer to him but he raises his hand and shakes his head.

“Not now Bayede” he says.

“You will find me in the bedroom” I say.

I make my way to the bedroom and take off my clothes stepping into the shower.

I turn on the hot water and shut my eyes as the water hits my body God knows I am tired and a little sleep is what I need right now.

I almost get a fright when I feel his cold hands wrap around me but ease into his hold.

His hands leave traces moving up my body and touching my breast.

I close my eyes and lay my head back when he starts massaging my breast, he kisses my neck and turns me around lifting me up.

I don't know where he gets the strength from seeing that he just got back from the hospital.

He steps out of the shower with me still in his arms.

And lays me on the bed he roughly devours my lips and bites my lower to his satisfaction.

I wince when he twists my nipples.

He's already hard and by the feel of things he keeps growing more.

He lets go of my one nipple and moves his hand down my private.

He pushes his finger in and moves it around till I am a bit wet.

He slides it out and positions himself pushing his hard cork inside me stretching me.

I wince at the pain but he pushes himself deep in, I try moving up to ease the pain but his tight grip holds me down his fingers digging at my flesh.

He looks at me and for a moment Nqubeko is gone he's not there his eyes are cold and empty.

He hammers inside me and growls, I ease in to his hold so I won't feel much pain.

He starts thrusting in and out fully pushing himself in.

I feel him hit walls he shouldn't and the tearing down there as he fully thrusts in and strokes deeply.

"Nqubeko" I say trying to move my waist.

*But he holds me down and f*cks me hard despite my attempts of moving away.*

He moves his hands and places them on my neck pressing hard.

I feel tears run down from the corner of my eyes. He pulls out and I gasp for air.

He turns me around having me kneel and pushes my

chest down.

He slams inside me hard and grabs my waist going in and out mercilessly grabbing my hair.

I wait for the pleasure to kick in but feel unimaginable pain that has me screaming in agony.

He doesn't stop going in and out despite me trying to move his hands.

I bite my lip and let him hammer inside me for the first time ever sex is the most painful thing ever.

He pulls out and turns me around spreading my legs. I look into his eyes as they fill up with tears.

He takes my legs and places them on his shoulders and rests his hands on my thighs slamming in hard.

I want him to stop already but I know he won't.

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Bayede's keeper

#47

It's been a few days and I have been sleeping at Nqubeko's house, he has been spending most his days out and coming home late at night to sex me till my legs shake and I am all out.

I am tired all I need is sleep and to get through today.

Yesterday I took the time and went to the doctor for a check up and I was told to ease up on the sex.

I have been having abdominal pain due to all the rough sex.

*I look at myself in the mirror and deeply sigh today is Phethile funeral and I am pushing through, emotionally I am gutted and physically I am k*k exhausted.*

This week has been rough on all of us more especially Nqubeko and his mother.

Phakathwayo is shutting me out and I don't know how to get through to him.

He walks in looking handsome in his black suit I walk over to him and fix his collar brushing my hands down his chest.

He wraps his hands around my waist and pulls me close leaning for a kiss.

He deepens the kiss and sneaks his hands up my thighs.

“Nqubeko not today” I say.

Never did I think I would ever utter these words. “Kancane nje Bayede” (Just a little) he says.

“I don't feel like it Nqubeko and I am tired” I say.

His been using sex to cope and I am tired of being at the receiving end.

I push him off and turn to face the mirror.

He moves closer and wraps his arms around my waist kissing my neck.

“I promise I will be gentle” he says softly.

I turn around and look at him.

“I am tired Phakathwayo I haven’t had any good rest all week, I am not a sex machine Nqubeko you can’t use me as your sex machine I am tired” I snap.

He nods his head and steps away.

“You will find me in the car” I say walking out.

We drive in silence as he makes the first stop at my fathers.

Mama asked me to bring her those big dishes of hers.

He stays in the car while I make my way inside.

I walk up to my bedroom and hear some soft music playing.

I walk over to Netha’s room and find him on the floor drinking.

There’s a piece of paper next to him he doesn’t look ready for the funeral.

“Bhuti” I say.

He raises his head and wipes his tears.

“Bhuti you are hurting me I hate seeing you like this” I tell him.

“Why aren’t you ready” I ask.

He shakes his head.

“You can talk to me I won’t tell anyone” I say.

“I can’t say goodbye Bayede I can’t” he says wiping another tear that falls off.

“If you don’t say goodbye you will always regret it” I tell him.

“I don’t know how to do” he says.

I pick up the paper next to him and read it.

‘Somahhashi

I could have called or told you this in person but I figured I should just write you a letter something you can keep close to your chest.

For the first time ever I know how it feels like to

experience a love so great and powerful, you are the man I prayed for Netha and I am lucky to have you in my life.

I love you Somahhashi and I am happy to let you know that I am carrying your child.

You are going to be a father Netha and I am ready to tell the world about us.

My brother will be angry but he will see the love we have for each other and he will accept us.

Ngiyakuthanda Somahhashi,

I told the letter and look at him.

“She was carrying my child Bayede I was going to be a father” he says groaning in pain.

I knew something was going on but this.

“She snuck out that day to see me but I canceled on her and now she’s gone” he says.

“She would still be alive if I didn’t cancel” he says.

“It’s hurts Bayede saying goodbye hurts” she says.

“I am sorry I really am but not saying goodbye will hurt even more, you will always have this open wound whenever you think of her and the baby” I say.

“Please stand up and get ready you loved her and she loved you its only fair you say your final goodbyes” I say.

He slowly stands up and settles on the bed.

“I know it hurts and I can’t promise it will get better because the truth is it doesn’t, you only learn to live with the pain” I say.

“Please don’t tell anyone” he say softly.

“I won’t tell anyone this is your secret to keep” I tell him.

He nods his head.

I stand up and take out his suit and lay it on the bed.

“Nqubeko is here you will find us in the car” I say. “Yeye” he says.

I turn and look at him.

“Thank you” he says.

I nod my head and step into my bedroom grabbing the scan.

I take the dishes and walk out do the car and find Nqubeko leaning against the car smoking.

This man is handsome and God knows I love him more than anything.

He takes the dishes and puts them in the car. “Can we wait for Netha he’s coming with us” I say. He pulls me close and looks into my eyes.

“I am sorry MaNgubane” he says. Tears fill my eyes and I rub them away.

“I don’t know what came over me I am truly sorry” he says.

I reach inside my bag and take out the baby scan he hasn’t been this gentle since he heard about Phethile.

“I have been meaning to tell you all week but everything has been happening so fast and you haven’t had time for me” I say handing him the scan.

“Yingane le” (Is this a baby” he asks. I nod my head.

“Ngikhulelwe Nqubeko” I say. He blinks and flinches

I take his hand and place it over my stomach. “I am carrying your child Phakathwayo” I say.

He rubs his eyes and clears his throat getting emotional the guilt in his eyes makes me wish I hadn’t told him now.

“You didn’t hurt the baby I went for a check up and the doctor said I am okay but I should lay off the sex” I say.

He clenches his jaws swallowing I lean close and kiss his lips.

“Bafo” Netha says.

I pull away and look at my brother he still looks like hell but he’s all dressed up and ready to go.

They share a hug and step inside the car Naubeko driving off.

We get to the house and the service is about to begin.

It's a small funeral friends and family only I look at Nqubeko's mother being helped to the tent.

She has been crying since she found out the news.

Everyone is seated while the pastor reads from the holy book.

Nqubeko looks at me and stands up from his chair.

He walks over to me and takes my hand walking back to his chair.

"I need you now more than ever MaNgubane" he says tightening his hold over my hand.

He moves my hand to his mouth and kisses it. "I love you" he says.

"I love you too Phakathwayo" I say.

The church choir starts a song and I place my hand over Nqubeko's back.

'Nkosi ngilimele, Ngipholise (Lord I am hurt, heal me)

*Ngipholise, Ngipholise (Heal me, heal me) Ngipholise
lamanxeba (Heal my wounds)*

*Baba ngidinga wen'uzongpholisa (Father I need You to
heal me)*

Oh ngilimele enhliziweni (My heart is wounded/broken)

Ngipholise lamanxeba (Heal my wounds)

*Ubuhlungu obungaka, ngipholise (I'm in so much pain,
heal me)*

*Ngipholise, ngipholise lamanxeba (Heal me, heal me,
Heal my wounds)*

Noma kubuhlungu nkosi yami (Even if it hurts, my Lord)

Inhliziyo yam' iyaqaqamba (My heart aches constantly)

Ngiph' isibindi Baba (wam') (Give me strength father)

Ukuthi ng'kwazi ukuthethelela (So I can be able to forgive)'

A loud sob from Naubeko's mother erupts. "Oh kodwa nkosi ngengane yam' yodwa vo yentombazane" (Oh lord my only girl child) she says wailing even more.

Nqubeko stands up and walks over to comfort her.

The scene is heartbreaking what's happening is unbearable.

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Bayede's keeper

#48

It's been a week since we buried Phethile the pain is still fresh and what hurts the most is that my brother can't grieve openly for the woman he loved.

He called me in the middle of night crying,he couldn't sleep thinking about the pain and torture Phethile went through before taking her last breath.

They had gone for a sonar scan the other day and he could hear the baby's heartbeat.

I stayed up all night talking to him begging him to see someone and he said he would.

I promised him that I would be there every step of the way and I meant every word.

With a killer on the loose I had to rent out my place and fully move in with the parents.

But I have been spending most of my time with

Nqubeko.

Things between us haven't been okay, it feels like we are drifting apart instead of being closer.

He hasn't touched me since I told him about the baby let alone look me in the eye.

We only cuddle and fall asleep waking up like strangers.

I step out of the shower and lean against the door looking at him shirtless facing the window.

His whole body is just beautiful a work of art.

I walk over to him and wrap my arms around his waist and rest my head on his back.

He gently turns and looks at me leaning for a kiss.

I deepen the kiss and hold his neck but he pulls away and holds my hands kissing them.

"Nqubeko" I say.

"I need to shower or we are going to be late" he says. "The doctor won't mind" I say pulling his hand.

I miss him being inside me so bad.

I push him on the bed and get on top of him kissing him while grinding myself on him.

“I don’t want to hurt you” he says softly.

He’s been saying this all week long and I am tired of the song.

“You won’t hurt me” I say sneaking my hand inside his pants.

He comes alive just by me holding him and closes his eyes.

I pull down his pants and free his hard cork.

I look at the shiny head and popped veins and bite my lip.

I massage him in my hands and look into his eyes as he becomes vulnerable.

I move up and slowly lower myself down his hard shaft as it stretches me filling me up.

He grabs my waist and I start moving slowly circling my waist.

It doesn't take long but he turns and gets on top slowly stroking me.

I close my eyes when his hands leave traces on my body.

The moment is so sweet I feel tears nearer it's been long since he kissed me this softly and loved him this kindly.

I meet him half way with each gentle stroke that he gives me.

I spread my legs wide when he places his thumb on my clit rubbing on it.

*With his thumb on my clit and d*ck deep inside me I fail to hold myself and softly mourn his name.*

"I don't deserve you Bayede" he says looking into my eyes.

"We are not perfect Nqubeko but I love you and I am not giving up on you or us" I say.

He kisses my forehead then my lips.

"I love you so much MaNgubane and I want to spend the rest of my life with you" he says.

“I wasn’t there the first time but I promise I will be here till the very end” he says moving his waist.

“Thank you Bayede for carrying my child for the second time, thank you for loving me MaNgubane even at my worst thank you” he says.

He pulls out his cork and rubs himself against my wet hole and pushes it up my clit sliding it back in kissing me.

We spent the morning in bed making sweet love.

I didn’t want to leave the house but we had to seeing that he had already called and made an appointment.

We got to the doctor’s and I was given some vitamins and we did a sonar scan just for Nqubeko to see his baby.

The doctor walked us through having intercourse while pregnant and how crucial it is for me not to stress and keep it easy.

We are now driving back to the house his one hand

on my thigh brushing me.

He parks the car in the drive way and steps out making his way to inside the house.

I shake my head and grab my bag stepping out.

He swoops me up and walks with me heading inside the house.

He places me in the kitchen counter and smiles.

I haven't seen this smile in days and in that doctor's room he smiled and now he's smiling too.

He washes his hands and wipes them clean getting the bread and a few spreads from the fridge.

"I promise I will do better" he says looking at me.

He's not there yet but he's trying its also hard knowing that his mother is going away moving in with her sister for the time being.

"Can I ask something" he says.

I nod my head reaching for the Vienna.

"Can you not take the job please not when things are like this,I know I am asking for too much but please

don't take the job I can't protect you when you are out there" he says moving and standing in between my legs.

My father asked me the same thing I guess it's something they discussed together.

"I signed the contract Nqubeko" I say.

"I know but your safety means more and with you carrying my son whoever is doing this will use you to get to me,I can't let that happen" he says.

I frown upon the word son because I am hoping for a girl.

"Fine plus I am emotionally tired to be putting all my focus on work" I say.

He faintly smiles and moves but I pull him back. "I love you babakhe" I say.

He smiles wide.

"I love you more mamakhe" he says.

I glad we did this and hopefully things will get better between us.

Bayede's keeper

#49

Shaka

I look at Bayede's Cv and I must say it's impressive she's young but she knows her work.

I took some time to dig up on her and found out that she started working at Spector way before she left school meaning the man was grooming her in a way.

I look at the time and she should have been here by now.

Today is her first day at work and I am looking forward to having her around the office.

She's beauty and brains in one and maybe that's why Phakathwayo fell in love with her.

I quickly close the file when a knock comes through and the door opens

Bayede walking in.

She closes the door turning to face me, she is not dressed for work but I push the thought of her not taking the job to the back of my head.

Her dress is tight beautifully hugging her thick body my dick twitches thinking about her naked.

“Mr Nzimande” she says smiling.

I look at her pearly white teeth and swallow hard. “Please sit down” I say.

She settles down still smiling.

“I don’t know how to say this so I will start at the begging I am sorry sir but I can’t take the job” she says sweetly.

I clear my throat and tighten my fist under the table.

“But you were keen to start and you signed a contract of employment” I say.

“I know and I also remember saying nothing would get in the way but at the moment my family is going through a difficult time.

I am sorry to drop you without even starting work but my family needs me now more than ever” she says.

I look at her small mouth and wish I could have my cork in there.

“Thank you for the opportunity and for believing I could do the job,I hope that this won’t leave a bitter taste in your mouth should we cross paths again” she says standing up.

I nod my head not wanting to stand up.

“Goodbye Mr Nzimande” she says heading for the door.

I am ready to explode seeing her hips sway from side to side this woman is deadly beautiful.

The door closes and I undo my belt unbuttoning my pants and zipping them down.

I shut my eyes picture Bayede naked and cum right there.

I jerk off till everything is spilled out and lean my head back breathing heavily.

I reach for the tissue and wipe myself clean wiping

even the table.

I get on my feet and fix my pants clenching my jaws reaching for my phone, I dial Zaine and clear my throat as thought of bending Bayede consume to the point of getting hard again.

“Boss man” he says.

“I need you to send me that video it’s time” I say. “Alright boss man” he says.

I wait till he sends the video and look at Phethile taking her last breath.

I look at my father’s framed picture and frown.

“I will avenge you baba they will pay all of them” I say. I open the file and look at Bayede and smile.

A part me wants her because apart from her beautiful and innocence there is something about her that draws me in but at the same time I want to cripple Phakathwayo to his knees.

I want him to beg for forgiveness while I strip him of everything that his has and what better way than to

start with his family and the one person he loves the most in the world.

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Bayede

On my way back I asked the driver to pass by the house so I could check up on the parents and Netha.

Baba and Netha were said to be out attending to some business.

I found mama cooking trotters and I couldn't help myself.

She dished up for me and added some peri peri

This is my second dish and for the life of me I no longer want to go home, but knowing me I will wake in the middle of the night wanting Nqubeko.

“I will put some in the Tupperware just incase” mama says.

“Thank you ma” I say.

She stands up and looks at me as I devour the trotters.

“Bayede are you pregnant” she asks.

The peri peri goes down the wrong pipe and my ears burn as I cough.

“Calm down sisi I am just asking” she says handing me a glass of water.

I gulp down the water and breathe.

“I was going to tell you mama but I didn’t know how” I say.

She smiles and shakes her head ever since I stepped foot in this house this woman has been kind.

“How are you feeling” she asks.

“I feel nervous but excited at the same time” I say.

“You will make a good mother Bayede and Nqubeko is lucky to have you in his life” she says.

“Mama please don’t tell Dad just until this whole thing dies down and things get back to normal” I say,

“I won’t as long as you will look after yourself” she says.

“And if you need anything tell me and I will be there” she says.

“Thank you Ma” I say.

“It’s my pleasure with Kenya around the house I don’t think I will be able to handle the quietness once they leave,so I am happy that there’s a new person coming and I am going to be a grandmother” she says smiling.

“And don’t worry about your father he will be just as happy when he finds out the news” she says.

I left the house before Baba and Netha came back and went back to the house.

I passed by a restaurant and picked up some takeouts with my day I won’t be able to cook.

The car parks in the drive way while I make way inside the house surprisingly the whole house is dark.

I put on the lights and shout for Nqubeko while

putting the food on the kitchen counter.

I take out my phone and walk towards the bedroom calling him, his phone rings but goes un answered.

I open the bedroom door and turn on the lights to find him sitting on the floor.

The place is thrashed and his hands are bloodied and shaking.

I panic and move closer to him and go down on my knees looking at him.

“Nqubeko” I say.

He doesn't respond, his head is bowed down and he is holding on tight to his phone.

“Phakathwayo look at me” I say placing my hands on his face making him face me.

I take the phone away from him and just then it vibrates.

I swipe the call and put the phone on loud speaker.

“How does it feel to lose someone close to you, how does it feel to see them take their last breathe and

struggle till there isn't any in their body" the voice says.

"Who are you" I ask.

"Someone the man next to your shouldn't have messed up" he says.

My heart beats the voice is not clear but bold enough to be heard.

"Seven years ago in prison you killed a man" the voice says.

I look at Nqubeko and swallow.

"Who is this" I ask.

The call ends and I look at the phone trying to press play but Nqubeko takes the phone before I can see anything.

He takes huge breathes and I can tell it's hard for him.

"Nqubeko what's going on" I ask.

His eyes fill with tears as his clenches his jaws tightly.

“I am sorry” I say.

*He clears his throat and wipes my tears seeing him like
this breaks my heart.*

*I wish he would just break down and cry him bottling
things is not okay.*

*He was hitting the wall and now he won't talk. He
helps me up and places me on the bed.*

*He kisses my forehead and steps away to stand by the
window putting his phone against his ears.*

“Somahhashi we need to talk” he says.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#50

Nqubeko

I looked at the phone and watched the video over and over again seeing her legs kicking till she took her last breath.

In the video she's wearing nothing but her under garments.

And the man standing behind her was using a rope to strangle her till she died.

I looked at his tattoo arm and shook my head shutting my eyes.

The call shook me I won't lie when I killed that man I didn't know who he was.

I didn't even stop to think if he had any children or wife I just did it trying to protect Mbomvu.

It was years ago and I took an impulsive decision without thinking and now it's come back to bite me.

I pour myself a drink and get the door.

Somahhashi walks in followed by Netha I look at the man and think about all the years I have been loyal to him.

Netha closes the door and we all make our way to the bar.

I hand Mbomvu my phone and gulp my drink down. He hands the phone to Netha who refuses to watch. "He sent me that" I say.

"Who is this man" Netha asks.

"The son of the man I killed in prison" I say.

Somahhashi's eyes widen as he looks at me. Netha frowns and tilts his head.

"What man" he asks.

"I don't know but I killed a man and I have a feeling your father here knew him well" I say.

“We are in this mess because I killed a man that was trying to kill your father” I say shaking my head.

“He is coming for me and he will use everything and everyone around me” I say.

“Baba do you know the man” Netha asks.

“I didn’t know David had a son” Somahhashi says. “I am sorry Nqubeko” he says looking at me.

I look at the time and breathe out.

“We need to find out who and what he looks like and then come up with a plan” I say.

The both nod.

“We are going to war Somahhashi and I hope you are ready” I say.

Netha chuckles and looks at me.

“I want the man that killed Phethile I want to skin him alive” he says coldly.

I nod my head walking them out.

I lock the house and walk back to the bedroom and

clear the mess that I made.

*I take off my clothes and get in snuggling up again
Bayede.*

*I place my hand on her stomach never did I ever think
her life would be in danger and I would be the cause.*

*Knowing I am going to be a father brings so much Joy
to heart, in few months time my baby will be running around
the house calling me dad.*

*I get up from the bed and walk to the closet and take out
the ring.*

I walk over back to the bed and rest my head on her belly.

*“Hey little one it’s me your Dad so many things have been
going on between mommy and I, but being blessed with
you has been the most amazing thing ever.*

*I want you to be strong for mommy no matter what
happens Phakathwayo I want you to be strong and
hold on for us.*

I love you so much and I can't wait to meet you" I say. I sit up straight and slide the ring in her finger.

It fits perfectly like a glove I kiss her hand and take pictures.

I have been meaning to do this properobig a part of has been afraid she will say no with how things are between us.

I move the box and place it away pulling her close.

"MaNgubane" I say softly.

"Mhmm" she says softly.

"Sthandwa sam" I say kissing her neck. "Babakhe" she says slowly opening her eyes.

It might sound cliché and old but I love her referring that way to me.

I love the term parting her lips.

"Ngicela ungibhebhise sthandwa sam" I say gently massaging her breast.

She turns and looks at me smiling lately she's been

horny like hell not that I am complaining.

I get in between her thighs and kiss her positioning myself.

“I am hungry” she says.

“Let me feed you then my love” I say.

I push myself inside her and run my hands over her soft thighs.

She moans as I stroke her gently careful not to hurt her.

The thought of hurting her still haunts me even now. “Oh Phakathwayo” she says holding me tight.

I wrap my arm around her waist and kiss gently thrusting in.

She’s the sweetest I have ever tasted and I love her so much.

She screams her pleasure and dig her nails into my skin.

I groan filling her up with my seed,I pull out and reach for the towel and clean her up then wipe

myself clean.

“Are you still hungry” she nods her head as I pull down her nightwear.

I put on my pants and lift her up heading to the kitchen.

I place her on the chair and look at the food she bought and put in the microwave.

She stands up and walks over to the tap and pours herself a glass of water.

The glass shatters as she screams loud frightening me.

“Phakathwayo yini le” (Phakathwayo what is this) she asks looking at her hand.

“It’s a ring sthandwa sam” I say.

She screams even more fanning herself.

I go down my one and careful not to cut myself. “Bayede Ngubane will you marry me” I ask.

She nods her head and steps on one of the glasses attempting to hug me.

“I love you so much and yes I am will marry” she says.

I lift her up and hold her in my arms kissing her.

“My foot hurts” she says.

I chuckle and place her on the kitchen counter and reach for the first aid kit and clean her cut then bandage it.

“If you must know I asked for my son’s approval and he agreed” I say.

She laughs and pulls me close kissing my lips.

Her eyes fill with tears she always has this look whenever the person she loves is hurting.

She feels what people feel and that’s why I love her so much but worry about her at the same time.

She places her hand on my chest and smiles.

“What was in that video” she asks now having calmed down.

“I am going to be your wife Nqubeko you can’t keep secrets from me” she says softly.

“It was a video of Phethile taking her last breathe” I say.

She nods her head.

“I am sorry” she says softly.

My future wife didn't sleep at all night she kept me up by talking and I know she did that because I couldn't sleep.

She kept me calm throughout the night and I couldn't help think about our lives together and the amount of peace and love she would bring in my home.

We are at the mall she's the one who woke me up told me that she is taking me out for for lunch.

She trying to take my mind of things but last night I was saying goodbye, Bayede can not stay with me not when there's a man who wants to kill me.

I can't leave her at the house alone she needs to be home with her parents that way I know she will be safer.

She holds my hand as we make our way inside the restaurant,

I pull the chair for her and kiss her cheek as she settles down.

I move and sit facing her.

She looks at her rings and laughs.

“Thank you Phakathwayo I love it” she says flaunting her hand.

I look at the gentleman making his way to us and frown.

He stops on our table and Bayede smiles . “Mr Nzimande” she says.

“Bayede how are you” he asks.

“I am good thank you” Bayede says.

“Baby this is Mr Nzimande the man who gave me a job and I turned down of course.

Mr Nzimande this is my fiancé Phakathwayo” Bayede says.

The man looks at me with a bit of a frown for some reason he looks familiar as if I have seen his face before.

“I was just saying hello” the man says looking at Bayede his mouth agape.

He slightly nods his head and walks away. I look at Bayede and then the man. “Sthandwa sam let’s go” I say.

She frowns and sulks a bit.

“We need to leave this place now” I say.

She grabs her bag and I help her up, I turn around and look at this Nzimande raise his glass at me winking.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#51

Nqubeko

I drive back home and pack Bayede's clothes putting them in a suitcase.

She is standing leaning against the door with her arms folded.

I place the suitcase on top of the bed and turn to look at her sulking self.

"Uyasilahla Nqubeko"(are you dumping us Nqubeko) she asks.

I shake my head with the pregnancy she easily cries and a lot too.

"No I am not dumping you my love I am just taking you to your father's place,that's way I will know you are safe under his roof" I say.

“I will be safe here with you” she says.

“I can’t leave the house Bayede and still get things done knowing that you are all alone” I say.

“We can hire more security” she says.

“We can but I still don’t want you around the house alone, what happens if you get an emergency and I am not around” I ask.

She taps her foot still folding her arms.

I pull her by her hands and sit in the bed making her sit on top of me.

“I love you and I don’t want to lose you” I say.

“I am going to war sthandwa sam and I will be fighting with everything that I have so please” I say.

“What if we lose you” she asks softly.

“You will never lose me, I am doing all this to protect the whole family” I say.

She bites her lips as I cup her face and kiss her.

“I will marry you and you will be mrs Phakathwayo the mother of my children’s and my heart” I say.

She smiles beautiful and hugs me “I will pray for you” she says. “Thank you sthandwa sam” I say.. “Mba” I say.

She smiles beautifully and leans for a kiss her hands going to down to my pants.

Trying to convince a pregnant lady is hard I had to beg and sex her so she could agree to go home for her own safety.

The drive to her home is quiet she keeps staring at her ring and breathing heavily.

“My father doesn’t know yet does he” she says.

“I haven’t asked him for your hand in marriage” I tell her.

She deeply sighs.

“You can take if off sthandwa sam and put it away till the dust dies down but I want you to know that I love you so much and when this is all over I want to

marry you” I say.

She nods her head and takes off her ring and putting it on the other hands.

“I will wear it around my neck” she says.

“Thank you for loving me Bayede” I say.

She smiles and holds my hand.

I park in the drive way outside Somahhashi’s house and step out of the car getting her suitcase.

She follows behind as we make our way inside the house.

“And then” Zamo asks once we are both inside. “Hello to you too Zamo” I say.

“Whats with the suitcase did you fight,oh my God did you throw my sister out of the house” she asks.

“No I did no such thing right love” I say looking at Bayede.

She nods her head.

“Oh so why are you here” Zamo asks shrugging her

shoulders.

“Zamo stop being a busy body and take that suitcase to your sister’s bedroom” Mrs Ngubane says.

“But she’s the youngest” Zamo says. “Zamo”

Her mother says giving her the eye. “Fine” she says taking the suitcase.

I greet Mrs Ngubane and proceed to Mbomvu’s study.

I find him listening to jazz holding a glass in his hand. I close the door behind him and settle down.

“Somahhashi” I say.

He raises his head and looks at me putting down his glass.

He looks stressed it’s been since I have seen him like this

“I am sorry that I put you in this position” he says.

I nod my head although I blame him what is going on.

“I met the man” I say.

He frowns.

“His name is Shaka Nzimande the man who offered Bayede employment” I say.

I can’t believe Bayede was that close to the man who wants to wipe me off the existence of this world.

“Does Bayede know” he asks.

“No which is why I thought it would be best to have her stay here till we are done with this pest” I say.

“Now that we have a face there’s nothing stopping us from attacking and killing this bastard” he says.

I shake my head drawing in some air and letting it out.

“It’s not that simple Somahhashi this man knows us better than we know him, you can tell that he’s done his research about us and we all know he’s a few steps ahead of us” I say.

“What now” he asks.

I stand up from my chair and look at the time.

“I going to pay him a visit” I say.

“Nqubeko don’t do anything stupid” he says.

“I won’t it’s just a friendly visit I want to see the man for who he is and what better way than you pay him a visit” I say.

He hesitantly his head.

“Very well call me when you are done” he says.

I contemplate asking him for Bayede’s hand in marriage by decide not to ask.

I look at him and nod my head walking out.

I secretly pass by Bayede’s bedroom and find her getting undressed.

I look at her beautiful body and smile the same body that is accommodate my son.

She looks at me and smiles.

“I wanted to say goodbye” I say.

“I will call you when I get home okay” I kiss her forehead and walk out heading outside to my car.

I asked Bayede about the man and she told me all she knew which was little but she did give me the company's address.

I drive to Nzimande Accountant the only place have that I might find him in.

I am let in and led to his office.

He is standing facing the window with his hands in his pocket.

“Took you long enough” he says turning to face me.

I give him a smirk and restraint myself from killing him right here.

“What do you want from me” I ask.

“Your life but we both know you are not give me that” he says.

“So I am going to take each and everything you care about till you beg me for forgiveness” he says.

“We both know I won't do that either seeing that you killed my sister and brother in arm” I say.

“Which was a shame both were down to earth,I must say you taught Mandlakhe well he died like a true man and as for your sister well she was bit difficult” he says.

I clench my jaws and tighten my fist. He smiles and slightly tilts his head.

“I am going to break you so much you will wish you never met my father,I am going to take everything away from and when you think I am not done I will go for the one thing you love more than anything” he says.

I frown thinking about Bayede.

“That’s right I will take her away from you and in the most painful way” he says,

“See a man like you is weak having a family makes you weak” he says.

“Says a man with a hidden sister” I say.

His eyes widen but he quickly masks the shock off.

“See if there’s one thing I learned about your father after killing him is that he had a daughter that he

loved dearly” I say.

“I might not know everything about you but I will find her and trust me the pain I feel right will be nothing compared to what you are going to feel, you made a huge mistake by coming by here and going after my family and worse to threaten me” I say.

The door opens and a young lady walks in I could be mistaken but he tenses up.

“Like I said I will find her and you will wish you hadn’t messed with me” I say walking out.

That was definitely the sister disguised as an employee.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#52

It's been weeks now and things have been crazy.

None of us have been able to leave the house without bodyguards hovering over us.

The house is not what it used to be we are living in fear of the unknown.

Nqubeko has turned into someone I don't know, he's like a stranger and I am scared that when this war ends I would have lost him.

He calls everyday to check up on us but he's not the man I know it's like Phethile's death unleashed something inside of him.

I look at myself in the mirror and smile my baby is growing and I can't wait to meet her.

Apparently I have one job and that is to take care of the baby and make sure she's well fed.

My phone rings and I bend over reaching for it, I look at the unknown number and answer.

“Hello” I say.

The person on the other line coughs a bad cough.

“Bayede” the voice says.

I recognize the voice and move the phone away from my ear and settle down on the bed feeling my legs get weak.

“Bayede please don’t hang up” she says.

“What do you want” I ask.

“I need to see you” she says.

I almost chuckle and shake my head.

“See me for what exactly so you can kill me” I ask.

She coughs again and this time it lasts longer till she shouts for Vumile.

Her breathing is difficult and it's wheezing.

“I haven’t been okay Bayede” she says in a strained voice.

“I don’t care and trust me I don’t want anything to do with you, don’t you ever call me again” I say.

“Bayede I am dying” she says before I end the call.

“I am dying Bayede please I need to see you” she says.

I close my eyes and end the call.

This woman has the nerve to call me after everything she did to us she can die for all care.

My phone rings again and I swipe the call answering it.

*“Lalela we mama ifa mangabe ufuna ukudla kodwa hlukana nomphefumulo wam ngiyakhonza mina”
(listen here woman die if you want to die but leave me alone) I say.*

“Tell your Phakathwayo to release my sister” the caller says.

“Hello” I say.

I stand up from the bed my heart beating fast. “Bayede tell your man to release my sister or he will

regret it”the caller says.

The fact that this person knows my name freaks me out.

“I don’t know what you are talking about” I say.

“I don’t care find him and give him the message” the calls ends.

This is what I have been afraid of being caught in the middle of Phakathwayo’s dealings.

I grab the phone and walk out of my bedroom heading to the living room.

As always baba,Netha and Bandile are not here,I greet everyone and grab a chair settling down.

Kenya stands up from her chair and comes over and rests her head on my lap.

“Yeye” she says. “Yes

PumPum” I say.

“Mama says there’s also a baby in your belly growing” she says looking up.

I smile and ruffle her hair.

“Yes there’s a baby growing inside me” I say. She smiles excitedly and touches my belly. “How did it get inside” she asks.

The table erupts with laughter and cleared throats. I look at Thando who smiles and sips her juice.

“Why don’t you ask your mother I am sure she knows since there’s a baby in her tummy too” I say.

“Mama doesn’t know” she says confidently. “Why is that” I ask.

“Because she said so” she says.

“Well I prayed to God for a blessing and he gave me a baby” I say.

“That’s not what gogo told me” she says squinting her eyes.

I look at mama.

“I simply told her that when a mom and dad love each they make a baby and that one day I would tell her how” she says.

I shake my head and laugh not so long this kid didn't want a brother or sister now she's asking me about growing babies.

I look at Zamo and I can tell her mind so far away.

No one wants to be a prisoner especially on your own father's house.

I clear my throat and look at mama.

"Aunt Martha called" I say.

Zamo raises her head looking at me.

"What does she want I hope you told her to go jump or hang herself" Zamo says.

"Zamo" Mama warns.

"It's true though mama after everything that woman did to Bayede, I hope she told her where to get off" Thando says.

Mama looks at Kenya and smiles.

"Kenya please fetch gogo her glasses" mama says.

"Bayede what did she say" she asks.

“She asked to see me apparently she’s dying” I say. She nods her head and deeply sighs.

“I know that woman hurt you and that she took away so much from you, but you are better than her and you should always remember that.

You need to forgive her in order to heal and move on from your past.

You will be sick Bayede from holding on to your past pain and that grudge you have inside of you, she doesn’t deserve your forgiveness and you owe her nothing but you owe yourself peace and so much more.

By forgiving her you are not doing it for her but doing it for yourself and peace of mind, trust me once you have forgiven her you will look back and your past will be just that a past that has no hold and impact on you” she says.

“Forgiving someone is hard it hurts and it’s not an overnight thing but think about it okay” I nod my head looking at Zamo shake her head.

“Of course you would say that mama because you are a good person and go to church, but the truth is forgiving someone is hard especially when they knew what they were doing.

That woman watched while her brother abused my sisters, she herself killed Bayede’s child and has a hand in Khethiwe dying.

So we can’t expect Bayede to just forgive and move on just because that old Haag is close to dying and wants to die with a clear conscious ngiyala” Zamo says.

“Zamo that’s enough” Mama says.

“No it’s not enough I want that woman to suffer let her die and go to heal and burn for everything she did, why must the good people always suffer and be expected to forgive as if nothing happened.

A person slaps you on one cheek and you are expected to bring the other cheek, a person hurts you and you expected to forgive them just because they suddenly asked for forgiveness” she says standing.

“I don’t know my twin because of the decisions that

were taken,I am stuck here in this house because of the decisions Baba took and when all this is done we are supposed to be grateful and thankful that we are alive.

We wouldn't be in this mess had it not been for him and as always we are supposed to forgive him.

I am tired of us always being the bigger people” she looks shaking her head.

She's angry and by her last rants its not only about Martha but the decisions our parent's took leading to where we are right now.

Baba walks in followed by Nqubeko and clears his throat.

Zamo walks past him and heads to her bedroom.

Thando excuses herself,I look at Nqubeko and ask him to join me in the kitchen.

He does and leans against the fridge with his hands in his pockets.

I look at him and realize he's slowly turning into this cold man.

“Someone called me and asked me to give you a message, the person asked that you release his sister or you will regret it” I say.

He frowns and pinches his nose bridge.

“What else did he say” he asks.

“Nqubeko what’s going on who is this man” I ask.

“I am scared not only for me but my baby ngiyacela Phakathwayo give this man his sister back” I say.

He nods his head and grabs his car keys moving closer.

He wraps his hands around my waist and smiles. “Will you give her back” I ask.

He nods his head kissing me. “Yes I will” he says.

“Tell you father I had to leave and take care of the Nzimande issue” he says walking out.

I blink at the mention of Nzimande and frown could this be Shaka.

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Nqubeko

I drove to the warehouse livid that Shaka had the audacity to call the mother of my child and threaten her.

I looked at Netha line up Zaine and Zekhetheko having them on the knees with their hands behind their backs.

“Bandile this is the time to back out and walk out of here” I said looking at Bandile.

He shook his head and swallowed.

“We are family and family stands together” he said. I looked at Netha’s carving Zaine like wood his skin

falling off.

I sat back and watched a blindfolded Zekhethelo shaking and crying.

“Please I am begging you” Zaine said.

“When you raped my sister and killed her did you stop when she begged” I asked.

I stood my up and deeply sighed walking towards them Netha was enjoying this too much for my liking.

I pulled out my gun and cocked it and nodded my head.

Bandile stood behind me and starting shooting a video.

I pointed the gun to Zaine’s head and aimed for his forehead.

I shot him twice and he fell to the ground, I turned the gun to Zekhethele and aimed at her head.

“Please don’t kill me” she pleaded.

Her voice cracked and she broke down crying. I

pulled the trigger and shot her in the head.

She fell to the ground and blood gushed out of her wound.

“I want both bodies dumped in-front of his gate” I said.

I turned my head and looked at Khethiwe for the first time ever I felt someone’s death by my hands.

Her death will forever haunt me.

I took the phone from Bandile and sat down looking at it as it played out.

I wanted him to feel the same pain I felt and more. “He’s going to come after us” Netha said.

“And I am ready for him” I said laying back.

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Bayede's keeper

#53

Nqubeko

News about the bodies found outside the Nzimande resident were making the the rounds.

I know Shaka will retaliate and come hard at me I just need to make sure the security is tight and that nothing and no one goes through.

A call comes through I looked at the phone and answered.

“Gambu” I say.

“Sekwenzekile Phakathwayo” (it's done Phakathwayo) he says.

“Akekho noyedwa obonile noma osolayo” (So no one saw or is suspecting anything) I ask.

“Lutho umuzi wona ushe wanqonqa kwangabona muntu ngisho ingane yakhe ibingekho” (No one says anything the house burned into ashes even the daughter wasn’t there) he says.

“And the Mthembu” I ask looking at time.

I promised Bayede that I would take her to the doctors.

“Kukhona lokho sengikutitinye kwaze kwayichamela isenyemfu sendoda” (He’s here I roughed him till he pissed himself” he says chuckling.

“I want to gift him to Somahhashi make sure he stays alive” I say.

“Kulungile bye” he says ending the call.

I look at the time and grab my car keys heading out.

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Bayede

I am woken up my ringing phone it goes on and on till I sit up straight and answer the call.

I answer the call and deeply sigh rubbing my eyes.

The call gets cut before I can say anything a message comes through.

I open the text and a few photos of dead people pill up.

I almost puke and put a hand over my mouth swallowing because of the gruesome pictures.

I press the video and it downloads slowly as my heartbeat picks up.

I get out of the bed and pace up and down holding the phone close to my chest.

I look at the video and it's finally done, I press play holding my breath.

Nqubeko shows up his back facing the camera I know it's him.

I look at the two victims on their knees the man

badly cut up and bite my lip.

The young girl screams begging for her life.

The first two gunshot go off and the phone falls off my hands.

I close my eyes and the third one goes off.

A call comes through and I slowly reach for the phone.

I answer the call holding in my tears.

“He killed my sister in cold blood Bayede” I recognized the voice and my lips tremble.

“Shaka” I say.

The call gets cut and I try calling it back but it goes straight to voicemail.

The phone drops because of my shaking hands. I call Nqubeko and he answers on the first ring.

“Nqubeko kodwa yini” I ask.

“Bayede” he says.

I fail to express myself and end the call breathing

heavily.

My chest starts burning I struggle to breathe as my heart beats rapidly.

“Mama” I manage to shout.

The door swings open and my father walks in followed Ma.

They both kneel in front of me and hold my hands.

“You are not dying okay breathe Bayede” baba says.

I shake my head because this time it feels like I am about to die.

“Bayede breathe think about the baby” mama says squeezing my hand.

I take slow deep breathes and letting the air out.

Baba stands up and walks out coming back with a glass of water.

“You are doing great breathe” she says nodding her head.

I breathe in and out feeling my senses come back.

“What’s wrong” Baba asks.

Tears fill my eyes and I struggle to say anything words fail me.

I am still shocked by the dead bodies and I don’t want to believe that it’s Nqubeko in that video.

“Bayede talk to us see is it the baby” she asks. I shake my head.

“Then talk to us” she says in a pleading voice. Baba helps me drink the water.

“You are shaking” he says helping me.

“I think I will call Nqubeko”he says walking out. “It’s nothing mama I was just overthinking” I say. She slowly nods her head and faintly smiles.

“I will make you some tea it should calm you down” she says walking out.

I lay on the bed and play the video over and over again.

It takes an hour before Nqubeko gets here he walks

in and closes the door looking at me.

He looks fine okay even though he just took two lives yesterday.

He walks over to me and settles on the bed.

I hand him my phone and watch as he plays the video.

I wait for him to flinch to do anything but he hands me back the phone and deeply sighs.

“I am sorry that you had to see that” he says softly.

“Nqubeko what are you” I ask.

“I am the father of your child the man who asked you to marry him” he says.

I shake my head.

“No” I say shaking my head.

“You killed two people Nqubeko and you are walking like nothing happened” I say.

He clears his throat standing up.

“They were innocent” I say.

“That man was far from innocent he killed my sister” he says shouting.

“And that girl what did she do” I ask.

“She was begging you Phakathwayo not to kill her and you still pulled the trigger” I say.

“They killed my sister what was I supposed to do sit back and laugh” he asks.

“Be the bigger man Nqubeko and not use innocent people in your fights” I say.

“Well this was the only way” he says.

“No its wasn’t you chose this way and you are no better than them” I say.

He raises his eyebrows looking at me.

“I am doing everything I can to protect my family because if I didn’t that man will kill all of us” he shouts.

“You are a monster Nqubeko a cold blooded monster” I say.

“Ubabulele Nqubeko”(You killed them Nqubeko) I

say.

He nods his head nod moves closer.

“I know sthandwa sam but I need you to calm down” he says.

I break down and bite my lip burying my head in my knees.

He holds me tight and raises my head making me face him.

“I am doing all this to protect you and the baby,I am sorry that you saw that video but I am a just a man trying to protect his family.

I love you Bayede more than anything” he says. I

look at his hands and shriek.

“Please don’t do that” he says softly.

“I don’t want my child to be raised by a killer” I say.

He flinches a d swallows hard clenching his jaws,no matter what he says right now it won’t take away what I saw from the video.

He cups my chin and kisses me,he slowly deepens

the kiss and rests his forehead on mine.

“I will fix this sthandwa sam I swear I will fix this” he says whispering in my ear.

“Ngiyesaba Nqubeko angilali ebusuku angifuni ukulahlekelwa uwena Phakathwayo,yiyeke lento ngiyacela muntu wam yishiye phansi lento yenzela mina me ngane” (I am scared Nqubeko I don’t sleep at night,I don’t want to lose you please let this go do it for me and the baby) I say.

He nods his head and faintly smiles.

“Okay for you I will do anything” he says standing up. He brushes my belly and sighs.

“I didn’t mean to upset you MaNgubane” he says. He bends and kisses my forehead.

“I will wait for you in the kitchen” he says walking out.

I take a few minutes and get ready then walk out,I find him in the kitchen seated having coffee.

As much as I love him a part of me is afraid of the

man he is now.

He quickly gets on his feet and looks at me. “You look good” he says.

I nod my head and faintly smile.

We both make our way out heading to the car. He opens for me and walks over to his side.

A loud bang goes off I turn and look at Nqubeko shooting back.

“Stay in the car and keep your head down” he shouts.

I drop my head and close my ears till the noise dies down.

I open my eyes to see everyone standing outside.

I turn my head and Nqubeko is no where to be seen.

“Call an ambulance” my father shouts running to the back of the car.

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Bayede's keeper

#54

I step out of the car with my hand around my abdomen I feel some cramps down there.

“Bayede stay in the car” Baba shouts.

I shake my head and walk over to where he is. Netha is holding Nqubeko in his arms shaking him.

“Nqubeko” I say through gritted teeth as the pain comes and goes.

“I think you should get in the house sisi” Mama says. I shake my head looking at blood on the ground. “Baba” I say.

“He's not dead right” I ask holding my back.

He gasps for air and holds his chest pulling his shirt.

Netha quickly opens up his shirt up.

I hold on to mama and bite my lips as tears fall down my cheeks he's alive.

He violently coughs as Netha takes out the bulletproof vest.

He looks at me and smiles breathing heavily.

"I am not about to die now" he says looking at his bleeding arm.

"Ahh" I say.

They all look at me. "What's wrong" Baba asks.

"It's the baby" I say biting my lip as the pain stirs up again.

"We need to call the doctor" Baba says. Mama shakes her head and opens the car.

"She needs the hospital, Netha drive" she helping me in settling next to me.

"Your father will follow us with Nqubeko don't worry" she says

Netha gets in and starts the car driving out

The cramps come and go and a part of me worries that I might lose the baby.

We get to the hospital and I am rushed to the ER immediately.

Doctor Taylor walks in and looks at me. “Bayede” she says.

“I don’t want to lose my baby” I say. She hold my hands and smiles.

“You are not going to lose the baby, now tell me what’s wrong” she asks.

“I have these cramps that come and go” I say.

She nods her head and lifts my dress up, she parts my legs and takes a peak then comes up and looks at me.

“There is no bleeding which is good now I need to examine you and the baby” she says.

I nod my head as she prepares to examine me.

“Is my baby okay” I ask.

She moves the probe around till we hear the heartbeat.

I wipe my tears and smile looking at the small screen.

“The baby’s heartbeat is steady and strong” she says.

“Then what’s up wrong with me” I ask.

The door opens and Nqubeko walks in bandaged. “Mr Phakathwayo sir” the doctor says smiling.

“As I was saying the baby is doing fine, but with every pregnancy comes risk and complications.

Your high blood pressure seems to be up which is not good for you and the baby, if you keep on stressing and worrying then this baby won’t make it.

I always advice my patients to be calm, to exercise and eat healthy and not to stress” she says.

“What can we do to make sure she and the baby are fine” Nqubekp asks.

“Make sure she gets a lot of rest and I emphasize do

not stress her please” She says.

“Your son is strong and he’s holding on but if Bayede keeps stressing and coming back here we might lose him” she says looking at Nqubeko.

She wipes me up and deeply sighs.

“The nurse will be here to administer your medication for the pain and we will be keeping you overnight for observation” she says walking out.

The nurse walks in right after the doctor and gives me some medicine.

I am then taken to my room where I change into the hospital gown.

I look at Nqubeko and it dawns on me that I almost him today.

He moves close and takes my hands into his.

“Ngiyaxolisa MaNgubane” (I am sorry MaNgubane) he says wiping my tears.

I look to the other side and bite my lip. He turns my face and gently kisses me.

“Phephisa muntu wam” he says softly. “We almost lost you Nqubeko” I say.

“I know but here I am here with you because I am taking as many precautions as I can” he says.

I nod my head.

“Woza la” (Come here) he says giving me a hug.

“I made a promise Bayede that I would never leave you and I won’t” he says.

“We are having a son MaNgubane, you are giving me a son and you deserve everything that is good” he says smiling.

“Do trust me” he asks.

“Yes” I say.

“Good because we are this close to ending all this” he says confidently.

“I am sorry about all the things I said earlier” I say. “I loved you then and I still love you now” I say.

He beams and that puts me at ease.

“And I love you more Bayede” he says.

I look at him and get all emotional again. “Ngiyakuthanda Nqubeko” I say.

He chuckles.

“Uthandwa yimina” he says.

He removes the rings from my other finger and smiles.

“I spoke to your father on our way here and I asked him for your hand in marriage and he agreed.

Now Bayede Ngubane will you marry me” he says.

I nod my head as he slips the ring in my finger and leans over to kiss me.

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Nqubeko

I left the hospital and went back home to get a few things done then I called Somahhashi and told him about Mthembu.

I wasn't going to pursue the matter but then I thought about the pain they put Bayede and Khethiwe through.

I thought about Mthembu getting away with what he did and how he would do it to other kids I knew then I wouldn't be able to live with myself.

Things have been hard trying to keep everyone safe and be present for the pregnancy has been hard.

I look at the baby scan and smile I know that my sister is looking over us and that son will make it no matter what.

I grab my car keys and head out dialing Zamo.

Her phone goes un answered typically of Zamo her phone is always in her hands but you don't find her whenever you are looking for her.

I drive straight to the hospital and get the shock my

life when I find the place surrounded.

I step out of the car and head inside but one of the police officers stops me.

“Sir no one is allowed to get in” he says .

I look at his hands on my chest and raise my eyebrow.

He slowly moves them as I click myself tongue.

I proceeded to make my way inside and bump into a few police officers.

Doctor Taylor rushes to me followed by a police officer.

“This is Mr Phakathwayo he’s the one who hired the guards to keep watch over his fiancé” she says.

“What’s going on” I ask.

She draws in her breath and lets it out.

“I don’t know what happened everything took place so fast, we held at gunpoint your men tried their best but those people were to many” she says.

I run towards Bayede’s room and find my men on the

floor covered up in white sheets.

There seems to have been a struggle and Bayede is no where to be seen.

“Where is she” I ask looking at doctor Taylor.

“They took her” she says.

I almost lose my balance upon hearing that.

“Sir do you have any idea as to who might have taken her” the officer asks.

“No” I say.

“Sir why would you have people guard her room” he asks.

I turn around and look at him.

“Like I said officer I don’t know anything once you are done with your investigation please alert me so I can fetch my men” I say heading for the door.

I feel a panic attack near but remember my breathing techniques.

I get to the car and drink a bottle of water grabbing my phone.

As predicted an unknown number comes through.

“If you touch her I am going to kill you Shaka” I say masking the fear in my voice.

With Shaka anything is possible and I fear losing her so much my heart starts beating fast with my hands sweating.

“Ngakutshela ngathi I will take her away from you” (I once told you I would take her away from you) he says calmly.

“I am warning you Shaka” I say.

“I want you to suffer Phakathwayo, I want her to hate you and despise you till you kill yourself” he says.

“What do you want” I ask.

“I want you to kill your mentor” he says. My eyes widen not Mbomvu.

“What” I say.

“You heard me I want you to kill Somhhashi or I will kill Bayede you choose” he says ending the call.

I swallow hard and look at the phone he can't be

serious.

I dial Gambu and put him on louder speaker starting the car.

“Mhlonishwa” he says.

“I want you track down Shaka for me do whatever it takes to find him” I say.

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Bayede's keeper

#55

I thought I was strong but today has proven that I am far from being strong.

I cried so much my cries fell on deaf ears I ended up begging him to kill him.

I am tied to a chair and there's a bucket of water and a cloth that's been used to chock me.

One wraps the cloth over my head and tightens it while the other one pours water over my head.

These men have been laughing and mocking me now I understand what Phethile went through.

I am just thankful they haven't touched my belly.

I keep praying that Nqubeko finds us before it's too late.

Shaka walks in and places a camera in front of me setting it up.

“Shaka please let me go” I beg.

He whistles and rolls up his sleeves looking at me brushing my belly

“Let’s press play and show Daddy that I have your mommy” he says.

He presses play and moves closer again.

He slaps me so hard I bite my lip and hear sirens in my ear.

He punches me in the face and cups my chin punching me again.

“Let’s do this again and maybe your fiancé will make the right choice” he says.

“What choice” I ask.

“To choose between and your father” he says.

A man walks in and stands next to him, my one eye shuts while I open the other one.

I think I recognize him but I am to disoriented to be sure.

“I want you to kill him as soon as he pulls the trigger

put one in him too,I want to see everything” Shaka says.

“Ngiyakuzwa” (I hear you) the man says.

Shaka moves behind me and puts a plastic over my head.

I struggle to breathe and kick trying to free my hands but the plastic gets tighter and tighter as he strangles me.

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Nqubeko

I drove straight to Mbomvu’s house and asked to drive around him,I took him to the warehouse where Gambu was waiting for us.

We have been sitting here having a drink I told him that Bayede was taken and that I would get her back.

I already have a few of my man out there looking for her.

I look at him gulp his drink down it's hard being a father and right now he's stressed.

This man has been a father to me built me into the man I am today.

I have everything because of this man and now I have to make a choice.

The hardest choice I have ever had to make in my entire life,going to prison wasn't this hard because I knew I would be back.

But if I do this there is no turning back if I do this I will lose my family forever.

“He gave you an ultimatum didn't he” he says. I nod my head and gulp my drink down.

“What is it” he asks.

My phone vibrates before I can answer him. I hate these sick phone games he plays.

I open the video and swallow hard seeing Bayede being beaten and a plastic bag over her head.

Tears fill my eyes as she struggles to breathe.

I have never been this powerless in my entire life and all because of one man.

I pass the phone over to Somahhashi and watch as tears fall from his eyes.

He rubs them and smiles looking at me. “I won’t do it Mbomvu” I say.

“You can and you will do it” he says.

“I don’t want to do it Baba” I say.

“I know but she’s my baby girl and I would give my life for her” he says.

I clench my jaws and wipe my tears.

My phone rings and I clear my throat answering the call.

“Tick tock” Shaka says.

I shut my eyes when I hear Bayede screaming in the background.

“I have the gun to her stomach and trust me if you don’t kill the old man I will kill Bayede and this child she’s carrying.

See its no longer about my sister or father but the fact that I am disgusted by man like you,man who think they are better than anyone else in this wold.

Man who think they are untouchable just because they are powerful,I want to teach you a lesson that you will never forget” he says.

I look at Somahhashi’s pull out his gun and breathe heavily.

“Do it” Somahhashi says giving me his gun.

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Shaka

I get a bucket of cold water and splash it over her,she gasps for air almost tipping over the chair.

She slightly opens her eyes and looks at me as I squat in front her.

I move my hands to her breast and squeeze them. She flinches and bites her lips.

“I have a surprise for you” I say.

I stand and move out of the way.

“Nqubeko” she screams looking at the screen.

I don’t know why but I have this thrill whenever I see something gruesome play on screen.

Nqubeko is pointing the gun at Somahhashi.

I finally did this is the end of Somahhashi’s reign and that of Phakathwayo’s and its all because of me.

I will earn my place in this circle of powerful man, I will be known as the man who brought about their demise.

“Nqubeko don’t do it please” she says looking at me. “He can’t here you” I say.

“Please don’t do this to him please don’t make him kill my father, I will do anything” she shouts.

“Shaka please” she says.

She begs and pleads bitterly crying.

“Please don’t do this I am begging you” she says.

I look at her and tilt my head no matter how I look at her it she’s just as beautiful.

A loud bang brings me back from thoughts

I turn looking at the screen and see Somahhashi laying on the floor.

“Baba” She says.

Her loud scream fills the room.

“Wait not just yet wait for it” I say.

Another shot and Nqubeko is on the floor.

“Pha... phaka .. no it can’t be” she says shaking her head.

Gambu walks over to the spy camera and switches it off.

A call comes through and I quickly answer the call.

“Gambu” I say.

“It’s done” he says.

I deeply sigh as relief washes over me. “Get out of there now” I say.

“Yes sir” he says.

I end the call and look at Bayede crying her lungs out. I reach for the taser and shock her in the neck.

“Baba I did it” I say.

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Bayede's keeper

#56

"Is she alive" a soft voice emanates

I try opening up eyes but they hurt so bad.

"Please don't you might hurt yourself even more we called an ambulance" another voice different from the last one.

"Baba" I say.

"Shhhh everything is going to be okay just hold on" the voice says.

"Hear that that's the ambulance" I hear the sirens nearer and wish I could take my last breath.

I wake up to the beeping machine and run my hands to my belly.

I open my swollen eyes and look around the hospital

room,I look at the iv on my arm and yank the bloody thing off.

“Ouch” I say at the stinging sensation.

I pull the light blankets and step out of the bed,I realize I am not strong enough to walk so I hold on the bed and other objects making my way to the door.

I hold the handle and open the door to my surprise there is a few people outside my door.

I almost drop to the floor but a nurse comes to my aid and helps me up closing the door.

“I want to go home I need to see my father,I need to see my Nqubeko” I say.

“Mam please you need to get back to your bed” the nurse says.

I push her back and make for the door but she quickly get to it and opens calling for another nurse.

“I just want to go home” I say.

“We understand your frustration and confusion but you need to be in bed “ the other nurse says.

“You don’t understand” I say.

The both look at me the other one holding an injection.

“We understand perfectly well you are scared but you are safe now nothing will happen to you or your baby” the nurse says.

“Ngifuna ubab’wami please I just want to go home and see him” I say calmly.

“Okay you will but for now please get in your bed you need to rest” the nurse holding the injection says.

I nod my head getting back to my bed. “This will help you” she says injecting me.

The white ceiling disappears as I fall into deep sleep.

I drift back and forth between reality and hallucinations.

My head hurts my eyes hurt I feel a hand squeeze mine and force my eyes to open.

“Nqubeko” I say.

“Hey” I look at Netha and smile.

“When did you get here” I ask looking around. He faintly smiles and just looks at me.

“Am dreaming” I ask.

“No you are awake” he says.

“I am thirsty” I say.

He quickly nods and pours me some water.

He helps me sit up straight and helps me hold the glass.

“Easy” he says taking the glass away. I swallow and breathe looking at him. “I was taken” I say.

“I know” he says deeply sighing.

“And I saw Nqubeko shoot baba and another man shoot him” I say.

He nods his head and clenched his jaws sniffing.

He takes out a picture from his jacket and shows it to me.

“Is this the man you saw” he asks.

I look at the picture perfectly and nod.

He deeply sighs and blinks his tears away. “Netha what’s going on” I ask.

The door opens and Mama walks in followed by Thando.

“Hey” Thando says.

“I will be outside” Netha says standing up,

He shuts the door behind him and Mama looks at me.

“I spoke to the nurse everything is fine the baby is fine so we can take you home” Mama says.

I nod my head.

“I know you have a lot of question but remember what the doctor said about stressing” She says taking out track suits from the bag.

“I want to see Nqubeko and my father” I say. “And you will see them” Mama says.

I look at Thando and she faintly smiles.

I change from the hospital gown and wear the tracksuits.

Netha walks back in and helps me onto the wheelchair.

I am wheeled to the car and the front is filled with reporters.

“Are we going home” I ask.

“No we are going to the hospital” Mama says holding my hand.

I lay my head back and rest my head brushing my belly.

Atleast we are headed to the hospital and my father together with Nqubeko are fine.

The car stops outside the same hospital I was abducted at.

We all step out of the car and walk inside.

Netha passes by reception he then comes back to us and leads the way.

We make our way to the intensive unit care, my heart beats fast with each step we take.

“We can’t go in he’s too critical” Netha says.

I watch through the window and see my father. I turn and give mama a hug.

“He’s alive sisi that’s all matters” she says wiping my tears.

I break down and hold her tight coming I was praying for them.

“Where is Nqubeko I need to see him too” I say.

Netha stand behinds me as I am weak to stand properly.

“Yeye Nqubeko didn’t make it” mama says. I shake my head and hold on to Netha.

“No baba is alive meaning Nqubeko is alive too” I say. She shakes her head tears filling her eyes.

“When Netha got there it was too late he was already gone” she says.

“Hayi you must be mistaken” I say.

Thando wipes her tears and my heart sinks.

“He said he wouldn’t going anywhere so I don’t believe you” I say.

“I want to see him” I say. “Bayede”

Netha says.

“I want to see him” I shout.

He nods his head and mama walks me down the corridor.

“He was taken to the morgue” mama says. “Stop saying that Nqubeko is not dead” I say.

My mouth says one thing but my feet keep dragging me to the hospital morgue.

We get ushered in and the place reeks of death.

It feels like I am in some horror movie and I am not about to wake up anytime soon.

Mama holds my hand as they uncover Nqubeko’s lifeless body.

“No” I say.

My lips quiver as they show me the bullet wound that took his life.

“Why” I ask.

“I am sorry sisi” mama says.

“Nqubeko why would you do this to us” my throat clogs up as lumps forms around my throat.

“Phakathwayo please don’t do this to me, I am begging you wake up.

I can’t raise him alone please” They cover him up. “Mama nono .. he can’t leave me” I say.

She holds me tight and slows walks me out but my legs fail me.

“It’s too much I can’t take anymore mama” I say.

I hold my chest and struggle to breathe it feels like a panic attack but way severe and tiring.

“Bayede stay with me don’t do this” Mama says. “Help somebody help my daughter can’t breathe”

she says shouting.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#57

It feels like I have been cut open and laid bare for the whole world to see.

The news people have been at it announcing that Phakathwayo is no more.

It's hard to believe but he's really gone and I will never see him again.

I look at my growing belly and faintly smile, I don't know how this baby keeps surviving but here it is alive and well.

The doctor said we are in distress and that he can't let us go home.

I am been hospitalized for two weeks now but it feels like a life time.

I have been dreaming about Nqubeko and each time I wake the smile on my face disappears.

My father's condition is better now but he hasn't woken up, I dread the day he wakes up and finds out that Nqubeko is dead.

I am confused and hurt I don't understand why these things happen to me.

I don't understand why everything has to be taken away from me.

My family has been coming and going telling me that everything is okay but I doubt it.

The door opens and Liam walks in I haven't seen him in a long while and seeing him now makes me emotional.

He closes the door and moves closer. "I am sorry" he says giving me a hug.

I break down in his arms and hold him.

"He's gone Liam" I tell him.

"I know and I am sorry" he says softly.

"How am I supposed to move on when he's gone" I ask.

“By taking it one step at the time”he says.

“I know it hurts but you have to think about the baby” he says.

I pull away and look at him.

“He’s going to grow up with a father my son is going to grow up and he will never get to know his father” I say.

He wipes my tears and looks into my eyes.

“I am here for you Bayede I have always been” he says.

I nod my head and move back.

“Thank you but I want Nqubeko back,I need him back because I don’t think I can do this without him” I say.

“I wish I could take away your pain but I can’t and I am sorry” he says.

“It hurts Liam so bad” I say.

He holds me close as I cry in his arms.

He pulls away and wipes my tears smiling through his glossy eyes.

“When I first met you, you were just a young girl that needed healing and trust me you have come to far to break down now.

I know it’s hard and that if hurts deep inside you but you need to be strong not just for you but for this baby that you carrying.

I don’t know why bad things happens to good people but you will overcome this I know you will” he says.

“You are one of the strongest people I know hold to that because this child will need you” he says.

I nod my head but truth be told staying strong is hard.

“I will always love you and I will always come when you need me,I know I can never be with you but I will always be here no matter what.

If you need me to hold your hand through this journey then I will because I would do anything for you” he says.

“Thank you” I say.

He nods and deeply sighs taking a seat next to me. “It’s okay you can sleep I will be right here” he says.

He holds my hand and lets me rest.

He's always been an amazing man but my heart has always belonged to Nqubeko.

I fell asleep and woke up to the nurses bringing me food, I was told that Liam left but promised he would be back.

These ladies have been so kind going beyond their required work.

They haven't asked me any questions about my father or Nqubeko seeing that they have the talk of the town.

Nurse Popi walks in and smiles she's been helping me cope since I have been here.

I call her my personal nurse she's kind and everything that a nurse should be and more.

"I have a surprise for you" she says.

I look at her and sit up straight smiling.

The door opens and my father walks in followed by

mama and Nqubeko's mother.

*She's been here for the whole two weeks putting off
Nqubeko's funeral for my father's sake.*

"I will leave you alone" Nurse Popi says.

"Baba Nqubeko ungishiyile" (Dad Nqubeko left me) I say.

*I hold my tears but they prick my eyes and fall. "I
know baby" he says holding me.*

I break down and sob bitterly.

"Baba" I say.

*He holds me tight so tight I feel my heart at peace knowing
that he's alive.*

*But what about my Nqubeko couldn't God spare his life
too couldn't he save him just this once.*

"Let it all out" he says softly.

I don't hold back and cry for the man I love.

*Just like that he's gone and there's nothing I can do about
it.*

“How are you feeling” Baba asks.

“It hurts” I say.

He nods his head.

“I am so sorry this is all my fault had I not told him to kill that man we wouldn’t be here” he says.

“I miss him baba and I don’t want to believe that he’s gone,angifuni baba” I say.

“It okay” he says calmly.

I look at Nqubeko’s mother and bite my lip had her son not taken the fall for me we wouldn’t be here.

Nqubeko has always been my keeper and now he’s gone.

My love is gone and it hurts like hell.

“Yeye” she says looking at me.

“Ma” I say.

She clears her throat.

“Tomorrow we are burying him” his mother says. I nod my head and look down.

“Your father is awake now so we laying him to rest tomorrow” she says.

Rest, the word echoes and my heart aches so bad I wish those people hadn’t found me by the side of the road.

“I was hoping that you would be there” she says. I shake my head I can’t say goodbye to him.

“Bayede” Mama says softly.

“You don’t understand mama he wasn’t supposed to die and I can’t say goodbye it hurts and I don’t want to see his coffin go down” I say.

“We understand sisi it’s okay” Nqubeko’s mother says.

“He’s gone baba Phakathwayo is gone” I say. He clears his throat and wipes his tears.

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Bayede's keeper

#58

It's been over a month now and I am still raw about Nqubeko's death.

I don't know if I am coming or going but life seems to be going on while I am still holding on to the man I lost.

His mother decided to stick around she mentioned wanting to be close to the her grandson.

Although my family is offering all their support but the truth is it won't be the same.

My son is going to grow up without his father who happened to be the most amazing man I have ever known.

For some reason it seems like the Shaka issue died down and everyone forgot about the man.

As for Gambu not only did he betray Nqubeko but he

also fled the country.

I am angry that his killers are out there and my father is doing nothing about the matter.

Bandile and Thando moved out of the house.

With the baby due they needed their own space and baba promised that nothing would happen to them.

Like I said life seems to be going as if nothing happened.

I fix my dress and grab my purse heading out Zamo is taking me to my doctors appointment.

My sister has been so amazing I don't think I would be here if it wasn't for her.

I join my father in the garden and watch as he places his newspaper down and takes off his reading glasses.

“Sthandwa sam” he says smiling.

“Baba” I say.

“How's my grandson doing” he asks.

“He’s doing good” I say.

I have been coming along great with the pregnancy although I have been anxious about the baby.

“How are you feeling” he asks. “I am good baba” I say.

“You have come a long way Yeye and I am proud of you” he says beaming.

I force a smile and nod.

“Baba thank you for everything that you did. I now know that my sister is resting in peace and now she belongs” I say.

He smiles proudly and swallows.

A week ago we were exhuming Khethiwe’s body one of the hardest things we did as a family.

Baba wanted to lay her to rest in the land of her ancestors.

I must say we all got the healing and closure we needed from her death.

Baba cried so much not mention Zamo a part of her

was buried and it hurt.

The trip was long overdue though I faced a part of my past that I had buried,I faced a few demons and confronted them.

It's a shame though we got there and Vumile told us that Martha died in the fire.

Apparently she was out and Martha was alone in the house no one saw anything and the fire came out of no where,neighbors could hear her screaming and shouting for help but they couldn't help because of the huge flames.

“Your mother and I were thinking of renewing our vows and have a wedding and we would like it if you and your sister become our bridesmaids” he says.

I laugh throwing my head back.

“Shouldn't mama be talking to me about such things” I ask.

He chuckles.

“Your mother and I discussed it and I thought I should mention it to you” he says smiling.

“I would love to be one of your bridesmaids and witness you declare your love again” I say.

“Thank you” he says smiling.

“Bayede” Zamo shouts.

“I am coming” I say.

I slowly get on my feet.

“I am sorry that I couldn’t save him” Baba says.

“It’s okay baba” I say walking away.

I find Zamo holding her waist tapping her feet.

“And then” I ask.

“I have been waiting for you” she says. I

shoot her a look and shake my head.

“Lately you have been grumpy what’s your problem” I ask.

We both get in the car and she fastens her seatbelt. She starts the car driving out.

“Zamo” I say.

She turns and looks at me and blinks her tears away.

“What did he do” I ask.

Her man has been nothing but a pain in the arse.

That man has been cheating on my sister for the longest time.

“It’s nothing I can’t handle” she says.

“Did he cheat on you again” I ask.

She nods her head and her tears fall.

“Stop the car” I say.

She looks at me shocked. “Zamo stop the car” I say.

She stops the car and wipes her tears.

“You are beautiful and trust me you are enough that man doesn’t deserve you.

Baba would have a fit seeing you like this” I say. She deeply sighs and chuckles.

“You are right I deserve better” she says.

I smile and step out of the car walking over to her side.

“Get out I am driving” I say.

She hesitantly steps out of the car and walks over to the passenger seat while I take the wheel.

I adjust the seat and start the car driving to Sizwe’s place.

“Hayi Bayede what are you doing here” she asks. “We are going to fix Sizwe” I say.

“I know you have his keys in the bag bring them” I say stepping out of the car.

I make my way to his apartment and wait for her to show up.

She reluctantly opens the door and we make our way in.

The place is clean and it smells fresh.

“What do you want us to do first” I ask settling down on the couch.

She shrugs her shoulders.

I shake my head and deeply sigh.

“There’s oil in the boot go get it” I say.

She steps out and comes back with the oil. “Do you guys have any food” I ask.

“Bayede we didn’t come here to eat” she says. “Is there food in this house or not” I ask.

She looks at me and folds her arms.

I look at her and smile standing up from the couch, I walk over to the fridge and grab the tray of eggs and drop it.

“Bayede” Zamo says.

“Accident sorry” I say going through the fridge.

There are meat platters and beers in the fridge. “Is he planning a party” I ask.

“No just a game between him and his friends” she says.

“Okay” I say.

I grab the platters and place them on the kitchen

counter and start eating.

She looks at me like I am crazy.

“Dlana” (eat) I say.

“I am not hungry” she says.

“Okay then suit yourself” I say shrugging my shoulders.

I stand up and take some of the dish washing liquid and pour it all over the platters still holding one drumstick and head to couch grabbing the remote.

I turn on the tv and put on the music channel putting my feet on the table.

“I promise if you do this you will fill better” I say.

It takes a while but she starts trashing the kitchen breaking Sizwe’s beers.

I steal some glances and laugh.

“That’s my girl when you are done in the kitchen go for his clothes,bring all the expensive sneakers and stuff” I say.

She laughs and starts throwing the food on the floor

“Just don’t throw away the celery sticks” I say.

She smiles and passes me the celery sticks and peanut butter.

She makes her way to the bedroom and does her thing.

She comes back carrying a pile of torn clothes and shoes.

“These are his most expensive pair of sneakers” she says placing them inside the sink and pours domestos and jick soaking them.

She takes the grease oil and starts pouring it all the place even on the tv and clothes.

She gets the domestos and pours it all over the clothes.

I look at her and smile like a proud aunt.

She finally settles next to me and takes the celery stick dipping them in the peanut butter.

“Feeling better” I ask.

She laughs and nods her head.

“It won’t chance that he’s a cheat but I feel a lot better” she says.

“We need to do one more thing” I say.

“What” she asks.

I walk over to the kitchen and locate the maize meal as well as rice and flour spilling them on the floor.

“Woah not that” I say stoping her from wasting the Oros.

“I am talking that with me ngeke nje sidlale nge Oros” I say.

She laughs out loud and holds the Oros close. “I think we should go now” She says.

We head for the door and bump into Sizwe.

Zamo pushes him out of the way and we make a run for it.

Zamo trips and drops my Oros, I follow behind and pick it up running to the car.

“Zamo” Sizwe shouts behind us.

I get in the car and Zamo speeds off.

We were late for my doctors appointment but at least we got through it then went for ice cream.

Zamo parks in the car in the drive way and we both step out.

I look at her and smile today was amazing I had fun trashing Sizwe's house.

"I had fun today thank you for the icecream date" I say.

"I should be thank you although it won't make the pain go away but I sure feel better" she says.

We both make our way inside the house and into the living room.

Baba looks at us and clears his throat.

"Naba bab' phoyisa bathathe" (here they are officer take them) he says.

The handsome police officer stands up with his colleague facing us.

I look at the door then Zamo surely we can run again.

“Yey don’t you dare” Baba says.

“Bathatheni”(take them) he says calmly.

“Baba we didn’t do anything” Zamo says.

“So you didn’t go to Sizwe’s apartment and vandalise the place” he asks.

“No” I lie.

“Oh so not only are you criminals but liars too” Baba says.

“He deserved it but we are sorry” Zamo says softly. “He deserves it” Baba asks.

We both nod.

“There you have it officers take them” he says adamantly.

“But baba I am pregnant” I say.

“And your child will know you are a criminal that goes around vandalizing people’s house’s” he says

“Ladies let’s go” The officer says looking at Zamo.

“Mbomvu the kids are sorry” Mama says looking at baba.

We get ushered to the car.

“I am too pretty for jail” Zamo says. The

handsome officer cracks up.

“It’s not about being pretty it’s about what crime you did and you two are serious criminals you even stole his Oros” he says.

I try to hold my laugh but crack up too thinking about my Oros in the car.

The man turns and looks at Zamo.

“You are beautiful” Zamo blushes and looks down. “Can I have your numbers you Oros thief” he says.

I smile looking at Zamo blush and forget we are in a pickle.

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Sponsored

Bayede's keeper

#59

It's been weeks since the jail scare Zamo and I have been behaving.

I still can't believe that baba was willing to let us spend a night in Jail had it not been for mama we would have spent the night in prison cells.

The man wanted us to pay for teaching that prick a lesson I still can't believe it.

Somehow vandalising Sizwe's place brought about good things.

Zamo is very much in the honeymoon face she's still getting to know Isaac but she's in love.

I know my sister and trust me she's hooked on the officer not that I blame her though the man is handsome and well mannered.

Well except for calling my child little Oros thief the

name has stuck it seems to slip out of everyone's lips.

Zamo and Isaac have been spending a lot of time together and I am happy that she ditched Sizwe.

For the first time in a long while she decided to choose herself and do what makes her happy.

I have been running around the kitchen not sure what I am doing exactly.

But I have been avoiding this man outside, how on earth does he explain being away for so long and making me believe that he's dead.

I feel cheated and my anger keeps rising the more I think about him deceiving me.

How can Nqubeko do this to us it's not fair on me or my child.

Baba walks in and looks at me he's been trying to convince me to forgive Nqubeko but I am not having it.

He showed up a few days ago and I couldn't believe

my eyes, I cried so much happy that he's alive but then I couldn't bring myself to forgive him for staying away for so long.

How does he expect me to be fine with everything and forget about my pain.

I am carrying his child for god sake how can he do this to me.

"Bayede" Baba says softly.

I wipe my hands clean and look at him.

"Baba" I say.

He deeply sighs and clears his throat. "You need to forgive him Bayede" he says.

Of course baba would say that he loves Nqubeko.

Everyone is just happy that he's back I am the only one in a sullen mood.

Him and Netha have been nagging about Nqubeko and giving him another chance.

But I don't think I can be with a man who can stay away from his pregnant fiancé and not see anything

wrong.

Yes he claims to have been protecting me but I am not there yet the forgiving stage.

“Baba Nqubeko faked his death and made me believe that he was gone forever” I say.

“I know but he was doing it to protect you and that baby you are carrying” Baba says.

“Well I am not ready to forgive him” I say. “What about his request to marry you” he asks.

I look at the ring in my finger God knows why I am still wearing this man’s ring.

I shake my head look at Baba.

“I will give him back the ring” I say.

“Bayede” he says softly.

“Baba he hurt me and you need to understand that” I tell him.

He slowly nods his head.

“Can you bring us something to drink” he says giving

the small clay pot.

I nod my head and watch as he walks out.

I walk to the living room and pour them the sorghum beer(Umqombothi).

There's a ceremony done today baba decided to have one and appease the ancestors.

I make my way out and walk over to where my father is seated with other men.

Nqubeko is seating next to him I swallow hard and sway my hips.

“Siyabonga” (thank you) Baba says.

I place ukhamba right next to their feet but Nqubeko reaches for it before I can let go.

His hand touches mine and just then the electric spark hits me.

He looks into my eyes and smiles.

He helps me raise ukhamba and help him drink.

I resist almost spilling the beer but his hands hold mine steady and tight.

The beer pot reaches his lips as I ease into whatever this is looking into his beautiful eyes.

I look at his strong arms and smile I could serve this man all the days of my life.

He's just handsome I smile at the thought of our son taking after him.

He has his fill and looks at me giving me a side smile.

Despite him being away and me me not understanding I love this man with all my heart and I should be sad.

I should be rejoicing that he's back home and that all this is over.

"Bengithi udlala ngami" Zamo sings from the top of her lungs.

She has a beautiful voice like Khethiwe's.

She makes her way to me and helps me up with a beautiful smile on her face.

“Sing with me” she says.

I shake my head and look at Nqubeko.

“Bengithi udlala ngami bengangazi ukuthi uyangithanda bengithi udlala ngam”

Zamo starts dancing and the cheering and ululating erupts.

“Bengingazi ukuthi uyangithanda bengithi udlala ngami” I sing.

Nqubeko stands up and stands in front of me.

“Ngiyakuthanda MaNgubane and that’s the truth” he says going down on one knee.

“I am sorry that I hurt you mamakhe” he says.

Tears fill my eyes God gave him back for a reason I should be happy.

“Marry me” He says.

“Marry me sthandwa sam” he says smiling.

I nod my head as he stands up and dusts himself pulling me to his arms.

His soft lips touch mine as his hand runs down mine my back.

“Bayede”

“Bayede”

The voice is distant but persistent.

I slowly open my eyes and find Nqubeko’s mother looking at me.

I run my eyes and look around.

“You were mumbling in your sleep”She says.

I swallow hard as tears fill my eyes I passed out on the couch.

“I saw him mama and he held me” I say.

“Who” she asks.

“Nqubeko mama I saw him he was back” I say. She nods her head tears filling her own eyes.

“I can’t go on like this Ma,I miss him so bad” I say.

“I know and I miss him too” she says wiping her tears.

She holds me tight in her arms and lets me be.

I pull away and wipe my tears after having messed up her beautiful blouse with my tears.

“I will get more boxes” I say standing up.

I make my way to the store room and pass by his bedroom.

I stop on my tracks and open the door walking in.

I shut the door behind me and walk around thinking of all the memories we made here.

I walk over to the wardrobe and pull out his t-short and wear it over mine.

I remove my shoes and walk over to the bed peeling off the blankets.

I get on and turn to his side of the bed and picture him looking at him.

This hurts so much him not being here rips me apart.

I imagine his hand on my belly and smile through my tears.

“I miss you Phakathwayo” I say.

“I miss you you everyday and I don’t think I will ever stop.

In a few months I will be giving birth to our son and I will look at him and see you and it will break my heart.

I will always love Nqubeko Phakathwayo you have always been my heart and keeper.

Look over us sthandwa sam smile on us everyday of our lives.

Ngiyakuthanda Phakathwayo omuhle” I say.

I hold myself from breaking down his mother asked me to come help her clear some of the thing in the house.

I can't bring myself to pack everything it's like we are forgetting about him and that he ever existed.

This is the last time I get to sleep in his bed and reminisce about the love we shared.

There are too many memories here and knowing myself I can't stay which is why I am moving away.

Four months later.

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Sponsored by Tshepiso Moline

Bayede's keeper

#60

It's been months now and I have been sitting at home doing nothing.

I had planned to move away from here but then I got sick had a few complications with the baby and I was told to stay put.

My parents moved the wedding since I wasn't in any state to attend or do anything.

I even got arrested for trying to kill Shaka.

I hated the man for messing up our lives and taking Nqubeko away from me.

I was lucky though Baba made everything go away and I was let off the hook.

A month after me trying to kill him he winded up dead.

Brutally murdered I couldn't even look at his burned

body apparently he was still alive when he was burned.

The whole thing was just gruesome to watch or even think about.

I am due any day now,I am both excited and nervous about this new phase.

I don't know what it means to be mother mine was taken too soon.

The only thing I know to do is to love and protect those close to my heart.

I want to be my child's first love to be the best mother I can be.

You see life has a funny way of playing out my stepfather was a monster that deserved to die but not at my hands.

Deep down I believe this is my karma for living as though I never spilled blood.

I hate to admit it but maybe this is me paying for what I did all those years ago.

I scroll down my pictures and look at my mother's.

Despite her faults my mother was a strong good woman and she was killed by a man who had claimed to love her.

A man who swore to protect her yet he ended up killing her.

I deeply sigh looking at Khethiwe's she was my everything and God knows I needed her to hold on just a little bit.

Their deaths still haunt me to this day my mother laying in a pool of blood and my sister cold in a bath tub full of water.

I then look at Nqubeko's picture and deeply sigh. "Oh my love" I whisper.

The baby has been active all morning kicking and sitting in places he shouldn't.

I can't do anything for myself anymore with each day that passes it gets harder to bend over.

My feet are swollen and I gobble up food like never before.

The door opens and Zamo walks in holding a brown

paper bag.

“Thought you might need a little pick me up” she says.

I take a peak inside and it’s a humongous bugger. “Thank you sis” I say.

“Now let’s go get you all dolled up and ready” she says.

We leave our room and head out to mama’s the glam squad is already here doing her make up.

“Finally I was about to send out a search party” Mama says.

I laugh settling down on the bed eating my bugger.. “Yeye” Ncane Sizakele says.

She’s Mama’s sister and kind too but heavy on the bottle in a classy way of course.

“Ncane” I say.

“Tell me when are you getting a man huh I mean the child is going to need a stepfather” she says sipping at her wine.

“Kahle Sizakele” Mama says.

“It’s okay ma” I say laughing.

The bugger goes down nicely with a cup of Oros.

I have been drinking it all weekend but I must say it tastes different from the one we stole.

This one lacks something exciting but it hits hard still just differently.

“I don’t want any man that’s not Nqubeko Ncane” I say softly.

“I know it’s impossible but I don’t want my son having a stepfather that will abuse him and besides have you seen how I look I doubt any man will look at me with this huge nose” I say finishing up the last bite.

“So you are telling me that you might never get married” she asks.

I shrug my shoulders.

“Lalela sisi not all men are monsters and not all stepparents are bad.

You of all people should know this because you have witnessed both.

Love is a beautiful thing and if you find it once again take it, embrace it and run with it.

I have never been lucky when it comes to love but I have witnessed those around me love and fall in love.

Today we are about to witness something amazing and pure, I want you to open your heart to anything and run with it”she says looking at me.

“You are beautiful Bayede and you deserve all the good things life has offer”she says smiling.

“Thank you Ncane” I say.

“Ma what is marriage like”Zamo asks.

I seat back and close my eyes as the makeup lady works on my face.

“Let’s start here no marriage is perfect because we all human and no one is perfect but let me tell you this marriage is beautiful especially when done with the right person.

Marriage is beautiful when there is kindness, love

and respect.

When done with a man who is committed and ready to love and protect you from the world like you are ready to do the same.

Marriage is beautiful when the both of you are ready for it and have invited God unto your union.

Marriage is not hard it's people that make it hard people that are not ready for it, people that aren't ready to nurture it and people that aren't ready to love right.

Your father has never hit me not once nor has he ever humiliated me or made me feel unloved or worthless because when he asked me to marry him he was ready for us” she says smiling.

I smile looking at her speak beautiful about marriage.

“Look at me bubbling when I should be getting ready” She says blink her tears away.

My parents are having a beach wedding I don't know why but apparently mama has always wanted to renew her vows by the sea.

The door opens and Thando together with Nqubeko's mother walk in looking beautiful.

Thando looks stunning you wouldn't tell she's a new mother.

"Bayede you need to get dressed" Thando says looking shocked.

I am the one who isn't dressed yet.

Zamo reaches for my dusty blue bridesmaid dress.

She and Thando help me put it on but it somehow it gets stuck.

"Hau Bayede in two weeks you have picked up more weight" Ncane Sizakele says.

"It's okay I have another dress but it's cream white and it will fit perfectly" The make up artist says.

"Jack of all trades huh" Mama says.

"Well this is a huge wedding one needs to be prepared always" the lady says.

Time is running out and everything is all set but

seeing that I am the only penguin here I am running late.

I look at myself in the mirror an blush despite the pregnancy I look good in this off shoulder beautiful flowing dress with a slit helm.

The makeup lady lied this dress is far from being cream white it is crystal white and gorgeous.

The door opens and my father walks in looking handsome.

A smile spreads across my lips I am about to witness something beautiful between two amazing people.

Sadness washes over me as memories of what could have been between Nqubeko and I swoop in.

“Hey today is a happy day please don’t cry” My father says.

“I know I didn’t raise you Bayede that I wasn’t there when you needed me growing up, but I want you to know that you mean the world to me MaNgubane I love you so much my child” he says.

“Baba shouldn’t you be at the alter waiting for your beautiful wife” I ask.

“Yes but your mother sent me here to get your everyone waiting for you” he says.

He helps me wear my slippers and hooks my arm around his.

“Baba I love you” I say.

He kisses my hand and smiles. “I love you too Bayede” he says.

We head out to the outside venue and it’s just breathtaking.

I remove my slippers and dig my toes into the sand and smile looking at the white Tiffany chairs each draped with a blue chiffon and a white flour.

Thando and Zamo are wearing dusty blue beautiful bridesmaid dresses.

I look to the groomsmen side and notice how Bandile and Netha are wearing navy blue suits looking fine.

I don't see mama anywhere near the alter she's just sitting with all the other guests.

I see some of Nqubeko's family members and smile even though he's gone his family still remains mine we share a child after all.

"Don't be afraid" My father says holding my hand.

A song starts playing and I remember the first time I heard it, I was being silly and Nqubeko sent it to me.

'I found a love for me

Oh darling, just dive right in and follow my lead

Well, I found a girl, beautiful and sweet

Oh, I never knew you were the someone waiting for me

'Cause we were just kids when we fell in love Not

knowing what it was

I will not give you up this time

*But darling, just kiss me slow, your heart is all I own And
in your eyes, you're holding mine*

Baby, I'm dancing in the dark with you between my arms

Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favourite song

*When you said you looked a mess, I whispered underneath
my breath*

But you heard it, darling, you look perfect tonight,

*My heart starts racing as we take each step towards the
alter.*

*I am stepping on white rose petals confused at hell
because nothing makes sense now.*

“Close your eyes” my father says.

*Tears fill my eyes when I think of the possibility of
Nqubeko being alive.*

“Trust me” he says

I close my eyes and bite my lip God knows I need a miracle.

“Open them” he says softly.

I open my eyes and come face to face with Nqubeko towering over me.

“Sawubona” he says.

My lips quiver as he goes down on his knees rubbing my belly the baby kicks harder than before.

“You held on buddy thank you” he says kissing my belly.

I close my eyes and shake my head.

“God let it not be another dream I am begging you” I say.

I feel his forehead on mine.

“Open your eyes it’s not a dream” he says.

“Sawubona Bayede” he says softly.

“I cried” I say.

He nods his head wiping my tears.

“I know” he says holding my face.

“And I cried” I say.

Mr father laughs and sniff.

“I know and I am sorry” he says.

I have so many questions but Ncane told me to open my heart as I am about to witness something beautiful and pure.

“I am sorry” he whispers.

“I cried” I say.

He holds me tight as I sob in his arms.

I pull away and look at him properly he’s grown a beard and it looks good on him.

“Sawubona” I say.

He chuckles and leans for a kiss.

I subtly pinch myself and look around still at the beach surrounded by family and friends.

He faces my father and they share a hug.

“Thank you baba” he says.

He walks back to the alter and the song resumes playing.

*“Well I found a woman, stronger than anyone I know
She shares my dreams, I hope that someday I'll share
her home*

*I found a love, to carry more than just my secrets To
carry love, to carry children of our own*

We are still kids, but we're so in love

Fighting against all odds

I know we'll be alright this time

Darling, just hold my hand

Be my girl, I'll be your man

I see my future in your eyes

*Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my
arms*

*Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song When
I saw you in that dress, looking so beautiful*

I don't deserve this, darling, you look perfect tonight

Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my arms

Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song I

have faith in what I see

Now I know I have met an angel in person

And she looks perfect

I don't deserve this

You look perfect tonight”

My father walks me down the aisle and no matter how hard I try to hold my tears they keep falling.

I look at the baby scans plastered over the alter and smile.

“He loves you more than anything forgive him Bayede”

My father says kissing my forehead.

Nquebko holds my hands.

“I have alway been here sthandwa sam watching

over you” he says.

“I can’t begin to imagine the pain I put you through and I am sorry for making you go through it.

But I once asked you if you trusted me and you said yes, I want you to trust again in us and our love and know that everything I did was for us.

I love you Bayede and it has always been you please let me make it up to you” he says.

I look at my mother and smile I don’t want to do marriage with anyone else but Nqubeko.

I feel some cramps and wince biting my tongue.

“You hurt me Nqubeko made me go on without you, made me grieve for you when you are alive.

I do understand but at the same time I don’t but what I know is that I love you and I am ready for us” I say.

He smiles beautifully and blinks. “I forgive you Nqubeko” I say.

I hold his face and smile this man is beautiful. I run

my hands over his chest and smile he's really here but so is his son.

"It's really you" I say.

"It's really me sthandwa sam" he says smiling.

"Sthandwa sam you are peeing on yourself" he says.

"Your son is coming" I say.

He smiles proudly men being slow.

"Nqubeko your son is coming my water just broke" I say.

"Now" he asks panicking.

I nod my head and pull him from walking away. "Marry me first Phakathwayo" I say.

We look at the priest scramble through the holly bible

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24

Therefore what God has joined together, let no one

separate. Mark 10:9

By the power invested in me I now pronounce you husband and wife” the priest says.

Nqubeko leans close and kisses me I hold onto to the back of his head and scream.

“I love you Phakathwayo” I say through gritted teeth. He rests his hands and either side on my waist.

“I love you Bayede” he says kissing my forehead.

....The End.....

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