

## Chapter 1

The December holidays are over and I thank God for that. It's not like we had a great time because while other children got their christmas presents and went home to spend time with their families, we were stuck at home packing our bags to prepare for our new home in Mamelodi.

Apparently my grandmother was away for church gatherings every now and then, and my aunt Aidah was at her boyfriend's house, so it made things a little easier. We arrived on the 2nd of January, a day after my birthday. It's only been two weeks and already it feels like I've been through hell.

I can stand my ground and defend myself against Paballo, my Aunt Aidah's daughter when her mom and my grandmother aren't around. I can't do that when they are here because they'd probably beat me unconscious. My aunt Aidah and Grandmother went out this morning and are only supposed to be back by this evening.

The other day Pabi tried her luck with me while her mom and grandma weren't around by insulting me in front her friends. I got fed up til I slapped her and her friend. They had better learn to respect me otherwise school won't be very pleasant for them. We're the same age and in the same grade as well, and unfortunately we're going to be in the same class as well.

It's the last day of the holidays, and exactly a day before schools open. My mom went out to do some piece jobs around our neighbourhood. She irons people's clothes and does their laundry for extra money. They are very fond of her in this area especially since she's the complete opposite of Aunt Aidah.

I was sitting outside, watching Tshiamo play with the other children from the area, while thinking of my miserable life. My father never even bothered to come visit or send some money for us during the holidays. My mom had to make means and get us the necessary things like stationery for school.

Tshiamo and I have to wear school shoes donated by previous learners at our new school. It's really better than nothing, even though Pabi rubs it in my face that her step dad bought her brand new uniform and a school bag. Luckily Menzi, Pabi's brother and Aunt Aidah's first born son doesn't hate us. He brings us some food and money every now and then when he comes to visit. Mom appreciates it but doesn't like being a burden.

He has his own house also in Mamelodi, not far from where we live. I'm not exactly sure what he does for a living though I heard rumours that he's a gangster. As I was deep in thoughts, I saw Pabi walking out of the house wearing a dress that looks really familiar. Then I remembered it's the dress my mom bought me for my birthday last year. I only wore it once. That witch stole my dress! I felt my rage build up from the pit of my stomach.

Me:"Pabi. That's my dress!"

Pabi:"Duh! Ka itse mos (I know). Ke no e adimile fela (I just borrowed it)."

Me:"Hey wena (you) Pabi! O nagana gore o dia eng (What do you think you're doing)?"

Pabi:"Mxm, ska mbora le pedi kwena (don't bore me you pedi girl)."

Me:"Pabi, ke mosese wa ka oo (That's my dress)!"

Pabi:"So? It's not like you need it to go somewhere. I'm just borrowing it for a little while. Thanks by the way."

She winked at me while holding a small purse and wearing really high stilettos and a very long wig. It didn't even look real to me. I know real hair when I see it. I was fuming and acted out of impulse. I grabbed her by her hair as it fell off. She got angry and tried to hit me, but ke being a little bigger than her, I overpowered her. She has back up from her mom and my grandma, but I have backup from my fists. I've always been good at fighting and my mom always says it will get me in trouble one day. Right now I don't care. I am tired of being abused by this skinny chicken.

She fell onto the ground and I got on top of her and gave her the beating of a lifetime. She's not as light as I am, but one could tell she was pretty swollen. She got up in embarrassment trying to dust herself off.

Pabi:"O tlo nya, wena Tshego kao botsa (You'll shit yourself I'm telling you). Emela Mma a bowe (Wait until Granny comes back)!"

Me:"Voetsek (Piss off)! O apole mosese oo wa ka (You'd better take off my dress)."

Pabi:"Wa lebala gore kaosane (You're forgetting that tomorrow) you'll be in my territory

without friends. Ke tlo go bontsha masepa (I'll show you flames)."

She clicked her tongue and walked back into the house. I didn't even care. I've never had a problem with making friends and at least Tshiamo and I will have each other, though we'll be in different grades.

Later that evening I was making dinner in the kitchen with Tshiamo sitting on one of the kitchen chairs chatting on her phone.

Tshiamo:"Eish, Sesi (sister). I can't wait to meet new people at our new school. It's going to be so much fun."

As I was about to respond, Aunt Aidah walked in and gave me one hell of a slap across my face. I lost my balance and nearly fell on the floor. The pots nearly spilled over.

Aidah:"O nagana gore o somang wena (Who do you think you are)?! Serathane sa go tshwana le wena se shapa ngwanaka (An orphan like you beats up my child) and thinks she can get away with it?"

My cheek felt scorching hot. I just looked at her with tears in my eyes, but I refused to let them fall. Pabi was standing behind her big mother with a huge smile on her face. A part of me wanted to laugh internally because she had a black eye because of me.

Aidah:"Apologize to my daughter or else you'll find yourself out in the streets!"

Me:"I'm sorry."

Just then Menzi and my mother walked in and they saw me holding my cheek.

Menzi: "Dintshang ka hier (What's happening here)?! Ah, Mama, kgante flop ya gao ke eng (What's your problem)? O ka se shape ngwana o seng wa gao (You can't hit a child that's not yours)!"

I could see Menzi was starting to get angry. Aidah's voice became a lot softer which meant that she was afraid of her own son.

Aidah: "Hai man, Menzi. Ngwana o wa tella (This child is disrespectful)."

Menzi: "I don't care. Continue like that and you're the one who'll find yourself out in the street. Remember Mama, ga se ga gao ka mo (This is not your house). Ke ntlo ya mdala (It's grandpa's house)."

Aidah was irritated but decided not to show it. My mother was heartbroken, she even had tears falling down her face. In all my 16 years of being on this earth I've never had an unhappy home. My father never used to abuse my mom and we never saw my mother cry-ever. My mother left to her bedroom which she now shares with Tshiamo and I.

Menzi: "Chichi, tla ko ntle re ringe (come outside so we can talk)."

Pabi clicked her tongue and gave me a filthy look. I left the kitchen with Tshiamo crying. We both went outside to sit on the stoep.

Menzi: "O grand ngwana (are you okay)?"

Me: (sigh) "Ke shap (I'm okay)."

Menzi: "You know you and your sister and mom can always come live with me. Ke nale di back room ko nna daar (I have back rooms in my yard)."

I really liked Menzi. He's always been very different from his mom and very fond of my mother. As nice as the offer sounds, I wouldn't want to impose.

Me: "Thanks, Menzi. I really appreciate it, I do. But we wouldn't want to be a burden."

Menzi: "Think about it. Tell your mother too. Ne ke go tletse zaka ya skhaftini for wena le Tshiamo (I've brought you and Tshiamo lunch money). It should last you all month."

He handed me about R500. I've never been a charity case so this makes me cry. My life has taken a turn for the worst, right when I'm about to start Grade 10. I had tears in my eyes.

Me: "Menzi, this is too much. I can't accept it."

Menzi: (Smiling) "You don't have a choice. You have my number. Feel free to call me whenever you need anything."

He gave me a hug and left. I had to hide the money in my bra otherwise Aidah would probably take it from me and accuse me of bewitching her son. I went back to the house and dished up for everyone.

After dinner Tshiamo and I went to our bedroom and found Mama reading her Bible with tears in her eyes.

Me: "Mama."

She didn't respond.

Me: "Mama hle."

She kept quiet and responded after a few minutes.

Mama: "Tshegofatso, I don't recall giving you life lessons on being violent."

Me: "Askies mama, but..."

Mama: "I'm not done. You can see how bad the situation is right now and I'm trying my best. That still doesn't give you the right to go around beating people up. I don't want us to be thrown out to the streets, Tshegofatso. I'm doing my best."

I felt a bit bad even though it felt like she just wasn't on my side.

Me: "But mama Pabi o tserere mosese wa ka (Pabi took my dress) without my permission. So was I supposed to leave her and keep quiet?"

Mama: "Tshego, it's just a dress. Rather let her have it for peace of mind. Psalm 55v22 e re (says) Give your worries to the Lord, and he will take care of you. He will never let good people down."

There she goes with her lessons from the Bible. I'm really starting to question God but that's a story for another day. We prayed together and slept as I kept worrying about my first day at a new school. New and foreign environments are scary but I know I'll be okay.

## Chapter 2

I woke up feeling much better than yesterday, even though my cheek was still a bit swollen. That fat woman can really land a slap. My cheek was a bit red, but I hoped it would fade away as the day went by. Tshiamo and I had to get up early so that we could get the water boiling. We went to the kitchen and got the urn going, while Tshiamo made us some lunch.

After about 15 minutes, I went to the bathroom to get two bathing dishes as we call them moving bathrooms here ekasi (in the township). They have a bathroom here, but ever since the geyser burst they never bothered to fix it. Menzi doesn't even give them a dime and I totally understand. If your family is toxic then it's best you stay away from them.

Koko Mokgadi has tenants outside in the yard and even with that money she never bothered to fix the geyser. Tsiamo and I went to the bedroom and took a bath and got ready. I got out first to throw the water out in the toilet, and I ran into Aunt Aidah running like a mad person.

Aidah: "Mxm, e le gore why o sa tsosa Pabi moloi kwena (Why didn't you wake Pabi up, you witch)?"

I decided not to respond because I knew she might just look for another reason to slap me again. She clicked her tongue and walked away. I'm not going to be slaving after a very well capable chick like Pabi. Tshiamo and I went outside and waited for our transport to arrive. Mama makes enough to pay for our driver at least. The driver finally arrived with his VW Kombi and we got in and much to my dismay I found Pabi's two friends Rea and Kamo inside.

I greeted everyone, while Rea and Kamo kept quiet. Rea is probably still angry that I beat her up the other day. The front passenger seat was empty, and was probably

reserved for Pabi since all the seats were now full. The Driver pressed his hooter repeatedly since Pabi took forever to come out. She finally came out running with a very short skirt. I have no idea how she'll bend over in that. She finally got in at the front seat.

Driver: "Pabi le wena man! Tlabe ka latelwa (You'll make me late)."

Pabi: "Ah, Thomas le wena man. O wara thata (You worry too much), baby."

Okay, so his name is Thomas and judging by his non phased reaction from Pabi calling him Baby, it means they're probably dating.

Pabi: "Besides, setlaela se sa le pedi ga sa ntsosa ka jeno (This pedi idiot didn't wake me up this morning)."

She said that while pointing at me with an irritated look on her face.

Thomas: "Ah, le wena mara Pabi. Why o sa mpotsa gore ko geno le nale mapyatla bjana (Why didn't you tell me you have such pretty girls in your family?)"

He said that as he stared at me on his rearview mirror. I didn't even bother staring back so I continued on my phone. Pabi was very much irritated because she clicked her tongue and got angry at Thomas for calling me pretty. Deep down it felt good to see her being jealous as always. She'd better keep out of my way so that I don't cause trouble on my first day at school. We finally arrived at our school and it's a lot bigger than the one I attended back in Seshego.

Although it's a semi-private school, it's not so bad. I saw the huge board at the gate as we got out "Clapham High School". I tried googling it and checking it on Facebook to see it's credentials, but most girls from this school are a bit too much for me. Most of those who posted on Facebook are party girls, and Pabi is one of the famous girls here. Her and her little clique are well known for dating the hottest guys at this school. As we got out Thomas shouted.

Thomas: "Enjoy your day ne, Chichi!"

He smiled at me revealing his crooked teeth. He was a very tall, light and good looking guy, but probably about Menzi's age if not older. As Tshiamo and I were walking beside each other, Pabi decided to irritate me way before 8am.

Pabi: "Hey wena sfebe (you bitch). You'd better stay away from my man! Thomas ke wa ka (is mine)."

I really didn't have the energy for this.

Me: "Pabi, ga ke na nako ya bashimane (I don't have time for boys), more especially guys your brother's age."

I yanked her hand off my arm and walked forward.

Rea: "O nagana gore o dese o chomi, mo tlogele (She thinks she rocks this one, friend, leave her). We'll sort her out."

Rea has always been Pabi's biggest cheer leader so it seems and Kamo is he follower. She goes along with everything they decide to do. This little fake friendship of theirs reminds me of the movie Mean Girls.

We walked in and had to attend assembly in different grades. I was worried about Tshiamo, but she seemed so excited and made a new friend right away. I decided to stand very far from Pabi and her little clique. I randomly stood next to a very short girl with a very nice body

and beautiful natural hair. She had a nice, big Afro tied with a red head band around it to match with the school's uniform I guess.

Girl: "You must be new. I've never seen you before."

She had such a nice, warm smile with cute, big dimples and wears glasses too.

Me: "Yes, it's my first day here. My name is Tshogofatso, but you can call me Chichi."

Girl: "My name is Brinette, but you can call me Bree. Nice to meet you Chichi. What's your stream?"

Me: "I do Accounting, Physics and Geography."

Bee: (smiling) "Those are my subjects too. Fingers crossed we're in the same class."

She's a very nice girl and quite talkative. We were finally divided into our classes. I'm in Grade 10C, with Bree as my classmate and Pabi and her clique are in our class as well. We were shown to our classroom and it had really nice colours and a very warm vibe with Accounting posters everywhere.

We were seated according to surnames and luckily Bree was seated next to me while Pabi was seated in the front along with her two friends. Thank goodness we don't share the same surname otherwise school would be a lot worse for me. Our teacher walked in and he's male by the way. I don't know a lot of male teachers who teach subjects like Accounting.

Teacher: "Good morning. My name is Mr. Legae, I'll be your register teacher and your Accounting teacher as well."

He had a nice smile with a very well built body. The typical tall, dark and handsome type. The girls drooled as he spoke. I have no idea what's up with these girls. In Seshego if you dared to do that, you'd be in serious trouble.

Bree: (whispering to me) "Better not fall for him, he has a history of dating school girls. Word is Pabi is his current victim."

Wow, okay. So Pabi is into school teachers now? I'm even surprised she's doing the same stream as me. She's never been very bright but I guess things do change.

Mr. Legae got us to introduce ourselves and he was smiling all the way. Pabi and her friends seemed very comfortable with him, too comfortable. We had a few boys in our class and one very cocky guy named Glen. Bree told me he's one of the hottest guys in our school.

We got our time tables and started working in Mr. Legae's class. I really enjoy Accounting a lot more than my other subjects and seems like Bree is also into such. She didn't seem like she had any friends until I came along. Mr. Legae gave us a small task to do in pairs and Bree and I were done in few minutes. Pabi kept asking annoyingly stupid questions to Mr. Legae but part of me thinks she was doing it to get his attention.

Glen: "Ah, Pabi, man. Ga se mo Bree street mo (This is not Bree street). Bo bohle ra itse wa rekisa (We all know you sell your body)."

The whole class laughed except Bree, myself and Pabi and her crew.

Pabi: Mxm. Tsek (piss off) Glen. We all know o jele di pikiri because ke go ganne skobo kwena (We all know you're bitter because I refused to date you)."

The whole class made sounds while Bree and I just kept quiet.

Glen: "O joke waitse, ga ke nyobe difebe nna (You're such a joke, I don't fuck whores)."

The whole class made sounds again while the two of us kept quiet. Surprisingly Mr. Legae didn't reprimand Glen until Pabi told him to so.

Pabi: "Sir! Are you just going to let him disrespect me like that?!"

Mr. Legae: "Glen, that's enough."

Glen: (Putting his hands up) "Askies juba ya teng (the boyfriend)."

Okay, Glen is the second person to make such a remark about Mr. Legae and Pabi. He's the first to make it in such a public setting and Mr. Legae didn't even respond to that. He kept quiet and went on with his work, but I could tell he was embarrassed while the other learners were laughing. There's more than meets the eye here, but with Pabi anything is possible. She lost her virginity when she just landed in high school. Mama told me few years ago. Luckily I'm still a virgin and I have no intention on losing it anytime soon.

The bell rang and we walked out and headed to our next class. While I was walking with Bree, Glen came running behind us and tapped my shoulder.

Glen: "Hey, Chichi. I'm Glen by the way."

Bree: (Annoyed) "Glen, she knows who you are. Everyone knows who you are."

Glen: "Hai man, Bree. Le wena tlogela go ba uptight (Stop being so uptight). Akitsi bra ya ka o go bona eng o mo tima lerao le le dese bjana (I don't know what my friend sees in you when you refuse to let him tap that fine ass)."

I could see Bree was annoyed and I was also getting irritated so I decided to put him in his place.

Me: "Look Glen, or whatever your name is. I don't appreciate rudeness, especially from a guy. If you can have the balls to disrespect your friend's girlfriend like that then there's no way your dickhead would disrespect your own girl. Now, excuse us we have class to attend."

We left him standing there cursing while the rest of the learners walking by were laughing at him.

### Chapter 3

We proceeded to our Physical Sciences class and met our teacher, Mrs. Coetzee. She's a beautiful coloured woman with a very nice body. She looks quite young, probably in her early thirties. She taught the rest of the class Natural Sciences last year in Grade 9 so I was the only new comer who had to introduce herself. After I was done the class

clapped and Mrs. Coetzee welcomed me while Pabi and her squad looked at me annoyed.

This time Glen sat in the row next to us right next to me, unlike in our register class. I simply ignored him and focused on our lesson. I don't understand why Pabi and Rea are doing Science because they're always on their phones underneath the desk. Kamo seems like an intelligent girl. She has so much focus and pays attention in class unlike those two. I still ask myself why she's following those two around like a lost puppy. Glen wrote a note on a small piece of paper and tossed it to me, but I tore it apart before reading it. I squashed it back together and tossed it back to him. His two friends Emmanuel, known as Imza and Bongani or Bongz as they call him, laughed at him while he was left embarrassed. I get the feeling he's not used to rejection, well nna ke ngwanenyana wa Seshego (I'm a girl from Seshego). He doesn't know me. It was finally time for break and I decided to give Tshiamo R50 this morning. It would be her lunch money for the week. We packed lunch so there was no need to buy anything really. I was about to buy a coldrink, but Bree came back from the tuck shop with two cans and gave me one. She's a really nice person and has no money problems. She lives in Equestria, a really nice suburb in East Pretoria. I've never been there though.

We sat on the grass and ate our lunch while Mandisa, the most famous gay guy in school and also the biggest gossip came to us.

Mandisa: "Hey, girls! Go jewa eng today (What are we eating today)?"

Ai, he's a bit too forward for my liking, but he's genuinely friendly.

Bree: (shaking her head) "Mandisa, we didn't even invite you mos."

Mandisa: (laughing) "You're so silly, Brinette. You know everyone loves them some Mandisa."

We laughed as we continued eating.

Mandisa: "So, Chichilicious, I hear you're Pabi's long lost cousin. How are you even related to someone so annoying?"

We all laughed. At least we have one common interest so far, our dislike of Pabi.

Me: "Ah, ke ngwana wa Mmamogolo wa ka. Ke tswa kuwa Seshego (She's my aunt's daughter. I'm from Seshego). Ke thothetje mokhi ngwaga o fetja go thoma (I just moved here after the year started)."

Mandisa was very unimpressed by my accent. Bree didn't mind, her parents are also from Seshego, although she grew up here.

Mandisa: "Eh, eh eh! Aowa mokgotsi (No friend)! We need to fix that accent ASAP.

O ka se bolele bjana mo pitori ngwana ko gae (You can't go around talking like that in Pretoria, sister). Stick with me and you'll never go wrong."

I gave him a faint smile. No one has ever complained about the way I speak, well except Pabi and her friends. Maybe I'll have to adapt if I want to survive here. As we were eating and chatting away, Glen, Imza and Bongz were walking towards us leaving me irritated.



Mandisa: "Ah, ah, ah, The three blind mice coming towards us."

Mandisa can be hilarious at times.

Glen: "Sho, sho (Sure, sure) banyana le mfana (girls and boy)."

Mandisa: "Mxm, o tlo mbora Glen (You'll bore me)."

Glen: (chuckling) "Ka dlala (I'm joking) sexy girl."

Bongz sat next to his girlfriend Bree, while Imza and Glen sat next to me. Mandisa was in the middle of all of us.

Glen: "Chichi, about earlier on, I'm sorry."

Me: "Don't apologize to me. Apologize to Bree, your bro's friend."

He chuckled while I kept a straight face.

Glen: "Okay, Bree. Askies (Sorry) neh?"

Bree: "Go shap (It's fine), Glen."

Glen: "Am I forgiven?"

Me: "What's there to forgive? Only God can forgive you."

Imza: "Tjo, haowa mfana (no, bra). This chick is a tough nut to crack."

Mandisa: "There's no nut to crack here. Wena Imza, mind your own business as for wena Glen, etswa mo Chichi if you know what's good for you."

Glen: (raising his hands in the air) "Alright, sharp. E re vaye (Let me leave) then. But remember this, I always get what I want."

Bongz kissed Bree on the cheek and left.

Chichi: "What was that about?"

Mandisa: "Ag, just Glen being Glen. Be careful of him. O jele skolo se se ohle (He's slept with the whole school)."

I can believe that. Glen really looks like the type. I don't know what Bree is doing with someone like Bongz if he hangs around people like Glen, but anyway. The bell rang and we headed back to class. Mandisa does the same subjects as we do, but he's in another class. We met the rest of our teachers and before we knew it it was time for Second break.

It's a short 10 minute break for us to quickly go and relieve ourselves. We left our Afrikaans class and decided to go to the toilets. I asked Bree to wait for me outside Mr. Legae's class so that I could leave my bag in his class since we were going to get him after break. The door was closed and I didn't bother to knock as I assumed no one was inside. As soon as I opened I saw Rea jump off Mr. Legae's lap immediately. The both stared at me in total shock.

Me: "Sorry, Sir. I just came to leave my bag on my desk. I didn't realize you were busy."

Mr. Legae: (embarrassed) "It's alright, Chichi."

I quickly put my bag on my desk while Rea looked at me trying to analyze my reaction, but I didn't look back at her. I left immediately and closed the door behind me. I found Bree waiting for me outside. She could see my mood had changed from a few minutes ago.

Bree: "O shap (are you okay), Chichi? Keng o kare o bone batho ba ponoka bjana (Why does it seem like you've just seen naked people)?"

If only she knew. I decided not to tell her at that moment.

Me: "It's nothing. I'll tell you later."

We went to the toilets and quickly did our business. I left my cubicle and found Pabi and Kamo standing in front of the mirror. I decided to wash my hands and ignore them flatly.

Pabi: "Jah wena, Miss Popularity wa two minutes. Enjoy it while it lasts because Glen will fuck you and leave you dry."

Brinette got out of her cubicle and I decided not to respond.

Pabi: "Mxm, o iketsa betere wena Chichi (You think you're better than me). Mark my words this is my territory."

She was about to get closer to me from behind just like the coward she is, but Rea walked in.

Rea: "Leave her Pabi."

Pabi was very surprised to see Rea back down from taunting me.

Pabi: "Mxm, go thoma neng o le lefiega so (Since when are you so afraid)? A ka se go bethe mo skolong man (She can't beat you up on school premises)."

Rea: "Leave her, man. Ke (It's the) first day and she might report us."

Kamo: "Yes, leave her."

Finally, she speaks. Pabi clicked her tongue and walked out of the toilets with Kamo following her. Rea gave me a discerning look before leaving as well."

Bree: "And then? What was that all about? Rea wa phapha (is tok forward) man, it's so unlike her to back down from starting trouble."

Chichi: "Ag, mohlomongwe o no te homolela fela (Maybe she just decided to keep quiet for a change)."

Bree: "No ways. What did you do to her?"

Me: "Okay, promise you won't tell anyone."

Bree: "I promise."

Me: "I'm serious, Bree."

Bree: "You can count on me, Chomi (friend). I won't tell a soul."

Chichi: "Okay, the time I went to put my bag in the class, ke khumane Rea a dutje godimo ga Mr. Legae (I founs Rea on top of Mr. Legae). It looked like they were busy with something unrelated to school work."

Bree: (widened eyes) "O reng wena (What)?! Eh, eh, eh. So both Rea and Pabi are sleeping with our register teacher?! Go sa tlo nyewa mos (It's about to go down)."

Me: "Sharp, but please keep it a secret between us."

Bree: "Fine, but if a ka go jumpela ko phanya (If she her shoes get too big for her I'm going to blurt out her little secret."

We got out of the toilet and made our way back to the class just after the bell rang. We got in and found most people seated, while Glen positioned himself next to me. Oh,

this guy is annoying. Mr. Legae kept staring at me but I ignored him. Rea was very quiet and uncomfortable throughout the lesson. The bell rang after a while and it was after school. As I was about to leave the classroom, Mr. Legae stopped me.

Mr. Legae: "Chichi, may I have a word with you before you leave, please?"

He waited for everyone to leave until it was just him and I. Bree gave me a look, but I signaled to her that I'll be okay. He went to close the door and sat on his desk facing me.

Mr. Legae: "Chichi, I'm sorry you had to witness what you saw earlier on."

Me: "I don't know what you're talking about, sir."

Mr. Legae: "Chichi, come on. You and I both know you caught Rea and I in the act."

Me: "I won't tell anyone about what I saw, sir. Now may I please leave?"

Mr. Legae: "You're a very beautiful girl, Ms. Mashabela. Your boyfriend must be a very lucky guy."

I was getting really irritated and very uncomfortable.

Me: "Like I said, sir. I won't tell anyone what I saw. I don't feel comfortable with you discussing my private life with me. Now, if you'll please excuse me, I have transport to catch."

I walked out leaving him standing at this desk. I was very irritated and offended to say the least. Seems like Mr. Legae was trying to hit on me. So unprofessional of him.

Brinette saw the look on my face as I walked towards her.

Bree: "What's wrong, Chichi?"

Me: "Nothing, friend. I'm just not dealing too good, hey."

She didn't buy my story, but decided to let me be. Mandisa ran past us saying his transport is going to leave him. He said we'd talk later on WhatsApp since we exchanged numbers during break. Bree's dad also came to fetch her and she hugged me goodbye. I walked out the gate and saw the transport full, and I was the only one left to get in.

Pabi: (annoyed) "Ag, man Thomas. Why ne o sa shiye ntwé (Why didn't you leave this thing behind)? Ga o driver tsela tse dese man (You're not one of those fancy drivers)."

Me: "They're called a Chauffeur, Pabi. You should know that by now I mean you're in Grade 10."

The whole crowd laughed except for Rea and Pabi. Even Thomas was laughing.

Pabi: "Mxm, wena Rea why o didimetse bjana (Why are you so quiet)?! Mfe back up man (Back me up)."

Rea: "Ah, Pabi. Sorry, but o bolela nnete (she's telling the truth)."

Pabi got even more annoyed at the fact that her little squad didn't defend her and I basically made her look like an idiot. She'll get to know me this one, I'm not done with her.

Chapter 4

Rea was very quiet all the way home, while Tshiamo was telling me about her first day of High school. I was very happy that she had a great day and mine wasn't too bad either. I really like my teachers, well except for Mr. Legae.

I don't trust him one bit and Pontsho, my best friend from Seshego used to tell me about his type. The type that preys on young girls to satisfy their sexual needs. It's pedophilia if you ask me and plain manipulation.

Thomas dropped Rea, Tshiamo and I last since we live in the same street. We live on the east side of Mamelodi, while Kamo stays in Mamelodi West. Pabi didn't get off with us, instead Thomas drove off with her right after we got off. I didn't really care, the less I saw of her annoying face, the better.

Tshiamo and I were about to walk inside the yard until Rea stopped me.

Rea:"Chichi, kopa go bua le wena toe (May I please talk to you)?"

Wow. In all these two weeks she's never been this polite. Mama always says secrets are dangerous and the people who hold your secrets are powerful so never underestimate them. Tshiamo went in the house and left me outside.

Me:"Ke theleditje (I'm listening)."

She looked down for a while and fiddled with her hands.

Rea:"Uhm, bona (look), about what you saw today..."

Me:"Relax, Rea. I'm not like that, you should know that by now. Your secret is safe with me."

Rea:"Let's be honest, I've never been nice to you. Why would you keep my secret? What's in it for you?"

Wow. Just when I thought she had repented, but her one minute of grace and remorse went down the drain with that statement.

Me:"Because I'm not like you, Rea. I'm my own person and I don't hide behind my friend's bossy personality."

Rea:"About that, you're not going to tell Pabi, are you?"

Oh, I see. So this is why she's cornering me. She doesn't want her precious bestie to know they're both dating the same guy.

Me:"I won't tell her if you tell me exactly what you're doing with our Accounting teacher."

Rea:"A se tabao eo (That's not your business)."

Me:"Okay then, we'll see how you'll feel after I tell Pabi..."

Rea:"Okay, okay. Shap, Pabi and I are sleeping with Mr. Legae in exchange for good grades. I mean Accounting is hard as fuck and I didn't even want to do it, okay.

Besides, she's fallen hard for Mr. Legae, she's just with Thomas for free transport. My parents forced me down this road. I want to be an actress one day and I don't Need Maths or Accounting for that. I don't even need school so I just go to please them."

Wow. This girl has zero ambition. Pabi on the other hand is something else. There are so many diseases out there.

Me: "Okay then. I won't tell Pabi anything. You'd better stay out of my way and stop harassing me, otherwise I'll tell your parents what you're up to at school. It would create a bad image for the church once the pastor finds out his precious golden angel is sleeping with teachers for marks."

She looked down in embarrassment.

Rea: "Thank you."

As she was about to walk away, some tall guy came and stopped next to her.

Guy: "Rea, dintshang (what's up)? Ke mang lepyatla le (Who's this pretty girl)?"

There's that weird word again. Lepyatla (beautiful girl).

Rea: (irritated) ipotsisetse man, Micah o tlogele go ntena (Ask her yourself and stop irritating me)!"

She walked away in distress and Micah just stood there.

Micah: "Hi, I'm Micah, Realeboga's brother."

Oh, okay. He must be the pastor's first born. Mmamoruti (Pastor's wife) always brags about her son who's a rich lawyer.

Me: "And I have to get going. Nice to meet you, Micah."

I walked away while he was trying to say something. I found Koko Mokgadi sitting outside drinking almost the last of her hansa.

Me: "Rea locha Koko (Good day, Grandma)."

Mokgadi: "Jah, Tshogofatso. Ke gore o no fologa transport wa tshogofatsa lefase le lohle le ka sebono seo (So you decided to just get out of your transport to bless this whole word with your ass)? Sale Tshiamo a tsena mo (Tshiamo got in here) ten minutes ago. O tswa kae (Where were you)?"

Me: "Askies (Sorry) Koko. I was talking to Rea about something related to school work."

Mokgadi: "Mxm. Nka se makale wa no ropiwa bjana ka mmao wa setlaela (I wouldn't be surprised if you get fooled just like your stupid mother). O no nyobiwa ke bhari ya mathomo a e bonang ya mo imisa same time (She got fucked by the first fool she met and fell pregnant same time). Bona nou (Look now) she irons and washes people's clothes for a living! O kae ena nou Rra marete (Where is the dickhead now)? He left his burden unto me."

I felt so hurt I wanted to cry, but I refuse to let her ruin my day. She doesn't ask about Pabi's whereabouts but insults me instead.

Mokgadi: "Anyway, go buy me a beer."

She doesn't even ask.

Me: "Okay, koko let me change first please."

Mokgadi: "Shap. Ska tseyo nako yao le wena (Don't take your time)."

I took a deep sigh and changed into casual clothes. I found Tshiamo doing homework already. She wants to be a doctor one day and I just love her ambition. I pray to God that we both make it re swabise manaba (and prove our enemies wrong).

I changed into a jean and top with flip flops and took Gogo's money and plastic bag which had two big empty bottles of beer. I can't understand why she feels the need to drink everyday, but that's not my problem.

I walked out and passed the usual annoying group of boys. You know, that group full of guys who're always at home

don't work and bother every girl that walks by. If you don't greet them you get insults thrown at you.

Guy1:"Eh, Sammy. Ashule m'thola mfanaka (There's that girl, man). Bona o pakile monate bjang (Look how great her ass looks)."

I kept ignoring them and walked past.

Guy2:"Ah, ke ngwanola wa go ipona wa bo Pabi (That's Pabi's relative, the one who's full of herself)."

Guy1:"Ah, mfana nagana o mo tshwere ka doggy style san (Imagine fucking her, doggy style position)."

They laughed and I continued walking past. I finally made my way to the nearby tavern. That walk felt like the longest ten minutes of my life. It stresses me out that I have to walk back. How some low life idiots feel entitled to talk shit about your body and make derogatory remarks baffles me. I waited a while for someone to come and assist me.

Me:"Koko (Knock knock)."

I thought of leaving, but Koko Mokgadi would probably tell me shit so I had to wait. I had to endure funny stares from random men and women in there. Finally someone came after about five minutes. Oh, no. It's Glen. Could this day get any worse? The tavern belongs to his family, no wonder the service is terrible. He seemed just as shocked to see me as I was.

Glen:"Hao, Chichi girl. O nwa Hansa kgante (You drink Hansa)?"

Me:"Very funny. Koko o nthumile (Koko sent me). Please hurry, I have homework to attend to."

Glen: (smiling) "Alright."

He took my empty bottles and gave me the beers and change and as I was about to walk out he spoke.

Glen:"See you tomorrow, lepyatla (pretty girl)."

I ignored him and walked out. As I was about to walk out of the gate, a guy I have never seen before stopped me.

Guy:"Sho sho. Bana ga ba nyakege ka hier (Kids are not allowed in here)."

I got so mesmerized by how handsome he looked. His deep voice could put a girl in heaven any day. He was tall, middle weighted, with nice muscles and very well dressed. He had cute dimples and very perfect teeth. He had very expensive jeans on, G star Raw with good looking sneakers and a nice t shirt on. For a moment I forgot I was staring at him until Menzi walked out of his BMW coupe.

Menzi: "Hai man, Nathi. Ke ngwana ko nna oo (That's my little sister). Magogo o mo romile bier wa itse go bjang (Grandma sent her to buy her booze. You know how it is)."

So his name is Nathi and he's friends with Menzi. Great.

Nathi: (smiling) "Wena o le skobo bjana o kereya kae lepyatla le le bjana (Where do you get such a beaut when you're so ugly)?"

Menzi: "Mxm, tsek (piss off) Nkosinathi. Ke ngwana Mmane wa ka (She's my aunt's daughter) and she's off limits."

Nathi: "Hao, azanka ka re ka mo nyaka (I never said I was into her)."

That statement hurt a bit. I don't even know if he meant it or not.

Nathi: "Reka di bier nyana daarso, ke mo khape phela wa itse bashimane ba mo kasi ba bjang (Buy us a few beers while I walk her home. You know how township boys can be)."

Menzi: "Shap".

Menzi walked in to buy beer while I walked out. Nathi followed me which I didn't expect, really.

Nathi: "Ah, bjanong lepyatla why o nshiya (So, pretty girl, why are you leaving me behind)? Wait up."

I walked a bit slower and he caught up with me.

Nathi: "E tla ke go tshwarele plastiek eo (Let me hold that plastic bag for you). Bafana ba ba kana ba go tlwaela blind (These boys could get too forward towards you)."

I gave him the plastic bag while we walked together.

Nathi: "So, what's your name?"

Me: "Tshegofatso, but you can call me Chichi."

Nathi: "Oh, ke wena (you're) the famous Chichi girl Glen has been telling me about? Phela he never raves about a girl this much. I figured you must be something special and I was right."

Okay, I'm so confused. Glen talks about me? To Nathi? Why though? I looked at him in confusion.

Nathi: "Oh, sorry, please excuse my manners. My name is Nkosinathi Dhlamini, but you can call me Nathi. I'm Glen's brother."

Okay, now I see the resemblance. They have good genes, but Glen is still a dick.

Me: "Nice to meet you, Nathi."

We walked past the annoying group of guys again and they were about to talk the usual shit until Nathi surprised me.

Guy 1: "Ashule M'thola Sammy (There she is again)."

Guy 2: "Eish fana lerao leo san (that booty man)."

Nathi stopped and went to them. He grabbed the second guy by his shirt using one hand and the guy didn't even protest.

Nathi:"Eh wena, Sammy. Ska tlo nyela sani (Don't fuck with me). I don't want to hear you say that kind of shit to her ever again. If I hear it and you know very well I will, ke tlo go kgaola marete san (I'll cut your dick off)."

The guy, or Sammy as they call him looked like he was about to piss himself. The rest of the guys looked scared. I guess everyone is scared of Nathi around here.

Guy1:"Hade (sorry), Bra Nathi. Ne re sa itse o di betha le ena (We didn't know you're dating her)."

Guy2:"Sorry, Bra Nathi. Hade ntja yaka (Sorry, my boss)."

Nathi:"She's not my girl. You should know better than to disrespect a woman. That says a lot about the way you treat your own mother!"

He clicked his tongue and let go of the guy. He looked really pissed at them, but turned to me and smiled. There's just something about Nathi. I just can't pin point it. I can't even think anything since I don't have much or any experience with boys for that matter.

## Chapter 5

Nathi walked me to my house busy asking me questions about myself. I didn't want to indulge much since he's a stranger and my cousin Menzi's friend. Menzi is pretty much my big brother and I respect him a lot. I asked him to turn around by the corner since people have eyes and ears everywhere. The wrong message might be conveyed to my granny or my mom or even Aunt Aidah.

I went back to the house and gave Koko her drinks, she didn't even thank me. It doesn't bother me much anymore. She's toxic like that. I quickly made some dinner and mom came back early.

We ate dinner around 6pm without Pabi or Aunt Aidah. Aunt Aidah doesn't work, but she's never home. Koko was in the lounge watching tv, while Tshiamo, mama and I were in the dining area. The three of us enjoy eating together in there just like we always used to back home in Seshego.

Every night was family night until my dad decided to ruin it all. I guess he never valued it as much as we did and I was slowly starting to accept it. Koko, Aunt Aidah and Pabi like saying the three of us act white and better than them, but we just ignore them.

I quickly washed the dishes with Tshiamo and we did our homework in the dining room. Pabi decided to grace us with her presence, still dressed in her uniform at 6:30, three and a half hours after Thomas dropped us off. Instead of greeting us she just walked past and headed straight to the lounge where Koko was seated.

Pabi:"Dumela koko (Hello, granny)."

Mokgadi:"Hello, Pabi. O tswa kae (Where do you come from)?"

Pabi:"Ah, after school study group. You know mos."

Mokgadi:"Okay."

My blood was boiling, but I didn't let it show. Just a few hours ago I got yelled at and insulted for arriving 15 minutes later than usual, while Pabi got in here hours later and



nothing was said. Tshiamo even shook her head while my mother just kept quiet and read her Bible.

I decided to play a little game. Pabi could hear me from the dining room since it was just next door the lounge.

Me: "Ma, what would you do if you knew someone's big secret? Like the secret is so big, it could tarnish everything, you know?"

Mama looked at me for a while with a questioning loom on her face, but decided not to ask anything. She chose to answer straight away.

Mama: "Luke 12v2 says 'Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known.' That simply means that the truth will come out eventually.

Matthew 10 v26-28 says 'So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.' That simply means that if this secret grows too heavy on you, then reveal it. No matter who threatens you about it fear no evil for God is with you.

And Proverbs 21v23 says 'Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble'. On the other hand, if you choose to keep quiet, you avoid trouble, ngwanaka (my child). So the ball is in your court."

I saw Pabi walked past us giving me a questioning look and I ignored her and continued working. By 8pm Tshiamo and I were done with our homework and headed to bed with our mother. We prayed with Mama and stayed up a bit chatting about our first day at school. Mama was extremely happy to see us happy. I can only wish for things to get better and so great one day that I get her out of here.

Mandisa and Bree were texting me on WhatsApp for a while. I had bought some data with today's lunch money. As I was about to greet them goodnight, a WhatsApp text from an unknown number came through.

"It was nice meeting you today, lepyatla. I can't wait to see you again."

I frowned and asked myself who it was, but there's only one way to find out. Luckily the person was online.

"Who are you?"

"It's me, Nathi."

My heart started pounding a bit faster and I was overcome with a heatwave controlling my body.

"Where did you get my number?"

"Menzi gave it to me. Well, I practically forced him to give it to me. I couldn't risk sleeping without talking to my future wife."

Hehe, this guy is such a sweet talker shame.

"Future wife you say? Keep dreaming."

"Lol. Dreams do come true, you know. Mine always do, I make sure at all times."

I smiled to myself like a little idiot and as I was about to respond my data got depleted. That made my heart sad for a while, but I decided to sleep anyway.

## Chapter 6

It's day 2 of School and I'm feeling a bit more excited than yesterday. I'm feeling truly hopeful about today, and at least I made new friends. Tshiamo and I woke up to do our usual business. We made our lunch last night before bed so we won't worry too much this morning.

Koko Mokgadi set an alarm to wake Pabi up and Mamogolo (aunt) Aidah hasn't been back since few days ago. We finished and walked out of the house without Pabi again. As I was walking towards our corner waiting for Thomas, guess who comes running towards us. Yes, Glen. He's starting to be a real nuisance this guy.

Glen: (trying to catch his breath) "Sho, Chichi. Hi Tshiamo."

Tshiamo: "Hi."

Glen: "Dintshang ngwana (How's it girl)?"

Me: "Are you following me now?"

Glen: "Hao, Chichi, I just wanted to greet you since le nna ke emetse transport (I'm also waiting for my ride)."

Me: "So you decided to walk ten minutes from your house to catch your transport on my corner? Just for fun nje?"

Glen: "Yep. It's good exercise."

Me: "Hmm."

Pabi walked out of the gate looking really annoyed, but nothing new there.

Glen: "Sho, Paballo."

Pabi looked at him in disgust and rolled her eyes.

Pabi: "Ag, Glen. Kgale keo botsa gore a keo feeli (I've told you countless times that I don't feel you). Stop stalking me please."

She carried on with her phone while Glen laughed at her.

Glen: (laughing) "Ga ke na nako ya di febe, Pabi (I don't have time for bitches). You should know that by now. Wa lebala gore ke ganne ong nyobise (You forget that I refused your offer to fuck)."

Pabi looked embarrassed and kept quiet. I see now all along Pabi was being mean to Glen because he refused to sleep with her, not the other way round. Talk about humiliation. Thomas came and to my surprise Glen got in as well. I looked around and noticed one person from yesterday wasn't in the kombi. Pabi got even more upset by Glen's presence.

Pabi: "Ag, man Thomas! Ke dilo man tseo (What nonsense is this)?! What's Glen doing here?"

Thomas: "He's our new member baby."

Pabi: "Hai man! Mo folose (Let him get off)!"

Thomas was understandably irritated by Pabi's behaviour. I'd also be, I mean who does she think she is bossing everyone around?

Thomas:"Pabi, ska itebala ne (Don't forget your place). O namela mahala ka hier (You don't pay like the rest of them) so you don't get to tell me who comes and who goes, wa nkutlwa (do you hear me)?!"

Pabi: (looking down) "Sharp."

Glen was overly excited and sat right next to Kamo.

Glen:"What's up, family?"

Kamo: (Blushing) "Hi, Glen."

I wasn't bothered much as I just ignored him and listened to Tshiamo tell me all about her new friends. She's not very talkative around new people, so I was very happy she made new friends so early. We arrived at school and got out.

Thomas:"Bye bye, Caramel Queen!"

I assume that was directed to me but I ignored him as he laughed and drove off. I'm starting to wonder if all men in Mamelodi are like this? Do they just lack respect for women in total or what? As I walked in Tshiamo went to her friends while I was approaching Bree and Mandisa. My phone rang and it was an unsaved number. I was hesitant to answer, but I did anyway since I thought it looked a bit familiar.

Me:"Hello?"

Voice:"Hao, Lepyatla (Beautiful). Why did you leave me hanging last night?"

That voice. It's very familiar and the way he called me that. I realized it was Nathi.

Me:"Hi, Nathi."

Nathi:"Hao. Didn't you save my number? Why ne o araba o kare gao sure bjana (Why did you answer your phone in such an uncertain manner)?"

Me:"Be ke sa tsebe gore ke mang a founang (I had no idea who was on the phone). I didn't save your number."

Nathi:"Ouch. I'll forgive you for not responding to my WhatsApp messages though since you sound so cute when you speak Sepedi. I love your accent."

I felt myself blush involuntarily. No one has ever told me my accent is cute ever since I arrived here.

Me:"Be se ne data (I didn't have data). Sorry about that."

Nathi:"No worries, lepyatla (Beautiful)."

Me:"Anyway Nathi ke ko skolong be o batla eng (I'm at school, what did you want)?"

Nathi:"I was just checking on you and I wanted you to enjoy your day."

Me:"Okay then. Thank you. I have to go. Bye."

I hung up before he could say anything else. We still have about ten minutes before school starts. I greeted Mandisa and Bree and then an unexpected message came through. I checked it and it was R150 airtime. I wondered who it came from. Must be a mistake or something so I made a mental note to buy data during break. It's my lucky day I guess.

Mandisa:"Chomi (friend). What's Glen doing coming out of Thomas' Kombi?"

Me:"Oh, he joined our transport this morning apparently."

Bree:"Ai, Glen is dodgy, Chichi. Just be careful."

Me: "Relax, I'm not into Glen. I came here to focus on my work."

Mandisa: "Glen is a smooth talker, babe. And o ba rata ga mpe ma virgin (He's a big fan of virgins)."

Me: (frowning) "What makes you think I'm a virgin? I've never told you that."

Mandisa: "You didn't have to, baby. It's written all over you."

I couldn't help, but feel a bit offended in a way.

Mandisa: "I'm just saying, as someone who knows Glen all too well. Be careful."

Me: "You seem to know him way too well. What's with you two if I may ask?"

Mandisa: "Ag, nna le Glen re jola mafifing. Ke le after nine wa bona?"

Bree and I looked at him shockingly.

Mandisa: "It's no big deal, besides Glen is good in bed."

Bree: "Won't he be mad that you told us?"

Mandisa: (laughing) "No one would believe it. Glen is one of the biggest players in school and besides, nnete ke nnete (the truth is the truth). I have nothing to hide."

The bell rang and he greeted us goodbye as he left for his class. Bree and I were left stunned. I've heard of that term after 9 before but I just thought it happened on tv only.

I have a lot to get used to around here. Bree and I made our way to our register class and Mr. Legae was smiling as usual. He winked at me and I thought I was seeing things, but Bree even asked me if I saw him do that. I felt really uncomfortable around this man. It's only my second day here and he's making me feel like he's making unwanted advances towards me.

I sat down and Glen whispered in my ear.

Glen: "Be careful of that guy, Chichi babe. Whatever happens, don't fall for his tricks."

I just looked at him and kept asking myself what he meant. I made a mental note that I would ask him about it later on. We were given a task by Mr. Legae to complete on our own and since the first two periods were a double period, we had to do it in complete silence. I really enjoy Accounting. I finished the task 20 minutes and I looked to my right and saw Bree was finished as well. Glen was still busy though he kept giving me stares and smiling at me every now and then.

I looked to the front and saw Pabi exchanging papers with Kamo right in front of Mr. Legae. Those two are cheating and he's pretending not to see them! I whispered to Bree.

Me: "Did you see that?"

Bree: "Yes, we all saw it. It's nothing new. You'd better keep quiet if you know what's good for you."

Mr. Legae: "Chichi and Brinette

is there anything you'd like to share with the class?"

I thought about what Bree told me just now, but then again I remembered what my mother taught me about morals and ethics.

Me: "Yes, sir. I'd like to ask why it is that you allow cheating in the class?"

Bree gave me her wtf look, while Glen had his hand over his face, but I didn't care. I had to do what was right. All this while Rea, Kamo and Pabi looked at me. I could see worry in Kamo's eyes, but Rea and Pabi just gave me a blank stare.

Glen: "Ah, ah ah."

Mr. Legae: "May I ask what you mean?"

Me: "Yes, you may. I saw Kamo and Pabi exchanging tasks right in front of you. We all saw it, but instead of calling them to order, you kept quiet."

Bree buried her face in her arms on her desk, while Glen tried to save me. The rest of the class was quiet.

Glen: "Ah, Meneer (Sir). Wa te dlalla fela (She's just playing). Or le bone something lena gents (Did you see something guys)?"

He was asking Imza and Bongz.

Imza: "Niks."

Bongz: "Nope. Nada (nothing)."

I got confused for a second, why were these people acting like they didn't see shit? Is this how they operate at this school? It frustrated me even more. Mr. Legae on the other hand looked really unimpressed.

Mr. Legae: "Ms. Mashabela, accusations without proof won't be tolerated in this classroom. I will not have you undermine my skills and profession like that. You're new here, the sooner you get used to how things work, the better."

I was so upset, I wanted to say something else but Bree looked at me and shook her head as a signal for me to stop. I decided to keep quiet and keep my anger in tune, while Pabi looked at me with a disgusting smirk on her face.

The bell rang after the second period and as I was about to leave with Bree, Mr. Legae asked me to stay behind. Each one of us left our task papers on his desk before leaving.

Mr. Legae: "Ms. Mashabela, please stay behind for a minute. I'd like to have a word with you."

Bree: "I'll wait for you outside."

She left and as the next class was about to walk in, he told them to wait outside and close the door. I don't feel comfortable standing in an empty classroom with the door closed while I'm the only one inside with a dodgy male educator.

Mr. Legae: "I don't appreciate what you did, Ms. Mashabela."

Me: "But sir, I saw it and I saw that you saw it too."

Mr. Legae: "Your shoes are getting too big for you, Chichi. You're forgetting one thing, this isn't Limpopo, you're in Pretoria now. We do things differently here and if you know what's good for you, you'll keep your filthy mouth shut."

I was so offended. I can't let this man talk to me like I'm trash.

Me: "Excuse me, sir, but you can't talk to me like that."

Mr. Legae chuckled and walked towards me.

Mr. Legae: (smiling) "I can do anything I want, Chichi. You're such a beautiful girl, you know, just a little uptight. Nkao fa legodimo le lefase (I'd give you heaven and earth), Chichi. You and I would look so good together and I'd make sure you pass with flying colours. All you have to do is agree to be my girlfriend."

He touched my face leaving me stunned. I was rather shaken and felt scared at that moment. I stepped back and stared at him in the eyes.

Me: "I don't date teachers. And I'm more than capable of passing on my own."

Mr. Legae: "Well then, you've made your bed now you'll have to lie in it."

I felt like that was a threat, but I rushed out of that class as quickly as possible. O noticed Bree wasn't outside, she must have hurried to Mrs. Coetzee's class to avoid being late. I walked in and was about to apologize to Mrs. Coetzee.

Mrs. Coetzee: "It's alright, Chichi. Brinette told me you were held up. You may take your seat."

I went to take my seat although I was a bit terrified. I didn't even realize I was shaking.

Glen: "Chichi, o shap (Are you okay)?"

I just gave him a brief nod and quickly wiped the tear off my face. Pabi looked at me and gave me a grin, while Bree passed me a small piece of tissue. I feel so humiliated, so violated even though I'm not quite sure why.

## Chapter 7

### Glen

My name is Glen Dhlamini and I'm 17 years of age, currently doing Grade 10. I'm very famous at school, and mostly known for being a fuck boy. I get the hottest girls in school. All the girls want me and all the boys want to be me, even boys in Matric. I'm so good looking and not to mention good in bed, that some teachers want me. My parents died when I was very young and my brother Nkosinathi had to step up and fend for me.

I don't blame him for becoming a gangster, I mean most guys in Mams turn to crime in order to become something in life. Crime is not something to be proud of, but it made him who and what he is today. He started off with nothing and now he owns a few taxis, a car wash and chesa nyama and even our tavern at home. He's very well respected, much like his partner in crime Menzi.

I love and respect him very much, but now I'm torn. Ever since I saw Chichi walk through that classroom door, I fell instantly for her. There's just something about her that hypnotizes a person. When she walks into a room, the whole room lights up. Her smile is contagious and her strong willed personality drives me crazy. I'm not the only one who wants her, even Boys in Matric want her. I was stupid enough to join the bet made the day she walked into our class.

Each boy paid R100 and the first one to have sex with her, wins R2000. We each have two weeks to get into her pants. That's 20 guys who joined in the bet. I know it's only been two days since we made the bet, but I just can't help but feel guilty.

Seeing her shed a tear after coming from that asshole Legae's class, made me fall even more deeply in love with her. I never even thought anyone could fall in love in just two days, but if it's not love then what is it?

Now Nathi kept asking me about her ever since she came to the tavern yesterday and I just can't help but feel a tad bit of jealousy. Nathi has always been a player just like me.

I know I'm young and an amateur compared to him, but why would he even be interested in a girl 10 years younger than him in the first place? She's only 16 and is supposed to be dating her age mates. Now I have to compete with my own brother for Chichi's heart.

I don't even know how I'll cope with the bet, but one thing is for sure I'll have to make her fall for me. I'm not going to tell the guys I'm pulling out of the bed and risk her finding out about it. I'll have to act fast because it's only a matter of time the news spreads faster than lightning.

If Mandisa finds out about this, he'll most definitely tell her since he's grown so fond of her. He really takes friendship seriously and even though he and I are fuck buddies, we're actually good friends.

Now that she's crying and trying really hard not to show it, I know it's all because of Mr. Legae. I'd like to tell Nathi to sort out his idiot friend, but then that might just bring them closer together. I'll warn him myself and if he doesn't listen, I'll get Menzi to sort him out.

Chichi

I had a hard time concentrating on today's lesson in Physics, but I just decided to bury myself in thoughts. We had a double period and then the period rang and it was finally time for break. Bree and I walked to our usual spot where we met Mandisa. Today was my turn to buy so I bought us some cold drinks, while Mandisa chipped in for some chips.

They could see how down I was but I guess they were waiting for us to all be together to ask about it. As I was about to sit down on the grass at our usual spot underneath the tree, Glen, Imza and Bongz came along. The three blind mice as Mandisa calls them.

Glen: "Sho, sho, The girls. Can we join you?"

Mandisa: (rolling his eyes) "Ah, Glen it's not like you'll take no for an answer. Ga le na timing waitse (You guys don't have timing hey)."

Glen: "Ah, hade (sorry) man, Mandi."

He and his two friends sat down, while Bongz sat next to Bree just like yesterday.

Glen: "So, Chichi, dintsitseng via wena le Mr. Legae (What went down between you and Mr. Legae)?"

I looked down and wondered if I should really come clean. I don't trust Glen's friends nor do I even know him that much.

Me: "Nothing. He just spoke to me that's all."

Glen gave me an inquisitive look

while Bree and Mandi didn't buy it.

Mandisa: "You do know that you're a bad liar, right?"

I've heard that before. I'm terrible at lying. Call it having a serious conscience I guess.

Bree: "Bona (Look) Chichi. I know what he did to you. He did the same to me last year."

I got a bit confused and gave her a puzzled look.

Me: "What do you mean?"

Bree: "Pabi and her friends have been doing this for a long time, hence I told you in the class when you asked me."

Me: "So what happened last year?"

Bree: (sigh) "I went to him after class to confront him about Pabi and Kamo being cheats and he told me to stay in my lane if I know what's good for me. He then.. He came onto me. He told me that he could do anything for me and treat me well, also make me pass with flying colours if I just agreed to be his girlfriend."

Mandisa: (clapping hands) "Heh! Meneer Legae o ja bana ka nnete vele (Sir chows kids for real)?"

Me: "This is ridiculous! You have to report him."

Bree: "It's pointless. I tried to, but he changed the story and made it look like I cornered him and made advances towards him. It sounds bloody ridiculous, I mean I was only 14. What did I know about flirting with old guys like Mr. Legae?"

Mandisa: "So that's why you were trending on the school's Facebook page and Twitter? Tjo mgani (Wow friend). Askies (Sorry) hey."

Wow. This Mr. Legae is the pits.

Bree: "My parents really thought it was true for a while. I nearly even failed my year because I had a mental breakdown. It's only then that my parents realized I was telling the truth. I decided to let it go and come back. I like this school and I wasn't prepared to leave because of a dickhead like him."

Bongz held her hand and kissed her cheek.

Glen: "Which is why I'm going to sort him out once and for all."

Mandisa: "Chesa wena Rambo Glen (You go, Rambo Glen)."

Imza: (laughing) "Ai mara lena ditabane le dramatic jong (You fags can be dramatic man)."

Imza had a tendency of being rude just like Glen, while Bongz was a lot calmer and quieter, although there's just something about him. Something that screams untrustworthy and unreliable. Bree is calm but not very quiet, but they seem to match perfectly. Glen saw that I didn't appreciate Imza's comment even though Mandi didn't mind. I guess he was used to it.

Glen: "Ema nyana lwena Imza man (Stop if, Imza)."

Imza: "Eh, sorry. Ka lebala gore re ntse le your future bae (I forgot we're chilling with your future bae)."

I widened my eyes in confusion while Imza looked like he let something slip which he shouldn't have. Glen gave him a warning look.

Imza: "Ah, ka dlala (I'm playing), man. Hade (Sorry) Glenzito."

Glen: "Tsamaya o checka medi wa gao (Go check on your girl) or something."

Imza left without hesitation. I wonder what that was about.

Mandisa: "Ai, Glen. Don't tell me you're trying to get into Chichi's pants by beating Mr. Legae up. Chichi is so not your type. Akere wena o rata di fuck girl (You're into fuck girls remember)?"

Glen: "Mxm, Mandi. I'm just trying to help out a friend. Besides, Mr. Legae has gotten away with this kak for far too long."



Me: "So we're friends now?"

Glen: (smiling) "We're all friends here, whether you like it or not."

I smiled and looked at him. Glen might be a bit rude and much of a dickhead, but his eyes don't lie. They seem so genuine and real, and I can tell that he doesn't take nonsense very well. We carried on eating and saw Pabi and her little crew walk towards us. Gosh, don't they have any other hobby than bothering other people?

Pabi: "Well, well, well. Bona ke mang (Look who it is) guys. Winnie Mandela wanna be. Ne o nagans gore o etsang sesi (What were you thinking, sis)? You got here two minutes ago and yet you already thought you could start a revolution? O bampile shem (You failed shame)."

Kamo: "Look, Pabi. You told her what you wanted to now let's go. We don't want people getting suspicious."

Mandisa: (rolling his eyes) "Pabi, nko o tloge mo pele ga rena man, e bile wa re nkgela (Please move away from us, you're even starting to reek)."

Pabi got really pissed.

Pabi: "Mxm. I wasn't talking to you, fagget!"

Mandisa: (laughing) "You really need to start getting new lines. Everyone knows I'm a fag, honey, a big one. Even my parents. Such old news."

Pabi was huffing and puffing in frustration.

Pabi: "Ag! Rea are you just going to let him insult me in front of these nobodies like that?! You know you're the queen of shade!"

Rea: "Pabi, let's just go."

Pabi was really surprised and Rea's statement made her even angrier.

Pabi: "Lena le le two le useless as fuck waitse (You two are useless as fuck you know)."

Glen: "Pab weh, I've lost count on how many times I've told you the back the fuck off. You're old news and this whole clique of yours is getting real tiring. What's the fucking point of being the boss if you can't think for yourself? You can't even write your own assignments without Kamo's help. You're a useless dumb fuck who only knows one thing: getting fucked. Now tloga mo (Now go away) before I spill your shit all over Facebook."

Pabi left with them in pure defeat while Mandisa and Bongz were laughing. Glen clicked his tongue while Bree and I smiled. Glen and Bongz left us saying they had to do something else, while Bree decided to tell Mandisa about Rea also sleeping with Mr. Legae. Ai, and here I was thinking she could keep a secret, but Mandisa is also good at keeping secrets so I let them be.

I took out my phone and decided to buy some data with the generous airtime donation I received this morning. I logged onto WhatsApp and tons of messages came flooding in. I checked the one I received this morning just after 8.

"Hope you enjoy the airtime. Love Nathi."

Okay, so Nathi decides to treat me like his charity case? I don't know how to feel about this. Mama always says a man never buys you something without expecting anything in return. Is Nathi trying to buy me or what?

## Chapter 8

Glen

It's after school and today was a good day. A lot more hectic than yesterday but all in all I had fun. At least I'm one step to being a part of Chichi's life one way or another. I walked out of the Life Orientation class with Chichi, Bree and my guys. I told them to walk on and wait for me by the gate, I need to send a message to someone before shit gets rough.

I walked into Legae's class and found him packing his stuff away in his bag, preparing to leave. I closed the door behind me after I walked in.

Mr. Legae: "Hey wena, san (Hey, boy). Who told you to enter? And Mmao gao ruta go kokota (Didn't your mom teach you how to knock)?"

That statement made me angry as I clenched my fists and tightened my jaw. People who know that you don't have parents should know better than to make such stupid statements. I need to keep my cool since I'm on school property. I can't go around beating teachers, or else I'll get suspended. I was about to respond but he interrupted me again with another rude statement.

Mr. Legae: "Oh, kana I forgot. You don't have a mom, or a dad for that matter."

I kept my cool. Hehe this guy is testing my patience.

Glen: "O nagana gore o dese ne (You think you rock ne)? Bona mo (Look here), you'd better stay away from Chichi if you know what's good for you."

Mr. Legae: (laughing) "Ao, mfana kithi (My boy). Your balls have gone soft neh? Since when do you care about bitches other than what's between their legs? And the last time I checked, Chichi doesn't belong to you or anyone for that matter. I can get her and every other bitch in this school."

I got really angry this time.

Glen: "Don't fuck with me, Legae! Or else you'll have Menzi to deal with!"

Mr. Legae: (laughing) "Menzi and I go a long way, your brother included. He knows I'm fucking his sister, so why would he care if I'm planning on fucking his niece?"

Glen: "That's because his niece is not a stupid whore like Pabi."

Mr. Legae: "Oh, okay. But you see, if you tell Menzi about this, then I'll have to tell Chichi about your little bet on her."

I suddenly felt a sharp pang on my chest. My eyes grew wider in shock and he noticed. How the fuck did he know about that?

Mr. Legae: "You really think I wouldn't know? News travels fast, boykie (little boy). Your tall friend has a mouth just as tall as he is."

Imza?! That motherfucker just couldn't even wait a week to spill the beans.

Mr. Legae: "Ja, cat got your tongue now? Get the fuck out of my class and learn how to knock."

I left his class breathing heavily. This man is playing with fire. I knew I shouldn't have listened to Imza. Now Chichi might find out about this bet and I'd be doomed.  
Chichi

We walked out of the class and met Mandi along the way. Glen told us to wait for him at the gate while he had to sort something out. My gut feeling was telling me he was going to confront Mr. Legae, but I decided not to dwell on it.

As we walked out I found Tshiamo standing outside a BMW 4 Series Coupe. It looks the same as the one Menzi drives, just a different colour. What puzzled me is that Nathi was standing outside and leaning towards the car with his back while Tshiamo was laughing at what he was telling her. I felt so awkward now. All eyes would be on me. Tshiamo signaled for me to go to them and I had no choice but to otherwise it would raise suspicion.

Bree:"Eh, chomi (friend). Is that who I think it is?"

I looked at her confused.

Bree:"Nathi Dhlamini?! The Nathi Dhlamini? You're dating Nathi?!"

Me:"Shh. Wa rasa (You're making noise) Bree. People might hear you and no, I'm not dating him. He's my brother's friend."

Mandisa:"Eh, so the rumours are true?"

Me: (puzzled) "What rumours?"

Mandisa:"Ai, you seriously need to be up to date on social media. People were talking on Facebook how Nathi is dating a yellow bone with a nice body. They said they saw them walking together yesterday. The description fit you perfectly although they didn't mention your name."

Oh, my God! If this gets out at home I'm fucked.

Me:"I'm not dating him and people should seriously stop assuming stuff man."

Mandisa:"No need to get defensive, love. E no ba social media fela (It's just social media). Not facts."

Pabi was getting seriously impatient with us who weren't in the kombi yet.

Pabi:"Re tla tsamaya mara mo (Are we ever going to leave here?!)"

Thomas:"O jagetse kae, baby (Where are you rushing off to?) It's not like o ira (you're going to do) homework mos."

The others laughed while she just clicked her tongue. I walked towards Nathi and Tshiamo with a frown on my face.

Nathi:"Sho, lepyatla (Beautiful)."

He smiled and put his arms in both his jean pockets.

Me:"What are you doing here?"

Tshiamo:"Malome Nathi o re be a re shapa ka surprise (Uncle Nathi says he wanted to surprise us). O re o kgopela go re ntsha for di ice cream (He asked to take us out for some ice cream)."

Me:"That's not a good idea. My grandmother won't be happy with us being away from home. Besides we have homework and chores to do."

Nathi:"I already sorted your grandmother out. Besides, she has a soft spot for me."  
He smiled making me feel weak. I still don't like the fact that he does things without asking me. What am I even saying to myself? We're not dating or anything. He's ten years older than me for crying out loud.

Tshiamo:"Please sesi, say yes."

Me:"I don't know"

Nathi. Thomas is waiting for us and besides, people might think we're a couple."

Nathi:"I'll sort Thomas out, and since when do you care what people think?"

Since my grandmother gives a heavy beating. I was contemplating what to do until Glen walked towards us with a serious frown on his face.

Glen:"Sho, bafo (Brother)."

Nathi:"Hola mfo (hey bro)."

Glen:"Ufunani hier (What are you doing here)?"

Nathi:"I came to take you guys home."

Glen looked at Nathi with a questioning look.

Glen:"Since when do you do that?"

Nathi:"Hawu, since today bakithi (goodness). Ni ya ngena or kanjani (Are you guys coming or what)?"

We all got in, while I asked Glen to get into the front seat and Tshiamo and I went to the back. Nathi drove and stopped right next to Thomas' window.

Nathi:"Sho sho Tman, ke vaya le bona (I'm leaving with them)."

Thomas was just finished smoking and more than delighted to have us leave without him.

Thomas:"Sho sho, Nathi nice. No flop (no problem). Ong sparetse tsela e bile (You've saved me the trip even)."

Nathi drove off while Thomas got into his Kombi. Glen was awfully quiet the whole way home and I thought it had something to do with Mr. Langa but I decided not to dwell much on it. Tshiamo on the other hand was so excited to be in a BMW.

Tshiamo:"Tjo tjo tko, Sesi ekwa di seat tje di bose bjang (Sis, feel how nice these seats are). Ekwa gore e kitima bjang (Look how fast it's going). Papa be a nale di motoro tse bose empa ena ke top shayela (Dad has some really nice cars but this one is top of the range)."

Nathi laughed and kept smiling at me through the rear view mirror.

Natho:"If you work hard enough, you'll buy a car just like this one, Tshiamo."

Tshiamo:"Eh, nna Abuti Nathi ke nyaka go ba nyaka (I want to be a doctor). Ke nyaka go ba le tshalete ke kgone go agela Mama ntlo ya ma kgontho (I want to have lots of money so I can build my mother a really nice house)."

Nathi:"Its good to have goals, Tshiamo. Glen also wants to be a doctor one day."

Glen was just too quiet. Nathi stopped by his house and I assumed he was going to get something.

Nathi:"Hlika mfo (Get off, brother)."

Glen looked like he really didn't want to leave the car.

Glen:"Kodwa o ba isa phi laba (But where are you taking these two)?"

Nathi:"I'm taking them home. You need to check if Aunt Regina is doing the right things. You know she has a small habit of stealing."

Glen looked at him for a while and decided to get off.

Glen:"See you tomorrow, Chichi. Bye Tshiamo."

He closed the door as I waved at him. He looked at us with a look full of sorrow, as if someone stole something from him. I felt kind of bad. I think Glen really has the hots for me and he's somehow competing with his brother.

Nathi drove away with us and we arrived at some mall. I felt a bit out of place since we were wearing uniform. We left our bags in the car as Nathi requested that we get out of the car. We walked out of the basement parking and took the elevators upstairs. We were met with such a beautiful mall. I tried to look for the name of the mall but we were already inside so I had to ask.

Me:"Nathi, what is this place?"

Nathi:"Welcome, to The Grove Mall, Lepyatla (gorgeous)."

Wow. This mall is nice, but not nicer than Mall of the North, though.

We walked past a few shops and Tshiamo was mesmerized as usual. He took us to Wakaberry and got us some nice ice creams. I'm a sucker for Ice cream, especially anything that has chocolate and nuts in it. Tshiamo wanted to walk around and check out the mall, so we decided to sit at one of the tables while she runs around.

Nathi:"So, do you like your ice cream?"

Me:"Yes, I love ice cream. Thank you so much."

Nathi:"You're welcome."

Me:"Nathi, I want to know, what is this that you're doing?"

Nathi:"I don't understand what you're asking me, Beautiful. Be specific."

This guy, though.

Me: "I mean what's your deal? Why are you taking me out and buying me airtime for no reason?"

Nathi:"Because you're beautiful, lepyatla (gorgeous). And because I really like you. And I was serious when I said you're my future wife."

I felt myself get butterflies and blushing. This guy must be insane. I mean we're not even compatible, He's old and I have no idea what he does for a living and I'm only 16. My mom would freak out!

Chapter 9

I was still in shock after what Nathi had just told me. I've honestly never thought that I'd date anytime before finishing school and besides, I'm still a virgin. A guy as old as he is will of course want sex from me, right? I guess mom was right, no man buys you nice things without expecting anything in return.

Me:"So, is that why you bought me airtime and why you're taking me out now? You just want me to date you so you can sleep with me?"

He was so taken aback by that question, that I kind of regret asking him like that.

Nathi: "Chichi, is that what you really think of me? That I'm doing these things for you just to get into your pants? What do I look like to you? I'm not 16, Chichi. I've had my fair share of people judging me and thinking shit about me, but I didn't expect you to do that. I thought you were different."

I felt weird pain in the pit of my stomach. I suddenly regretted doing what I did. My intention wasn't to come across as being judgmental.

Me: "Nathi, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. I mean, my mother always says that when a man buys you nice things and does things for you, he wants one thing and one thing only."

Nathi: (chuckling) "Well, your mother is wrong. I'm not just any man. I know you're a teenager, and my intentions are real. I'm not Glen, you know."

I wonder what he means by that.

Me: "What do you mean?"

Nathi: "I mean I'm Nkosinathi and Glen is Glen."

I felt like that answer was incomplete. I still don't think it's a good idea to date a guy this old especially now when I've just turned 16. I know most girls in high school date older guys but that's just ridiculous. I'm sure he realized I was thinking too hard as he decided to speak.

Nathi: "Chichi, I'm not saying date me now. All I'm saying is allow me to take care of you and once you're ready, we'll make it official. I really see a wife in you in the near future."

I was confused though. Does that mean I don't get to look at any other boys besides him? How would this work?

Me: "I'm confused right now, Nathi."

Nathi: "Look, all I'm asking for is for your time. Let's spend time together every now and then and let me appreciate you and show you your worth."

Me: "Does this mean I don't get to date or give any other guy a chance during this whole time?"

Nathi: (laughing) "Hawu, Beautiful. We've barely made it to the next step and already you want to cheat on me?"

I laughed softly.

Nathi: "Look, I value education more than anything. I didn't get to pursue my studies, and I wouldn't want to ruin your future. I don't want you to end up like Pabi, you're way smarter than that."

I blushed and looked down. Tshiamo came running back to us. I checked the time and it was 3:30 pm already. I started panicking about Koko Mokgadi now.

Me: "Nathi, look at the time. Ga re sepele pele koko a mpotsa tje ke di jeleng maobane (Let's go before Koko tells me nonsense)."

Nathi got up and bought us two boxes of Debonairs Triple Decker pizza. It had been so long since I've had some pizza. He promised me to ask for my permission first

before doing things like fetching me from school and buying me airtime. I can't get so used to a guy doing things for me. I need to learn to be independent.

We walked out and headed to the car. He asked that I sit in front. Even though I was a bit reluctant, I did it anyway. It's the second day already and I've learnt a lot about him. He's funny and genuine, sensitive at times but a bit controlling.

I know all that except for what he does for a living. I'll ask him the next time I see him. We got home at 4pm and Nathi got out with us holding the two boxes. Tshiamo was so excited yet I was so terrified. I began shaking a bit but tried not to show Nathi. I knocked on the door with an insteady hand.

Mokgadi: "Kena (Come in)!"

Nathi opened the door with one hand while holding the pizza boxes in the other. Tshiamo walked in with a huge smile on her face and greeted. Koko and Mama were in the house. Mama was in the dining room while Koko was in the lounge watching tv with a bottle of beer as always. Aunt Aidah was still not home judging by how quiet it is around here and Pabi was nowhere to be seen.

Nathi: "Sanibonani ekhaya (Good day, everyone)."

Mama came to the kitchen and smiled, although I could tell the smile wasn't very genuine.

Mama: "Yebo, mfana wami (yes, my boy). Unjani (How are you) Nkosinathi?"

Nathi: (smiling) "Ngiyaphila (I'm well) ma, unjani (How are you)?"

Mama: "Ngiyaphila (I'm fine thanks). You've grown into a very handsome young man."

Nathi: "Thank you, ma."

Mama: "I hope you've stopped doing crime, mfana wami (my boy)."

Wait, Nathi is a criminal? I was so confused at that point.

Nathi: "Yes, ma. I've changed."

Mama: "Kuhle loko (That's good)."

Nathi: "I've brought you some food since I kept Tshiamo and Chichi from cooking and doing their chores today."

Mama: "Thats very kind of you, my boy. As long as you don't make it a habit, angithi (right)?"

She gave him that look and I knew she meant it. She was dead serious.

Nathi: "Yebo (Yes), ma. It won't happen again."

Koko came from the lounge, with the biggest and fakest smile I've ever seen. I've never even seen her grin in all my life, not to mention smile and laugh. I could see all her teeth from where I was standing. Even though some were missing.

Mokgadi: "Hai

man, Julia. Why are you interrogating Nkosinathi like that? Bona fela o re tletse dijo tse dese bjang (Look at the nice food he's brought us). Thank you for bringing my granddaughters home safely. Thank you so much for the drinks as well. Your parents raised you well."

Now that's what I call an Oscar performance. So brilliant and not even a grin in sight. Her eyes were even glowing. Hehe so she's this nice because Nathi bought some pizza and drinks for her? If she could sell me she most definitely would this one.

Nathi: (smiling) "Akunankinga ma (It's not a problem at all, ma). I have to go. Enjoy the food."

Mokgadi: "Tshego, walk Nathi out man hao. You can't be this rude to such a wonderful gentleman."

Mama looked at me inquisitively, but I went out and closed the door behind me.

Nathi: "Your grandmother is fake as fuck, yoh!"

We laughed out so hard. I was shocked that Nathi noticed. I thought he fell for her act.

Me: "Hao, be ke nagana gore wa mo tshepa (I thought you believed her)."

Nathi: "No ways. Everyone knows gore jou sgogi o sleg (Everyone knows that your grandma is not a very good woman)."

At least I'm not the only one who knows that. I said goodbye and Nathi asked me for a hug. I peep toed and he leaned over to give me a hug. I inhaled his hypnotic scent. This cologne must be quite expensive. He left and I took a deep breath as I walked back into the house. One can never tell with Koko on how she'd react.

I found koko already dishing out a few pieces for herself as she went to sit back into the lounge. I found Mama sitting in the dining room once again, with Tshiamo eating her pizza and with some of her books in front of her. I quickly went to change into casual clothes and I put a few of my books on the table as I also had homework. I quickly got two pieces of pizza and went to sit with Mama and Tshiamo. I prayed and ate my food, while Mama stopped to read her Bible and stared at me. I got so uncomfortable, I just had to ask.

Me: "Mama, keng (What is it)?"

Mama: "A ko mpotse mo, Tshego (Tell me). That boy o batla eng ko wena (What does that boy want from you)?"

I knew this would happen.

Me: "Nothing, mama. He's Menzi's friend and was just trying to be nice to us."

Mama: "You think I'm stupid, neh?"

Me: (looking down) "No, mama."

Mama: "Corinthians 7v2 says

“But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.”

Thessalonians 4 v3-5 says

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.”

1Corinthians 15 v33 says "Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.”

Now tell me, Tshегоofatso, do any of those versus say a girl your age is capable of dating, especially a man as old as Nkosinathi? And with a past like his?"



Wow. I truly felt like my mom was giving me a whole sermon, but judging Nathi at the same time. Does it mean that a guy with a criminal past doesn't deserve love? I'm not trying to be defensive or anything, but I don't recall her raising me to be judgmental, but I know better than to tell her that.

Me: "No, mama."

Mama: "Good. I've made myself clear then."

And just like that she continued to read her Bible. I felt so small and discouraged at the same time.

Mokgadi: "Chichi weh! E tla kwano (Come here)!"

She never calls me Chichi and never calls me to come sit with her-ever. What's up with that? I got up and went to her anyway. I stood opposite her and looked at her.

Me: "Ee, Koko (Yes, granny)."

Mokgadi: "Nna mo (Sit down)."

I sat down reluctantly next to her. She was enjoying that pizza so much, even licking her fingers while sipping her beer so that it would go down well.

Mokgadi: "Ao mpotse mo (Tell me this), go tla bjang wena o kereye monna o mo dese bjana ka Nathi o le so (How come you got a nice man like Nathi while you look like this?)"

I was so hurt. This woman never stops.

Me: "I don't get what you mean."

Mokgadi: "I mean he's more Pabi's type, wa bona (you see)? Wena phela ga o pila bjana ka Pabi (You're not as pretty as Pabi is). Modimo o go zamble mara shem Pabi ena o go phala game down (God tried with you, but Pabi wins hands down)."

I wanted to cry but then I remembered she's just trying to toy with my emotions. I decided to just keep quiet.

Mokgadi: "Anyway, we can see that Pabi is just busy with her useless driver, if wena you just continue dating Nathi and make him marry you. A tlise di pizza (He should bring pizza) everyday."

Wow. She couldn't even hide the fact that she's willing to sell me to the next bidder.

Mama got really upset and got up from the dining room.

Mama: "Mama weh, I don't appreciate you talking to my daughter like that. She's just a child, not a prostitute!"

Mokgadi: "Ah le wena wa catxherw di feelings bjana (Why are you catching feelings like this)? We're just having a casual talk between a grandmother and a grandchild."

Mama: "Tshego, come. Your homework is waiting for you."

Mokgadi: "Ah, o uptight le wena Julia (You're so uptight). No wonder bhari e la e go hlalletse mosadi wa go phala (No wonder that idiot left you for a better looking woman)."

I could feel those words sting me, but they stung my mother even more. She kept her cool and tried not to show it. My mother rarely cries in front of us. I think that whole

"Mosadi o tshwara thipa ka bogale" (A woman holds the knife by its sharp edges, meaning a woman preserves in marriage, no matter what) got to her head.

I'd never be that woman-ever. I keep asking myself if my mom actually put up with more than what we saw when it came to my father? He wouldn't just up and leave out of nowhere. What if he had abused her long before he took off?

Chapter 10

Glen

I've had a hard time concentrating on my work ever since Nathi dropped me off. I even nearly made a mistake counting the profits we made today because all I kept thinking of was Chichi. The fact that she drove off with Nathi tells me that Nathi already made his move. She can't date my brother. I refuse to let that happen.

I've never felt this way over a woman before. Chichi has got me bad. Now it's going to be even more difficult to sleep because I keep thinking about this stupid bet. Imza le yena has a big mouth. I'll have to sort him out tomorrow before shit gets real. I'll have to talk to Menzi about Mr. Legae and about Nathi's interest in his sister. Perhaps that will keep Nathi away from dating school kids. I can't compete with a successful 26 year old and a beemer.

I asked Mandisa to give me Chichi's number and she gave it to me out of reluctance. I've been lying in bed for an hour trying to figure out if I should text Chichi or not. I decide to go ahead and do it. I've got nothing to lose.

"Hey, Chichilicious, I hope you had a great day. Glen"

I kept staring at the Whatsapp message as it had two Gray ticks. Her last seen was at 6pm, it's 7pm now. I kept checking to see if she responded every two minutes until she finally went online and read my message.

"Hey, Glen. Thanks, I had a good day indeed and hope yours was also fine."

"Yep, mine was great."

"How did you get my number by the way?"

"Lol. I told you, I always get what I want".

"Haha. You're very funny. Anyway, care to tell me what you and Mr. Legae spoke about after school?"

I thought about confessing my sins to her but then she might never talk to me again, so I decided against it.

"Ag, I just warned him to fuck off if he knows what's good for him."

"And he listened?"

"Well, he had no choice."

"Lol. Okay, let me sleep. I'll see you tomorrow. Goodnight."

"Goodnight, Chichilicious."

She sent me a smiley face. There's hope after all. I slowly drifted off to sleep with a smile on my face.

Chichi

It's Wednesday morning and Tshiamo and I did our routine as usual. Pabi didn't come home last night and Koko didn't seem to care. The favouritism in this house is on another level. Anyway, we did our usual business leaving Mama sleeping today since It's her day off. We packed our lunch last night before sleeping, so we're basically good to go.

We walked out and found Glen already waiting at our corner. He's so punctual, though. As Glen and I greeted each other with Tshiamo, a Grey Mercedes Benz 200 stopped next to us. The driver rolled down his window and I saw Micah, Rea's brother. Come to think of it she's always in the Kombi before us even though she lives just up the street.

Micah: "Hey, Chichi. O kae (How are you)?"

Me: "I'm well thanks and you?"

Micah: "Ke sharp (I'm okay). Can I come see you after school?"

Okay, first of all he disregards the presence of Glen and Tshiamo and now he's acting like we're friends? I got instantly irritated.

Me: "No, you can't."

Micah: "May I ask why?"

Me: "Ka gore Micah ga o ne mekgwa (Because you lack manners). And sa bobedi, ga re megwera nna le wena (And secondly, you and I are not friends)."

He looked defeated while Glen smiled with a smirk on his face as Micah left.

Tshiamo: "Tjo, Sesi, Micah wa tena (is annoying) man. A ke kgole gore ke ngwana moruti (I can't believe he's a pastor's child)."

We got into the kombi and to my surprise Pabi was in the Kombi with fresh and clean uniform. I decided not to say anything as we headed to school. Nathi sent me a good morning text and I responded just before school began. Mandi and Bree greeted me as we made our way to our register classes.

I hate seeing Mr. Legae now and worst part

we always get him in the morning. He looked at me funny but I just ignored him.

Mr. Legae: "Good morning, class. I'll be handing out your tasks today. Before I do that I'll be anouncing our top ahievers for the task. Our top three goes to:

Pabi Mogashoa 86%

Kamo Mokgotle 82% and

Reamogetswe Mabaso 76%

This must be a sick joke. The whole class clapped except for Glen, Bree and I. Pabi was so excited while Kamo looked down in shame. Rea has been quiet and walking on egg shells ever since I found out about her dirty little secret. I've always gotten 90% and above for Accounting. This must be a mistake.

Bree was also surprised but decided not to say anything. Mr. Legae walked around as he gave us our tasks back. This is unbelievable! I looked at Bree's task and we both got 49% yet most of our answers were the same and very much correct. Glen got 40%

and his answers were correct as well. I look at Glen and he signaled that we shouldn't say anything.

I was so angry. It's high time we dealt with this corrupt asshole. I have a plan, I'll have to ask Mandi's Accounting teacher to grade our tasks and see which results we will get. This is pure unethical and I can't go home with a kak mark like this. I'm planning to sing like a canary today and bring Mr. Legae down.

Break time came and I asked Mandi if he could show us his task and to my surprise his answers were just the same as mine, Bree's and Glen's. We showed him our papers and he was also shocked. I suggested to them what I wanted us to do and luckily they never protested. Mandi said he would give Mrs. Naidoo our papers and she would mark them and give them back before the end of the day.

My day has been pretty unsettling ever since this morning and Pabi just couldn't wait to throw it in our faces during break. She, Kamo and Rea came to us at our usual spot. This time it was just Mandi, Bree, Bongz, Glen and I.

Pabi:"Hehe, look who it is, the losers club."

Glen:"Paballo, ska re bora toe (Don't bore us please). We all know you can't write a simple equation without getting Kamo to do it for you."

Pabi:"Mxm. O nagana gore wa rocka ne Glen (You think you rock Glen, hey)."

Glen:"I know I rock, wait til the Principal finds out that you're a cheat and also sleeping with one of the teachers."

Pabi looked a bit fearful. She was trying to tell if Glen was bluffing.

Pabi:"You wouldn't dare."

Glen:"Re tla bona water meisie(We'll see mermaid girl). Now leave man eish."

They walked away but I could see Rea looking very worried. I'm a bit tired of this nonsense. If I burn her in the process, then so be it. All I want is a fair education for all.

The day flew by very quickly and before we knew it it was afterschool. We quickly went to see Mrs. Naidoo before heading home. We entered and found her sitting on her desk.

Mrs. Naidoo: "Oh, hi guys. I was starting to wonder if you'd ever come back."

Me:"Sorry, ma'am. We had a few things to do before coming here."

Mrs. Naidoo:"Well, I've had time to remark your tasks and it seems that Mr. Legae made some really hectic mistakes. There's a serious difference in marks on all three tasks. I mean he marked about over 50% of your answers as incorrect when indeed they're correct."

I knew it. That sly dickhead.

Mrs. Naidoo:"This is a serious discrepancy and I don't exactly know why he would do such. If he could do it to all three of you, then it means there are more of you. So I alerted the Principal and he'll launch a full on investigation first thing tomorrow morning."

Okay, I really didn't expect that. My heart started beating a bit faster as I thought of the possible outcomes of this investigation. What if he lands me in deep trouble at home and the whole story gets twisted?

Mrs. Naidoo: "Here are copies of your correct marks. The Principal had kept your original copies."

I checked mine and I got 98% for my task. Bree got 97%, with Glen achieving 95%. I never knew Glen was a smart ass. I guess we'll be taking our copies home and explaining to our parents the real truth behind these copies. I'll have to keep quiet to Koko and show Mama instead. I know I'll be able to confide in her. I don't care what Koko will think, I know I'm good at what I do.

We thanked Mrs. Naidoo and left. We headed towards the gate and as we were about to leave, Mr. Legae came out of the Principal's office looking really pissed. He gave the three of us a look and we just kept on walking. I really don't like the way he looked at us, though. Glen and I greeted Bree goodbye as Mandi had already left. As we headed to the Kombi, Nathi was at the gate with Tshiamo yet again. Ai, I seriously need to tell Nathi to stop fetching me. Why am I paying transport fees then?

Chapter 11

I walked towards Nathi with Glen as he was standing with Tshiamo. Once again Glen had the same irritated look on his face as he had yesterday. I'm really starting to believe that these two are competing for my affection.

Me: "Nathi, I thought we spoke about this. I didn't ask you to fetch me today."

Nathi looked a bit serious.

Nathi: "I know, but I came to fetch the three of you. Get in the car we'll talk on our way home."

Glen and I looked at each other and got in. As we got in, Mr. Legae drove out of the gate and came to park right next to Nathi, obstructing traffic on the road. Thomas' Kombi was just next to us and he was preparing to drive away, but paused as he saw Mr. Legae come out of his VW Golf 7 fuming. He walked towards my side of the car as I was seated just behind Nathi's seat at the back with Tshiamo next to me, but Nathi stopped him.

Nathi: (blocking him) "Eh, mfo (bro), ucabanaga ukuthi uyenzani (What do you think you're doing)?"

Mr. Legae: (hyperventilating) "Fok (Fuck) Nathi, man! E re ke sorte out sfebe se sa gao (Let me sort out this bitch of yours)!"

Okay, that was humiliating enough. Pabi looked like she was enjoying the whole show in the Kombi as she smiled and cheered Mr. Legae on, while Nathi just transformed after Mr. Legae said what he said. Nathi looked at him with bewildered eyes.

Nathi: "O reng (What did you just say), Kg?"

Mr. Legae looked like he just regretted what he said and changed his tune.

Mr. Legae: (soft voice) "Ah, Nathi, I didn't mean it like that, man. Ke thelletswe (It just slipped out)."

Nathi grabbed him by the shirt and babged him against his Golf 7, and everyone got out of their cars, as learners got out of the school to come and watch the big fight.

Great, Just great. It's my third day here and already there's so much drama, enough to last a whole year. Thomas came out trying to calm Nathi down, while Glen and I were seated with Tshiamo watching the whole thing.

Nathi:"Repeat what you just said. Angithi wena you're the shit?! You fuck school girls and desert them like trash! You're a corrupt motherfucker who threatens young girls and boys, now you're calling Chichi a bitch?!"

The crowd made noises, I even heard Pabi say they're fighting for me. Really, though, Pabi?

Thomas:"Eh, gents. Let's not do this here, please. Le tla e seka ko pele eaeng hierso (You'll discuss it elsewhere, not here)."

Nathi was so angry, over a mere statement. I kept asking myself what he would do if someone said something worse. Nathi was about to let Mr. Legae go, until he provoked him - again.

Mr. Legae:"Mxm, ah, Nathi. O lwa le nna bra ya go for sfebe se (You're fighting me for this bitch)?"

There goes that word again.

Mr. Legae:"Ska chuna dai ding, man (Don't do that, man). Kuku ke kuku mfo (Pussy is pussy, bro)."

Now it certainly looked like confirmation that they were indeed fighting over me. I was so embarrassed. How would I appear in front of everyone tomorrow? Worst part what if this news gets out at home? I'm doomed for sure. I guess Mr. Legae didn't see it coming, because Nathi punched him twice on the face until he fell down. That amused Pabi so much and I could see other learners taking a video of the whole scene.

Thomas:"Haowa, Nathi nice, kao fraiza bra yaka (No, I'm begging you, bro). Biggy o tlo kwata ka taba e (Biggy won't be too happy about this). O ka se khawate hom laaitie bjana (You can't beat up his brother like that). Vaya, jo (leave, bro)."

I can't get so much tsotsi taal, but I heard Nathi's name, bra and Biggy in between. So I asked Glen.

Me:"Glen, what's happening? Who's Biggy?"

Glen:"Biggy is some low life gangster who happens to be Mr. Legae's big brother."

He seemed so disinterested in what was happening and I think he just spoke without thinking. He realized that I was trying to process what I had just heard about gangsters and this Biggy guy. If they all know who Biggy is, then it must mean that Nathi is a gangster as well, right?

Glen:"Ah, man, Chichi. I didn't mean it like that. Bona (look), you can ask him yourself when you guys are alone. It seems as if you're so close these days."

Okay, that last statement came out of spite from Glen's mouth. I could just tell. Nathi got in his car without saying a word to us, while Mr. Legae was trying to dust himself off. He tried to yell at Nathi while he was trying to drive off, but Thomas told him to leave very quickly.

Mr. Legae: "O tlo nyela, san (You'll regret this, boy)!"

Thomas: "Eish, vaya lwena jo (Leave man)!"

We left the scene with Nathi speeding like crazy. This car is so light you can't even feel it when it's going too fast. Tshiamo was so impressed with Nathi's fighting skills as she kept on raving about him.

Tshiamo: "Tjo, Sesi, o bone Malome Nathi o mo itaile Meneer o la shem (Wow, sis, did you see how Uncle Nathi have Sir a good beatin)?! Nna ke re o mo laile shem (I'm saying he deserved it). I heard a few girls tell me that Mr. Legae has been preying on young students every since he arrived at that school. They said most of them were afraid to come out because his brother was a big shot gangster here..."

Tshiamo wanted to keep talking as she didn't even realize we had arrived home. Nathi cut her off very quickly before she revealed too much information to me. From what I know, she'll probably tell me later on.

Nathi: "Tshiamo, we've arrived. Please tell Koko and your mom that Chichi will be doing her Science project."

Tshiamo just kept going.

Tshiamo: "But Chichi doesn't have clothes to change mos. O boa nako mang (What time will she come back)?"

Nathi: "She already has clothes in her bag. She packed them in this morning. She'll be home before six."

Tshiamo: "Okay, empa we have to cook..."

Yoh, Tshiamo just couldn't get the message Leaving Nathi frustrated. Nathi took out a R200 note and handed it to her.

Nathi: "Here, you can buy them some food so you can take a break from cooking today. Buy yourself some airtime and snacks with the change."

It's true what they say: Money talks. Tshiamo was so excited she asked no further questions. She thanked Nathi and said goodbye. I just hope she doesn't grow up to expect money from men. And Nathi has to stop this thing of buying people nje. Nathi drove off and we passed his house.

I got confused but I decided to just keep quiet. We drove for a while until we arrived at a nice neighbourhood with some really nice houses everywhere. Wow, there's not a single rdp house in sight. I have to ask where we are and why we are even here.

Me: "Pleke ye e botsana gore, re mo kae mo (This place is really beautiful, where are we)?"

Nathi: "Glenway Estate. This is where I live."

Wow. So Nathi must be making some serious money hence he moved out of the township. Glen has been quiet the whole time, looking out his window. Nathi

punched in his access code at the gate as we drove in and we finally arrived at his house. It's very beautiful indeed, reminds me of our house back in Seshego. Papa sold it though, but the memories will forever be in our hearts. We walked in and Glen just walked over to one of the bedrooms, I guess it makes sense that he has his own bedroom here.

The house has a moderate kitchen and living room, a bathroom with a bath and shower as well as three bedrooms. It's a standard house for a bachelor like him, that's if he really is a bachelor indeed. Everything looks so clean, I think Nathi is one of those OCD guys. He's always so well put together, even his car is always clean with no papers or dirt in sight. I did see a few cigarettes in the ash tray on the living area table. I got so wrapped up in the beauty of this house and I forgot for a second that it's not even my house.

Nathi: "Welcome to my humble abode."

Me: "It's a really nice house, Nathi."

Nathi: "Do you like it, beautiful?"

Me: "I love it."

Nathi: "Good, because you'll be coming here more often."

I looked at him puzzled.

Nathi: "I'll tell you some other time. For now we have some serious things to do, go to that bedroom (pointing at one of the bedrooms), you'll find an outfit on the bed. Put it on and put your uniform in the bag on the bed and then come back."

Okay, so we've barely been 'together' for a week and he's already buying me clothes. I don't know how to feel but it just warms my heart a little bit. I could get used to this, though. It would really be nice to be away from Koko's house every now and then.

Listen to me rambling my thoughts about spending time here like I'm Nathi's woman.

The thought of being his woman is slowly worming its way into my mind, though.

I got in the bedroom and found a nice high rise skinny jean with a white vest on the bed and a pair of All Stars. I checked the labels and they were still brand new and also my size. Eh, how did Nathi know that I wear a size 36?

And the shoes are exactly my size, Size 4. Maybe he did research or asked Tshiamo or something. She just blabs a little too much for a 13 year old. Next to the outfit was a very nice pink Nike back pack, also brand new. I took off my uniform and my worn out school shoes and packed it neatly into the bag and put on the outfit. It really suited me well since I have big bums and fairly large curves, and small, rounded B cup breasts.

I walked out and found Nathi sipping a beer while Glen was doing the same. He was also dressed in casual clothes. I looked at them both shocked, Glen is only 17 and he's drinking already. They both looked at me.

Nathi: "Keng (What is it)?"

Me: "Nothing, I'm just shocked that you're drinking Glen. I mean you're a teenager and you're drinking on a school day on top of that."



Nathi laughed while Glen shook his head.

Glen: "Ai, you're so uptight, Chichilicious. One would swear o ngwana wa moruti (you're a pastor's child)."

They both laughed leaving me feeling a bit offended. I have no problem with having morals and certain beliefs that my mother bestowed upon me. Could it be that I come across as being too judgmental? Or maybe people think I'm little miss perfect?

Nathi: "No offence, Lepyatla (Gorgeous), but you do come across as a bit of a church girl. I love your innocence, I really do, but you have to get to know to be your own person, you know. For example: what is it that you like and dislike? Not what your mom taught you to like and dislike, wa bona (you see)?"

I stood there puzzled as he got me thinking. What do I like really? I'm 16 years old and I don't really have any hobby other than studying, cooking and going to church. Is my life really that boring?

Glen: "Ah, wa bona nou bafo (you see now, bro). Umfakela istress manje (You're stressing her out now). Here, phuza nyana (drink a bit)."

He tried handing me the bottle of beer and Nathi got annoyed.

Nathi: "Hai, voetsek san (piss off, boy). Chichi is still a kid and don't ever offer her alcohol-ever again!"

Glen: "Geez! Bengizidlalela kuphela man (I was just joking)."

They finished their beers leaving me deep in thought as we headed out. Nathi wanted me to jump in the front while Glen sits at the back, I refused but Nathi refused to go until I did. I sat in the front while Glen went to the back seat with a very displeased look on his face. Nathi played some house music for us, while Glen was quiet. We drove out of Mamelodi it seems and got on this long road that looked a bit like a highway. I tried to memorize the boards in case they kidnapped me. I could see Hans Strijdom Road and Silver Lakes. I remember Bree telling me about Silver Lakes. She says it's a really posh neighbourhood, much like where she lives. People are living the high life I guess. I can't wait to make my own money.

Glen: "Entlek, kwenzakalani lana (What's actually going on here)?"

Nathi lowered the music and stopped humming to it so that he could listen to Glen.

Nathi: "What are you talking about, Glen?"

Glen: "Firstly, you come unannounced at school to 'pick us up' for a whole two days. Yesterday you left me at the house while you left with Chichi. Now you're fetching us again. Yini, ni ya jola (What is it, are you dating)?"

I felt so embarrassed I kept quiet. Are we really dating vele? Nathi took it upon himself to answer Glen.

Nathi: "Well, Glen. If you must know, I took Chichi and Tshiamo out yesterday. Yes, si ya jola (We're dating), not that I have to explain myself to you."

I could feel Glen's tension all the way from here.

Glen: "Kodwa bafo, umdala kuye (But brother, you're way older than her)."

Nathi: (laughing) "So? uBaba was 15 years older than uMa. He met her when she was just 13, so I don't see anything wrong with that. And why are you so concerned? You've never had a problem with me dating anyone and last time I checked you were fucking everyone njena, even older women. So, why are you catching feelings all of a sudden?"

For some reason I could sense Glen's sadness, and it seemed like Nathi was oblivious to it. A bit insensitive, but he probably doesn't know how Glen feels. Could Glen have the hots for me or am I imagining things?

## Chapter 12

We arrived at a very nice suburb called Savannah. I could see all these big houses and no small house in sight. This reminds me of the Real Housewives vibes. We also have some really nice suburbs and estates in Limpopo as well. One day is one day, I'll make it no matter what. I wish I could take a picture of this place, but I don't want Nathi and Glen to think I'm not used to such things. It would most definitely make me look weird.

As we drove in and passed a few houses, we were met by a very huge double storey house, Tuscan style and painted in dark grey. I saw a lot of cars outside including a black Porsche Cayenne with a specialized number plate BIGGY GP and one of the cars looks exactly like Menzi's M4/ and the other looks like Mr. Legae's red Golf 7. I could even see Thomas' kombi parked outside as well. As we got closer I saw the number plate on the blue M4, MENZI KAYI 1 GP. I suddenly felt my heart pounding faster than it should be. There's no way I'm getting out of this car.

Glen got out without even being told, I assume he knows his way around these guys. What the hell is Mr. Legae doing here and why am I even here?! Nathi looked at me from the front seat.

Nathi: "Let's go, gorgeous."

Me: "Are you crazy, Nathi?! There's no way I'm coming out of this car. You never even told me what I'm doing here!"

Nathi: (sigh) "Okay, let me come sit next to you, neh."

He got out and closed his door, and made his way to the back seat. He got in and sat next to me.

Me: "What am I doing here, Nathi?"

Nathi: "Beautiful, I know everything, okay. I know what Kg has been doing to you, to Pabi, Bree, everyone."

I looked at him confused. Kg must be mr. Legae.

Me: "Explain, please."

Nathi: "We have a few boys at your school who work for us but nothing illegal. They tipped me off on what was happening. I knew I had to put a stop to this before Kg gets out of hand. I know he's been making moves on you and today he'll know me." I couldn't calm down, I felt small drips of sweat making their way down to my cheeks.

Me: "Bjale Menzi o diang fa (So what's Menzi doing here)?"

Nathi:"He's my best friend, lepyatla. We do everything together. We work for the same guy, babe."

This whole setup is confusing as fuck. On that note, let me ask him what exactly does this "work" mean.

Me:"So, when you say work for the same guy, explain to me what it is you do exactly."

Nathi seemed a bit nervous and held my hands. I could feel him shake.

Nathi:"Eish, beautiful nawe, you make me so nervous."

A whole 16 year old making a 26 year old nervous? I've seen it all.

Nathi:"The thing is, I don't want you judging me like other people do, Chichi. I did what I had to in order to survive. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth and I had to fend for myself and for Glen as well. I am who I am today because I had no choice. Most people just don't get it at all and I'm scared you won't get me either. I've never felt the way I do about you ever. I've only had a few love interests with women breaking my heart. I know you're young, Chichi and I have no intentions of hurting you. All I want is for you to love me unconditionally. I want to treat you the way you deserve to be treated. I know I didn't get the wealth I have by doing clean jobs all the time, but if you can't live with that then you'd better tell me now and I'll end it."

I stared deeply in his eyes and I could see vulnerability, pain and fear. His eyes were glistening with tears but he fought them back with all he had. I didn't even realize I came across as judgmental. My mother taught me not to involve myself with immoral and unclean people, but I love my friend Mandi even though he's gay.

I know Mama would never approve of him. Does that make me a child of a judgmental woman? She's taught me all I know about the Bible, but then the Bible also says in John 15v12 "Love one another as I have loved you." If I can't love and accept Nathi the way God loved and accepted thieves and prostitutes, then I'm just as bad as non-believers.

Me:"I hear you, Nathi. But if you want me to accept you, all of you, then you'll have to tell me what it you really do."

Nathi: (sigh) "I'm a gangster, Chichi. Well, I was a gangster. Now I'm a self made business man. Menzi and I used to do heists together and rob a few banks. Kg is the boss's brother. He's just a weakling who claims to be a gangster. Biggie took him to school and he became a Teacher for all the wrong reasons. He uses Biggie's boys to clean up his mess, He's just a loose canon."

This is a lot to take in, but it's not a deal breaker. Nathi being a gangster doesn't define who he is. Sure he's prob killed a few people but we all deserve love and a second chance at life.

Me:"I hear you. Now what will you tell Menzi when I walk in that house?"

Nathi:"Don't worry about that. He already knows how I feel about you. He isn't a big fan of it, but he said he'll try and accept it as long as I don't make you fail. Besides, He's also dated a few high school girls."

These guys are just something else. Why can't they go for someone their age though? Anyway I decided to go see what Nathi had planned for us. I was still terrified but I decided to trust him. He held my hand as we walked through the beautiful, big house. We were met by a crowd of people including Menzi, Thomas, Mr. Legae and some fat guy sitting on one of the couches. Fat is an understatement, he was really big with his belly reaching below his knees. I guess he must be Biggie. Glen was seated on one of the couches having a Heineken. He just gave me a blank stare not even smiling. Mr. Legae on the other hand clenched his jaw as he saw us walking in together, with his right eye half shut and bruised.

Biggie: "Nathi nice, so glad you could make it, ntja ya ka (my dog)."

Nathi: "Sho sho bafo (bro)."

I just looked down as I stood next to Menzi. I felt really embarrassed and out of place.

Menzi: (whispering in my ear) "Relax. I know. We'll talk later."

I looked up at him and he smiled. I gave him a faint smile back.

Biggie: "So, Nathi, I see you've brought your new diamond. She's a real gem this one." The others laughed while Nathi beamed with pride. Menzi gave a straight face while Glen was just being Glen.

Menzi: "Mxm ah man, Biggie. Ke ngwana ko nna ska bolela bjao (That's my sister, don't talk like that)."

Biggie: (laughing) "Mos le wena o jele ngwana ko nna (But you also fucked my sister). Its not so nice when the wheel turns ne?"

The others laughed again except for Glen and I.

Menzi: "Mxm."

Biggie: "Eh, Nathi, o mo je goed wa nkutlwa (you must give her the fuck of her life, you hear me)?! Phela e sale new spek di kilos di sa eme o no mmona fela (She's still fresh meat, you can see she's inexperienced just by looking at her)."

I couldn't really make out what he was saying, but I could tell he made a really derogatory remark. They laughed while Menzi, Nathi and Glen were very serious.

Nathi: "Enough, now, Biggie man. This is my woman, phela. Ga re hlompaneng assomblief (Let's respect each other, please)."

Biggie: "Alright then. Miss Chichi, lepyatla la Nathi (Nathi's gorgeous girl), welcome to the family."

They all cheered and raised their glasses while Mr. Legae and Glen just kept drinking.

Biggie: "Now, a re bueng dinto tse serious (Let's talk about the serious stuff). Wena Kg, ke masepa a eng o a chunang (What bullshit are you getting up to)?"

I could see Mr. Legae looking nervous. I could tell he really is afraid of this Biggie guy.

Mr. Legae: "Ah, Biggie man, bhari e e no lwa le nna for kuku fela (This idiot just decided to fight me over pussy). Nagana fela ke shapelwa sfebe (Just imagine I got beaten for a bitch)."

I could see Menzi and Nathi looking really angry.

Menzi: "Voetsek wena sani (Piss off boy)! Ga se difebe tse o di nyobang ko skolong o (She's not one of the bitches you're fucking at school)!"

Biggie: "Kg, bontsha majita hlompo please (Show the guys some respect, please). Remember you're not even part of the gang. I only allow you to our get togethers because you're family."

Ouch I could see Mr. Legae was hurt by that. Really hurt.

Mr. Legae: (angrily) "Mxm wena Biggie you're always on their side! You never take my side-ever! Ke mfana gao (I'm your brother)!"

Biggie: "You're my brother, not my son! Quit whining like a little bitch o bule ditsebe (and open your ears)!"

Mr. Legae sat back down in defeat and kept quiet.

Biggie: "Ai, e bile o phala le ke ngwana wa go lekana le Glen (Eveb Glen is way more behaved than you). Ke utlwa ba re you've been threatening Chichi at school and giving her lower marks than she actually deserves."

Mr. Legae kept quiet and looked down.

Biggie: "Oryt, ka bona ga o sa na mantswa (I can see you no longer have words). Let me finish my statement: I heard you've been selling your own merchandize at school, wena Kg. Since when do we sell our stuff on school property and since when do we make our own drugs?!"

Biggie was fuming and I'm surprised as to how he managed to get up that fast with that big stomach. Drugs?! They're dealing in drugs now?! Biggie held Kg by his shirt.

Biggie: "Yeh wena Kg, o ska ntlwaela masepa (don't fuck with me)! Wa lebala gore (you forget that) I took you to school with my hard earned money. Is this how you repay me for my blood, sweat and tears?! Wa nyela waitse (You're so full of shit you know). Ka mo o nyobela Thomas cherry ya gae (Now you're even fucking Thomas's girl)!"

Yoh, secrets are being dished out right here and Thomas looks pissed.

Thomas: "Mxm ah, man Kg! Ong nyobela medi jo (You're fucking my woman)?!"

Nako eo Pabi o bhana masepao (That time Pabi is pregnant, you little shit)! Ke nqosi ya gao (Is it yours)?!"

Wow, so Pabi is pregnant and sleeping with both Thomas and Mr. Legae? Mr. Legae didn't answer as Biggie threw him to the couch. Thomas was seriously upset and his eyes were really red. I had no idea he felt this way about Pabi.

Biggie: "Mo tseye Thomas (Take him). Mo moere mfana o (Moer him)."

Thomas was so angry next thing he jumped on Mr. Legae beating the living daylights out of him. Surprisingly everyone just stood and watched as Thomas was beating Mr. Legae. Seems like this was a form of punishment for his disorderly conduct. I just stood there with my eyes wide opened. Am I really ready for such a life?

Chapter 13

Glen

I sat there looking at that scumbag being beaten like the useless dog he is. Tman is a bit thin, but he can moyer a person especially when he's angry. This plan wasn't what I had in mind for Kg, but it's way better, even if my brother decided on it. I trust him to act like the knight and shining armour at this time. I really had a plan; a plan to make Chichi to fall in love with me.

We're perfect for each other and we can build our own empire. Why can't she see that? How will I compete with my brother's flashy cars and money? I'm just a High school learner with a rich and ruthless brother. All I want is for Chichi to give me a fair chance just as she gave Nathi. And besides, her mom wouldn't approve of her dating a guy like Nathi, especially because of his age and his occupation.

I looked at Chichi and the horror in her eyes told me that she isn't ready for this life. I was exposed to it, but I don't get to be in their meetings just like Kg. If she had chosen me, I'd make sure she never gets exposed to this nonsense ever again.

Biggie:"Alright, Tman. That's enough."

Thomas stopped beating Kg up and he looked like a dead man walking. I highly doubt he'd ever make it to school tomorrow. He struggled getting up and I'm so glad Thomas shut him up.

Biggie:"Well, now that that's out of the way. Kg, you're no longer part of the business. I want you out. You're putting my business at risk and that's something I can't handle. Nathi, I apologize on this dog's behalf. I had no idea he was trying to do his shit on your girl. From now on, you're on your own Kg. No one will clean up your mess anymore. The Principal has already escalated the matter to the District Officials so as of tomorrow you'll be under serious investigation."

Kg got up and looked at Biggie with a bleeding mouth, holding his stomach.

Mr. Legae:"You can't do that to me, Biggie.... I... This business helps me survive and maintain my lifestyle, man."

Biggie:"I'm not interested. You should have thought about that when you tried to become your own man out of my business. You're on your own now."

Nathi:"Now that that's out of the way, please excuse me I have to take Glen and Chichi home."

As I got up from my couch I downed the remains of my beer, while Thomas stormed out of the house. Menzi took a seat next to Biggie's couch and Kg tried to speak up.

Mr. Legae:"Now that my secrets have been spilled, it's only fair that the golden whore gets to know yours too. Wena Ms. Mashabela, you should know that Glen and..."

He didn't even get to finish his sentence. I punched him once on his face and he fell face flat on the floor, leaving him unconscious. My heart was beating a little faster than usual because I could see Nathi staring at me. I sensed immediately that he was trying to search my eyes for answers. Chichi was still in shock, but I walked out right behind them. We got into Nathi's car and he didn't say anything. He just started the ignition and we were off.

Chichi

I was seriously distraught about what happened earlier on. I didn't even say a word until we got back to Mamelodi. I had to go into Glen's house and change back into my uniform so that Mama doesn't get suspicious of my whereabouts. It won't look right if I get back home in casual clothes when I left in uniform this morning. Worst part it's clothes she didn't even buy me. Glen was still quiet and barely said a word to me. I greeted them goodbye and walked home. On my way home I was met by Sammy and his stupid crew yet again.

Sammy: "Sho sho cherry ya Nathi (Hi Nahi's chick). Ska wara ga re sa tlo go tshwenya (Don't worry we won't bother you anymore). O a go flopisang o re botse (If anyone bothers you, just let us know)."

I didn't say anything as I just kept looking ahead.

Guy2: "Wa bona ko boditse wa te pona o (I told you she's full of herself this one)."

Guy3: "Didimala lwena Nathi o tla o sata jo (Keep quiet, Nathi will kill you, bro)."

I ignored them and walked past them. As I was about to reach my gate, I was met by Micah. Oh, can my day get any worse?

Micah: "Hey, Chichi."

I just stared at him since he decided to ambush me right in front my gate. This guy is like a typical stalker. Hes tude on top of that so I don't even know what he wants from me.

Micah: "Can I have a few minutes of your time?"

Me: "Micah, I have work to do and chores to get to."

Micah: "I won't be long. I just wanted to apologize."

Ai, I couldn't even care. He acts so smart with his expensive clothes and expensive car with his fake English accent with his annoying twang.

Me: "Okay. Can I go now?"

Micah: "You know, when you arrived here you were a very nice girl, but ever since you've been spending time with that Dhlamini criminal, you've changed."

Okay, this guy is slowly rubbing me up the wrong way.

Me: "Bona fa (Look here), Micah. A ke mogwera wa gao ene ga o ntsebe (I'm not your friend and you don't know me). Where do you get the right to talk to me like that and call other people criminals?! You're not as perfect as you let out. If this is your way of trying to befriend me then please stop wasting your time. You're boring as fuck."

Micah: "1 Corinthians 6v10 says 'nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers

will inherit the kingdom of God."

Hehe, Micah and my mother would get along like a house on fire. But he doesn't know me this one. I know my Bible all too well.

Me: Since you're so perfect Micah, let me give you a little bit of insight: "John 8v10 says All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them." Matthew 7v2 says For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you."

He looked at me so stunned, I guess he didn't know I knew my story nje.

Me:"Now please excuse me."

I left him standing before my gate with his eyes wide open. I walked into the yard and greeted koko who was drinking as usual.

Mokgadi:"Hai, Modimo, wa tla wa mfa di tlogolo tsa di febe (Oh, God, you have given me whores for grandchildren)."

I hope Pabi was included in that because wow. I ignored her as she kept sipping her beer and walked into the house. I found Mama cooking for a change as Tshiamo wasn't in the house. Pabi was watching tv still in her uniform.

Me:"Dumela Mama (Hello, mama)."

Mama:"Dumela ngwanaka (Hello, my child)."

She looked at me inquisitively.

Mama:"O rekile school bag se se ntshwa (You bought a new bag)?"

I had to lie to her and knowing me I'm a horrible liar.

Me:"Aowa, Bree o nreketje sona (Bree bought it for me). She said she feels bad that I've already had my birthday so she surprised me with this one today."

Mama:"Oho, kea bona (I see)."

Pabi laughed out loud from the lounge.

Pabi:"Mmane Julia weh (Aunt Julia)! Tshego ga go botsa gore o faitse task ya Accounting (Did Tshego tell you she failed her Accounting task)?! O kereile 40 something percent, e re a go bontshe (She got 40 something percent, let her show you)."

Shame, Pabi really doesn't know which battles to choose.

Mama:"Pabi o rile o kereile 86% for task ya lena (Pabi says she got 86% for her task). She even showed me."

I put my bag on the table and took out my copy of the test and handed it to Mama with a smile.

Me:"Pabi wa go fora mama, ke kereile 97% (Pabi lied to you, mom, I got 97% for mine)."

I could see the misery on my mother's face turn into a huge smile. I even explained to her why we received a copy. I told her Mr. Legae was being investigated for giving learners fraudulent marks and that I was one of the victims. Pabi was in so much shock she came running towards us.

Mama:"Tshegofatso Mashabela! I've always known you'd be a blessing, my child. You've always been intelligent and now I see the proof! That teacher of yours will get what's coming to him!"

She hugged me as she carried on with her cooking and started singing "Ska nsheba wang nyatsa by Joyous Celebration". She's always loved that song. Pabi snatched my task from my hands and stared at me.

Pabi:"This is impossible! O kopile (You copied)!"



Me: (laughing) "Ke kopisha keng wena (Why would I copy)? Mrs. Naidoo remarked our papers because our teacher is doing illegal dealings. I have nothing to hide."

Pabi got so furious as she started breathing heavily and clicked her tongue.

Pabi: "Mmane weh (Auntie), did I tell you gore Tshego wa trenda ko Facebook (Did I tell you that Tshego is trending on Facebook)?"

I started feeling worried with my heart beating out of my chest. Could Pabi be so cruel to take a video of what transpired today between Nathi and Mr. Legae? Yes, she could be that evil, I believe so. I had to come up with a serious back up plan in case Mama fell for her stupid plan.

Mama: "Ai, Pabi le wena o rata maka man (Pabi you love lies, man). Di Facepage or book what what tsa lena tse di tlo le bolaya ka maka fela (These Facepage or book what what of yours will kill you with lies). Motho wa go tshwana le Tshego a ka trendela somang (Why would someone like Tshego trend)?"

Before Pabi could answer, I dropped a little bombshell.

Me: "Waitse Mama, go tsheba mang (Who knows, mom)? Word is a girl in my class is pregnant by one of our teachers."

Pabi's eyes grew bigger as she stared at me.

Mama: "Heh banna (Wow)! Mos gwa nyewa ko skolong sa lena (It's happening at your school). E le gore ke mang ngwanyana oo le teacher eo (Who's that learner and that teacher)?"

Me: "Ga re tshebe gore kgarebe ke mang empa morutishi yo a mo imishitjeng ke Meneer Legae (We don't know who the girl is, but Mr. Legae is definitely the one who made her pregnant)."

I was Exaggerating about Mr. Legae being the father since I don't know exactly who the daddy is, but Pabi had it coming. By the way she reacted, I could tell my statement had some truth in it.

Mama: "Iyo, go sa tlo nyewa mos (Wow, things are about to get really bad). 1

Corinthians 7v2 says "But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. And I hope wena Pabi ga wa ima because ke lorile o tatile ke nnoga gare ga metsi (I hope you're not pregnant Pabi because I dreamt you in water covered by a snake). Di toro tsa ka ga nke di nhlahla (My dreams never fail me)."

Pabi became really uneasy.

Pabi: "Mxm, e le gore why o naganela nna, Mmane (Why do you assume it's really me)?"

Me: "Ka gore Tshego ke le virgin (Because Tshego is a virgin) and we all know you're not."

Pabi couldn't even respond to the facts and gave me a death stare before storming out the house. I dodged a bullet for now, but I'm glad I did what I did. I don't even care if I had to play dirty just like Pabi to get what I wanted. Maybe I am changing like Micah said, but who cares? It's about time I got to Chapter 14

Pabi

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Mokgadi: "Pabi nko o ntele bier e one ngwanaka toe (Please bring me one beer my child)."

I got so annoyed but I didn't show it. I'm my grandmother's favourite so I try my best to stay in her good books. I don't have to do much because she'll always be on my side no matter what. I took the empty bottle and put it in a plastic bag. I extended my hand and waited for her to give me money.

Mokgadi: "Hao, o nna o tshwere tshetele mos (You always have money). Nthekele ka ya gao ke tla gofa ka Month end (Buy for me with your money and I'll pay you back at the end of the month)."

Whenever she says that it's code for "I'll never pay you back." I walked out and decided to call Kg. If Chichi knows then who the hell told her?

Mr. Legae: "Hello."

Pabi: "Kg, kgante dintshang (what's up)? O ko kae (where are you)? And since when o ndumedisa bjao (And since when do you greet me like that)?"

Mr. Legae: (Irritated) "Ey, ey, ey, Paballo. Kopa o ska nkenya stress, please (Please don't give me stress). Ke nale mathata a ka man (I have my own problems)."

Pabi: "Kg bona mo (look here), I'm pregnant."

Mr. Legae: "So?"

Kg was acting so different. He wasn't this mean when he was on top of me.

Pabi: "O ra bjang o re so (What do you mean so)? Wa nrotela ga fetsa o re so (You come inside of me and then you say so)!"

I was so angry and frustrated at the same time. I thought he'd be happy.

Mr. Legae: "Bona mo Paballo (Look here). It's not like you protested when I came inside of you. You should have been on contraceptives, sweetheart. Don't you ever pay attention in LO? Ke wena o rileng ke go je ka nama eseng nna (You told me not to use a condom not the other way round). And besides, Ga ke sure gore ke ncosi ya ka (I'm not even sure if that's my baby)."

My heart started beating so fast I felt like I was a disturbing dream.

Pabi: "O... O ra bjang (What do you mean)?"

Mr. Legae: "O nagana gore ke bhari ne (You think I'm stupid, hey)? Everyone knows you've been fucking Thomas and I at the same time. Who knows? Maybe o nyobisa le ntatao (Maybe you fuck your own father too)."

That was such a low blow. I don't even know my dad. How could kg be so mean to me? Yes, I was fucking them both, but he has no right to treat me like that.

Pabi: "Kg, you can't do this to me."

Mr.Legae:"I just did. I'll be under investigation and the last thing I need is a little brat claiming she's pregnant with my child. O tswe mo nna wena (You'd better leave me alone) otherwise o nyele (you'll regret it)."

He hung up before I could even say a word. I felt warm tears burning my soft cheeks. I can't believe Kg would do this to me. He promised me the world if I became his. I even had unprotected sex with him as well as Thomas. I only fucked Kg because he looked better and seemed like he had more money than Thomas. Now I don't have a choice but to pin the baby on Thomas.

I wiped my tears off with the back of my hands and I walked to Menzi's tavern. I bought my granny's beer from Mam'Regina and as I was about to walk out of the gate I found Glen waiting for me at the gate. I tried to pass him but he blocked my way.

Pabi:"Glen, kopa go feta toe ska mbora (May I please pass, Don't bore me)."

Glen:"Ucabanga ukuthi uyiclever wena Pabi ne (You think you're so clever Pabi, hey)?"

Pabi:"Ah, Glen. I'm so not in the mood for your one minute speech."

Glen:"I know you posted that video on Facebook. I know you're the one instigating the whole hate campaign against Chichi. I'm telling now, delete that post or else the whole school will know you're carrying Mr. Legae's bastard child."

I got a bit fearful. So everyone knows that I'm pregnant? How did this news get out?!

Pabi:"Don't mess with me, Glen. If you keep threatening me, I'll tell Chichi about the little bet you made on her pussy."

I could see I hit a nerve because he got so surprised for a minute.

Pabi:"That's right, I know your precious little secret so you have no leg to stand on."

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I got so angry. Glen could always manage to get under my skin. He was right, sadly. I had a lot more to lose than he did. How does he even know so much? Is he stalking me? Or was he sent to spy on me? I assume he's the one who fed Chichi everything.

Pabi:"Fine. I'll delete it."

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I got so irritated, I took out my phone and logged onto Facebook. I deleted the post without thinking twice.

Glen:"For once in your life you listened. Take this as a lesson, baby girl, don't go around opening your legs to idiots."

I walked out of there with a very sore heart. Chichi always gets the good ones. Why does she always get guys who care about her so much? My mother has always taught me that being good gets you nowhere and that a woman's pussy is her golden ticket to everything. Now why are all the men in my life turning their backs on me?

As I walked home, I passed Sammy and his annoying little crew.

Sammy:"Ashule mthola (There she is). Sfebe (whore) of the year!"

The others laughed while I didn't say a word.

Guy2:"Eh wena (hey you)! Tman o emetse ko wena da (Tman is waiting for you at your house)!"

Sammy:"Shiyana sesi (Run, sis)!"

The kept laughing as I increased my pace. I was getting so agitated. Why is Thomas looking for me? As I turned around the corner indeed his Kombi was parked right in front of my gate and he was smoking outside. He saw me approach and didn't even change his unreadable facial expression.

Pabi:"Ka boa e re ke fe Magogo bier ya gae (I'll be back, let me go and give my grandmother her beer)."

Thomas:"Shap."

I went in and gave Koko her beer and went back outside. I stood next to him while he still looked blank.

Pabi:"Baby, o nyaka eng mo (What are you doing here)?"

Thomas:"Since when do you question when me when I come and see you? Do I need a reason to see my baby mama?"

I freaked out internally. I hadn't told him that I'm pregnant, so my question is how did he know? Who told him?

Thomas:"Tsena (Get in)."

He opened the door and I was reluctant.

Pabi:"Re ya kae (Where are we going)?"

Thomas:"Ke go ntsha di out (I'm taking you out)."

I got in even though my gut feeling told me not to. We drove in silence as the radio played. We drove past all the fast food joints I knew and even the chesanyama. I started getting really scared as we drove towards the bushes and he switched off the ignition.

Pabi: (frightened) "Thomas, ga wa re re ya di out kgante (Didn't you say we're going out)?"

Thomas:"Ja, akere ne ke nyaka go ba le wena in private (Yes, I just wanted to be with you in private)."

I was scared shitless but I decided to keep my cool and give him a faint smile.

Thomas:"Now baby, tell me: why didn't you tell me you're pregnant?"

Pabi:"I.. I wanted to surprise you, baby."

Thomas:"Then is it mine or Kg's?"

I became so scared I felt like shitting myself right there and then.

Pabi:"O.. O ra bjang Thomas (What do you mean)?"

He switched off the radio and looked at me with scary eyes.

Thomas:"Let me rephrase, you know I hate repeating myself. Ke ncosi ya ka or ke ya Kg na (Is it my kid or is it kg's)?!"

Pabi: (hyperventilating) "Ke.. Ke wa gao, baby (It's yours)."

Thomas:"I'm going to ask you once and you'd better answer me truthfully. Did you fuck Kg?!"

He looked at me with red eyes without even blinking. I took a moment to absorb what was about to happen. I know Thomas is going to beat the shit out of me. He gets really violent if I don't do what he likes.

Pabi:"Ye.. Yes, but it was only once."

I didn't see it coming. He slapped me so hard I felt my ears ringing. I tried to scream, but he grabbed me by the neck and slapped me with his other hand. I lost count of his slaps and he stopped when he saw me bleeding from my mouth. I felt so dizzy and nauseated at the same time. There was no way I could tell him the whole truth, that my baby belonged to Kg. Especially not when he's been dying to have a child of his own. If he could beat me like this, imagine what he'd do to me if I told him the truth

Thomas: "Now that you're carrying my seed, I never want to see you fucking around ever again. You belong to me and only me Pabi. Don't ever fuck me over again or else I'll kill you before your fucking mother, wa nkutlwa (are we clear)?!"

I just nodded in fear.

Thomas:"Good, now give daddy a kiss."

I gave him a peck on the lips.

Thomas:"I love you, Paballo."

Thomas:"I love you too, Thomas."

Thomas:"Let's go feed our son."

He started the ignition and we were off. I remember my LO teacher Mrs. Madisha telling us that toxic behaviour gets worse when you accept and enable the abuser. I always thought that girls who get beaten brought it upon themselves and now I'm the full recipient of abuse. What have I gotten myself into?

know the real me.

Chapter 14

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The kept laughing as I increased my pace. I was getting so agitated. Why is Thomas looking for me? As I turned around the corner indeed his Kombi was parked right in front of my gate and he was smoking outside. He saw me approach and didn't even change his unreadable facial expression.

Pabi:"Ka boa e re ke fe Magogo bier ya gae (I'll be back, let me go and give my grandmother her beer)."

Thomas:"Shap."

I went in and gave Koko her beer and went back outside. I stood next to him while he still looked blank.

Pabi:"Baby, o nyaka eng mo (What are you doing here)?"

Thomas:"Since when do you question when me when I come and see you? Do I need a reason to see my baby mama?"

I freaked out internally. I hadn't told him that I'm pregnant, so my question is how did he know? Who told him?

Thomas:"Tsena (Get in)."

He opened the door and I was reluctant.

Pabi:"Re ya kae (Where are we going)?"

Thomas:"Ke go ntsha di out (I'm taking you out)."

I got in even though my gut feeling told me not to. We drove in silence as the radio played. We drove past all the fast food joints I knew and even the chesanyama. I started getting really scared as we drove towards the bushes and he switched off the ignition.

Pabi: (frightened) "Thomas, ga wa re re ya di out kgante (Didn't you say we're going out)?"

Thomas:"Ja, akere ne ke nyaka go ba le wena in private (Yes, I just wanted to be with you in private)."

I was scared shitless but I decided to keep my cool and give him a faint smile.

Thomas:"Now baby, tell me: why didn't you tell me you're pregnant?"

Pabi:"I.. I wanted to surprise you, baby."

Thomas:"Then is it mine or Kg's?"

I became so scared I felt like shitting myself right there and then.

Pabi:"O.. O ra bjang Thomas (What do you mean)?"

He switched off the radio and looked at me with scary eyes.

Thomas:"Let me rephrase, you know I hate repeating myself. Ke ncosi ya ka or ke ya Kg na (Is it my kid or is it kg's)?"

Pabi: (hyperventilating) "Ke.. Ke wa gao, baby (It's yours)."

Thomas:"I'm going to ask you once and you'd better answer me truthfully. Did you fuck Kg?!"



He looked at me with red eyes without even blinking. I took a moment to absorb what was about to happen. I know Thomas is going to beat the shit out of me. He gets really violent if I don't do what he likes.

Pabi:"Ye.. Yes, but it was only once."

I didn't see it coming. He slapped me so hard I felt my ears ringing. I tried to scream, but he grabbed me by the neck and slapped me with his other hand. I lost count of his slaps and he stopped when he saw me bleeding from my mouth. I felt so dizzy and nauseated at the same time. There was no way I could tell him the whole truth, that my baby belonged to Kg. Especially not when he's been dying to have a child of his own. If he could beat me like this, imagine what he'd do to me if I told him the truth

Thomas: "Now that you're carrying my seed, I never want to see you fucking around ever again. You belong to me and only me Pabi. Don't ever fuck me over again or else I'll kill you before your fucking mother, wa nkutlwa (are we clear)?!"

I just nodded in fear.

Thomas:"Good, now give daddy a kiss."

I gave him a peck on the lips.

Thomas:"I love you, Paballo."

Thomas:"I love you too, Thomas."

Thomas:"Let's go feed our son."

He started the ignition and we were off. I remember my LO teacher Mrs. Madisha telling us that toxic behaviour gets worse when you accept and enable the abuser. I always thought that girls who get beaten brought it upon themselves and now I'm the full recipient of abuse. What have I gotten myself into?

Chapter 15

Chichi

I helped mama do the dishes and scrub the pots after she finished cooking. I tried to search for the Facebook post Pabi was talking about but it wasn't there. Mandi and Bree sent me screenshots of the post before it got deleted apparently.

Pabi made some really nasty comments about me saying that I'm a jealous bitch and I'm a loose canon, Mr. Legae and Nathi were fighting over me. Most people didn't take note as they said that Pabi was jealous because her beautiful cousin was now getting all the shine. I'm just thankful the video got deleted and even better, my face was never on it.

I was done scrubbing the pots at the drain outside as I saw Pabi walking in with a Nandos paper bag and a swollen face. She really looks like someone beat her up. I wanted to ask, but I decided against it. She looked at me with an unsatisfied face and walked up to me.

Pabi:"O nagana gore o clever wena pedi girl ne (You think you're smart, hey)?"

Me:"Ga ke rereshi (I don't understand)."

Pabi:"Nywa ke nyenyeshi ya masepa! You told Thomas that I'm sleeping with Mr. Legae and now thanks to you o mpethile (He beat me up)!"

Wow, Pabi is in an abusive relationship? I thought she actually loved herself. I kept quiet and just looked at her.

Pabi: "This is not over yet, baby girl."

She clicked her tongue and walked away. I was left confused but mostly I felt sad for her, I really did.

We ate dinner as usual and did our homework. I've never even seen Pabi do her homework yet she gets good marks. I wonder what's going to happen tomorrow with all this drama. As I finished doing my homework, I checked on my phone and Nathi sent me a nice message "I miss you already, Lepyatla la ka (My beauty). See you tomorrow. Love Nathi."

I smiled to myself with caution so that Mama couldn't see me, but I guess I was too late since she's got a third eye.

Mama: "Galatians 5v19-21 says:

"Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

With that said I just knew she was reminding me that I'd better still be a virgin. I ignored her and kept quiet. As we were sitting in the dining area, Aunt Aidah stormed in with someone I don't even know.

Aidah: "Dumelang (Hello) Bagaeso (Family)!"

She walked in and saw Mama, Tshiamo and I first in the dining room.

Aidah: "Hao, Julia, o sale mo (Are you still here)?! Kgante wena le di rathane tsa gao le tsamaya neng (When are you and your brats leaving)?!"

I thought mama would keep quiet as usual but this time she decided to answer.

Mama: "The day you and your brat leave too."

Okay, at least Mama is trying to take a stand against her evil sister. Aidah got so angry and tried to grab mama.

Mama: "Try me, Aidah. I dare you. This time o tlo nyela kao botsa (This time I'll show you flames, I'm telling you)."

Aidah was so shocked she decided to click her tongue instead. The man she was with just looked at Tshiamo and I in a very uncomfortable way. Mama didn't notice, but I did. As Aidah made her way to the lounge, He kept staring at Tshiamo.

Man: "Hehe, batho ba bangwe ba dira bana ba ba pila man (Some people make beautiful children)."

Mama: "Joseph, kao bona o boetse wa gao ngwana (I see you came back for your child). Shule o go emetse ko lounge (She's waiting for you in the lounge)."

Okay so his name is Joseph. He looks a lot similar to Pabi. Their noses are very much alike and so is their complexion. Aidah is big

really big but Joseph is thin much like Pabi. Mama said Pabi is his daughter. I thought her dad ran away soon after birth.

Aidah:"Mma weh! Ke tlile le moeng (I came with a guest)."

I could hear Koko shout in amusement.

Mokgadi:"Heh banna! Aidah weh! O ka tlisa spoko se ka ntlong ya ka (How can you bring a ghost in my house)?!"

Aidah:"Ah man, Mama le wena o rata drama (you love drama). Joseph ke papa Pabi ga se spoko (Joseph is Pabi's dad, not a ghost)."

Pabi was in serious shock since she never saw her dad like ever.

Pabi: "Please excuse me."

She left to her bedroom while Koko wasn't very impressed with Aidah bringing her long lost baby daddy to the house out of nowhere.

Koko:"Bjanong Joseph o boetseng (Why are you back, Joseph)?"

Joseph:"Ah, mamazala ke boetse ncosi ya ka le mosadi wa ka (I came back for my child and wife)."

Koko: "Heh! (Clapping hands) nkile wa nyala ka mo wena (Did you marry her)?

Nkile wa ntsha magadi (Did you pay lobola)? Damage yona (What about damages)?

All you ever did was do as you please and wa se kgopele le tshwarelo (you never even asked for forgiveness)."

Joseph:"Ah, mamazala, let bygones be bygones."

That statement made Koko angry, I'd also be pissed as a parent, but serves her right.

She has let Aidah get away with far too much and now it's way too late to fix her.

Koko:"O reng (What did you just say)?!"

Aidah:"Eh, Mama. Ska tlo re bora please (Don't bore us). Joe ke monna wa ka and o tlo nna ka mo as of today (Joe is my man and he'll be staying with us as of today)."

Koko:"Heh! Aidah o tlo ntaola ga ka (You want to call the shots in my house)?!"

Aidah:"O tla nketsang (What will you do)?!"

Koko kept quiet.

Aidah:"Exactly."

She got up and went to her bedroom where Pabi was and left Joe there with Koko.

Mom always says that if you fail to teach your children manners from when they're young, they'll defeat you when their grown. Aidah never did wrong in Koko's eyes and now she's finally reaping what she's sown.

Pabi

I went to my bedroom as soon as I heard that that stranger is my father. How could my own mother do this to me? Truth is she never cared for me the way Mmane Julia cares for Tshago and Tshiamo. Even during tough times she stands by her children, while my own mother roams around with different men and just sends me money. I've never really experienced the love of a mother. Koko pretty much raised me.

I lay on my bed thinkong about my pathetic, shitty life. I'm 16, pregnant and facing expulsion. To make matters worse my mom just brought my long lost father home.

Talk about H for hectic. I heard the bedroom door open and it was my mother.

Aidah:"Pabi, o llela eng bjanong (Why are you crying)?"

Pabi: (sobbing) "Mama, I'm... Ke.. Ke (I'm) pregnant."

Aidah: (sigh) "Ah, nna ke re o tla re o tshwere ke aids or wa swa (I thought you'd say you've got aids or you're dying) or something."

I looked at her in astonishment. Did my own mother really just say that?

Aidah: (unphased) "Keng (What)? At least o bhanisitse ke monna wa tshelete (At least a rich man got you pregnant)."

I couldn't bear to tell her the truth about Kg not wanting the baby. She would seriously curse me out.

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Truth is I really love Thomas. I was just driven by greed and the thought of being Mrs. Legae. Now that the baby is actually his, I deeply regret sleeping with him.

Pabi: "Mama..."

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That statement seriously hurt my feelings. I expected her to hug me and tell me everything will be fine, but nope. She just decided to be so blase about it. She didn't even ask about my bruised face.

Aidah: "Etswa (Get out), from now on o robala le koko (You're sleeping with Granny) because your dad is back."

I got seriously annoyed.

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Aidah: "Voetsek (piss off), Paballo! Joseph ke ntatao (is your dad) and you'll respect him. If you can't then find another place to stay."

I got up and took a few of my clothes out of the bedroom and left. I looked at this Joseph fucker and he smiled at me. I clicked my tongue and made my way to Koko's bedroom.

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He looked really sad and not like the usual Glen. I miss the funny Glen who would make jokes and call me funny names.

Me: "Hi Glen."

Glen: "Sho sho, Chichilicious. Go reng Tshiamo (How's it)?"

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Chapter 16

Chichi

The ride to school was a rather odd and quiet one. Glen didn't say much, he looked rather worried than angry at me. Rea and Kamo on the other hand were very quiet. I

guess their boss bitch wasn't around and they had no one to torture. We made it to school and I greeted my friends as usual. Glen stuck with me from the morning, which is highly unusual. He usually goes to his friends in the morning.

Everyone kept staring at me and whispering to one another. It's a good sign because they don't have the guts to tell me what they want to to my face. Bree told me that after the video got deleted life pretty much went on and everyone moved onto something else. We made our way to Mr. Legae's class and I dreaded seeing him. I tried dragging my feet, but Brew and Mandisa dragged me to class.

We walked in and he was not there which I kind of expected. We made our seats as Bree kept asking me if I knew what was going on and I just told her I was clueless. Glen looked really pissed at Imza for some reason. I guess it's their guy thing. The Principal walked in with Mrs. Naidoo. Okay, this I didn't expect. We quieted down and waited for him to address us.

Principal: "Good morning 10C."

Class: "Good morning, sir."

Principal: "As of right now, your register teacher Mr. Legae is under investigation for sexual assault, statutory rape, and fraud. He has been having illegal relationships with learners and doing things which go against our code of conduct. We urge any one of you to come forward with information if you know of anything or if you've been a victim of his dealings."

The class was in so much shock while some kept murmuring amongst themselves.

Principal: "Now, since you don't have an Accounting teacher until Mr. Legae comes back, Mrs. Naidoo will help wherever she can. Since there were a few discrepancies in terms of yesterday's task, the whole class will have to redo it."

Most of them were complaining and making unpleasant sounds.

Principal: "This is not up for discussion. If you are good at Accounting and you have nothing to hide, then surely you don't mind doing it again."

I could see Rea panicking as she looked back to stare at me. Kamo didn't seem phased at all. She's a very smart girl, just mixed with the wrong crowd. The Principal left as Mrs. Naidoo gave us the task again right after his exit. A lot of them were very uneasy because Mrs. Naidoo was a very strict and observant teacher. She invigilated without even shifting her focus. Once she was done she handed in the papers again and left.

Thank goodness we won't see Mr. Legae for a while. My days at school would be a lot more peaceful.

Break time finally came and we had our food as usual. Glen and his friends weren't with us today, so Mandi decided to use this as a little gossip session.

Mandi: "So, moghel (girl). Why o sa re botsa ka Nathi nice (Why didn't you tell us about Nathi nice)?"

Me: "Because there's nothing to tell, Mandi."

Bree: "Come on, Chichi. We all saw how angry he got when Mr. Legae called you the b word."

Eish, I don't even know if telling them that I'm dating a 26 year old gangster is a good thing.

Me:"Eish, guys."

Mandi:"And don't think we haven't noticed how he's been picking you up everyday, Preacher girl."

They both laughed. Ja ne, I seriously need to tell Nathi to stop fetching me.

Me:"Okay, promise you won't tell a soul."

Bree:"Promise."

Mandi:"Cross my heart, hope to die."

Me:"Well

Nathi and I are dating."

They both widened their eyes. They expected this so I'm wondering why they're even shocked.

Mandi:"Heh! (claps hands) Chichi Mashabela, o jola le leginza (you're dating a gangster)?!"

Me:"Wa rasa le wena Mandi, man (You're making noise)."

Bree:"Do you think it's a good idea, Chichi? I mean he's literally ten years older than you."

Me:"Yes, I'm perfectly sure. I've never been more sure of anything ever before."

Mandi:"Nna I say good for you, girl. Your first should always be memorable."

Bree:"Hai, Mandi. Don't encourage her to have sex yet. She's just turned 16."

Mandi:"So? That's the perfect age to do the tlof tlof."

Bree shook her head while I remained silent for a while.

Me:"I don't think I'll be having sex anytime soon. Besides, I've never even kissed a boy before."

Mandi:"This is Pretoria baby. Seshego is no more. Besides, if Bree can date wena o palwa keng (why can't you)?"

Bree:"Mxm, ag man Mandisa."

Mandi:"Mara wa jola mos (But you're dating, aren't you)? Le tshaba nnete (You hate the truth)."

After that conversation I started thinking. Does dating automatically mean you'll have sex?

Glen

Break time came and I needed to sort Imza out. He told Mr. Legae about the bet and who knows if he told anyone else. I got hima and Bongz to get away from the girls during break so I could get to the bottom of this.

Glen:"Wena Imza why udom so mara (Why are you so stupid)?"

Imza:"Eish, Hade (Sorry), Glenzito. I got carried away and it slipped out nje."

Glen:"Who else did you tell?"

Imza:"Just him, I swear."

Me:"You'd better be telling the truth otherwise unyile (you're in deep shit)."

Imza nodded fast while I just looked at him. Something tells me he's lying but I let him off the hook-for now.

Pabi

It took me a while to sleep last night and sleeping with Gogo was so uncomfortable. I'm so used to sleeping on my own here in the house, but I guess that's over ever since my so called dad came back to play happy family.

As I decided to take a bath and walk to the bathroom, I saw Joseph staring at me with ungodly eyes.

Joseph: (smiling) "Pabi ngwanaka man (My child). Bona gore o dese bjang (Look how gorgeous you are)."

I looked at him and felt so scared at the same time.

Joseph:"Has anyone ever told you just how beautiful you are?"

I just kept quiet without saying a word. I looked at him sitting on the couch wearing nothing but boxers and drinking whiskey in my grandmother's house. His smile was just creepy and his eyes were full of lust. I looked at him and his hand traveled to his crotch. This man has a boner and is rubbing his dick while staring at me!

Joseph:"Don't you want to give me a little show? Your mother tells me how you fuck everyone around this neighbourhood. Surely you can show your daddy some love too."

I got so scared I went back to my bedroom and locked the door. There's no way I'll be able to bathe right now with him in the house.

Chichi

Finally the day had ended on a good note, we had no homework today at least. Glen has been acting a bit weird today, but I decided not to dwell too much on it. I suddenly remembered that we had a creep in the house and I was so not looking forward to it.

At least Nathi didn't pick me up today, but I just wish he had. I walked out with Mandi since Bree's dad fetched her earlier than usual. Glen was walking towards us.

Me:"Eish, Mandi. I wish I could go somewhere else this afternoon for a while."

Mandi:"Why chomi?"

Me: (Deep sigh) "Because Mamogolo Aidah just decided to pitch up with Pabi's dad who decided to pitch up after 16 whole years. Joseph is just creely, man. He gives me weird vibes that unsettle me."

Mandi became weary and surprised as Glen caught up with us.

Mandi:"Ema pele (Wait). O re (You're saying) Joseph as in Joseph Masango?!"

Me: (puzzled) "I don't know his last name."

Mandi:"Is he tall, skinny and dark?"

Me:"Yes... Why? What is it?"

Mandi became frightened for a bit and went mute for a while.

Mandi:"Eish, Joseph was arrested for rape not so long ago. He raped my neighbour's 10 year old daughter. He was arrested but got away scot free due to lack of evidence a week later. That wasn't his first rape scandal."

I felt like I couldn't breathe for a minute. So that's why Glen has been acting really weird lately. We're living with a rapist! No wonder he stared at us the way he did, especially Tshiamo! He likes them young, that sick sadist asshole! I'm even more scared of going back to the house. I felt like the world was spinning around me and nearly fell. Glen caught me in time as I tried to register what I had just heard.

## Chapter 17

The ride home was very unpleasant for me. The closer we got to home was the more scared I felt. I asked Glen to get off with me at my corner so I could talk to him. We got off and I didn't even want Tshiamo to go into the house.

Me:"Glen, you have to help me, please. I hate being a charity case, but we can't stay in this house any longer."

Glen:"I get you, Chichi and I also want to help you, but what about your mom?"

Chichi:"I'm more worried about my sister and right now, please. Menzi told us we could call and ask him for anything even a place to stay."

Glen:"Okay, let's go to my house. You guys can stay there for a while until your mom comes back."

Tshiamo:"Sesi, ga rena di aparo tsa go changer (We don't have clothes to change in)."

Chichi:"Wait here with Glen, I'll go."

I quickly went in and found Koko outside.

Me:"Ra locha koko (Hello, Granny)."

Mokgadi:"Jah, Tshego."

I didn't even wait for her to ask me for something, I rushed into the house and found Joseph gone. I breathed a sigh of relief as I packed some clothes for Tshiamo and I. I overpacked not even worrying about coming back here. This is the last time I ever want to see myself in this house. As I was about to proceed to the kitchen, Pabi got out of her room.

Pabi:"Hey, Chichi, kopa go bua le wena, please (May I talk to you, please)?"

Pabinhas never been this sincere towards me and she looked genuinely scared with tears threatening her eyes.

Chichi:"Sure. Bothata (What's up)?"

Pabi:"I... I need your help."

I raised my eyebrow and frowned. I never thought I'd see the day.

Pabi:"I... I don't feel safe in my own home anymore. My dad... Joseph he... He tried to rape me."

My eyes grew wider in shock as my heart started beating at a faster pace. Joseph has barely even been here for two minutes and already he has tried his luck, worst part with his own blood! I really feel bad for Pabi, I really do. Since she's the golden child in my grandmother's eyes, she can tell her.

Me:"Look Pabi, I suggest you tell Koko and if that doesn't help go to the police station and lay a charge. After that go stay with Thomas until this man is out of the house."

I'd love to help, but you know Koko and your mother don't like me-they never have. They'll think that I'm probably setting him up or something. Mandisa told me that Joseph was arrested for rape and he got out on no evidence."

As Pabibwas about to respond I heard Mmamogolo Aidah grab my neck from behind. I nearly fell but regained my balance.

Aidah:"Wa reng wena Sfebe kwena (What did you just say, you whore?! I leave here for two minutes and I come back to hear you gossip about my man?!"

I was so scared and seems like Pabi was also terrified of her mother. I looked at her to see if she could at least say something to get me out of this situation.

Pabi:"Mama, ga se maka (It's not lies). Ke nnete (It's the truth). Joseph tried to rape me today. I was even scared to get out of the bedroom."

Aidah got so angry she slapped me instead. She slapped me so hard, I screamed out involuntarily.

Aidah:"Ka itse sfebe se ke sona (I know this whore) who put you up to this!"

Koko stormed in with Glen and Tshiamo right after her.

Mokgadi:"Go etsagala eng mo (What's happening here)?!"

Aidah:"A se mpya e ya Julia (It's Julia's dog)! O re Joseph o zamile go raper Pabi (She says Joseph tried to rape Pabi)!"

I could see the rage in Glen's eyes as Aidah held me by my hair and dragged me up.

Koko kept quiet, but what did I expect? I knew she would enjoy seeing Aidah man handle me like that. For some odd reason her eyes screamed fear, it's like she believed it.

Glen got so angry he yanked Aidah's hand from my hair as I dropped down. I quickly got up as he slapped Aidah so hard and she fell onto one of the couches. Aidah is a big woman, but Glen has power just like Nathi.

Tshiamo picked me up while Pabi just stood there quietly.

Glen: (fuming) "Aidah, o tlo ntena waitse (You'll annoy me)! Ga ke sa batla go bona ko Tavern and o tlo phumula skoloto sao sa masepa before ke go tshwarisa (I never want to see you at the tavern, and you should come and pay up your debt before I get you arrested). You're a disgrace to women and mothers out there, as for you Koko, wa swabisa (You're an embarrassment)!"

Aidah:"Ga se tavern ya gao ke ya Nathi (It's not your tavern, it belongs to Nathi)!"

Glen:"Good

then tonight you can explain to him and your son why you beat up his girlfriend over your rapist boyfriend!"

I could see Aidah's eyes growing bigger with fear.

Aidah:"Glen! Ema pele (Wait a minute)! Ga re bolele (Let's talk)!"

Glen: "Fok off (Fuck off)!"

Glen grabbed me by my arm and pushed Koko out of the way as we stormed out. My cheek was started to feel painful and as I touched it I could feel it swelling up. Glen



walked with Tshiamo and I to his house while he was breathing fire. Tshiamo was so scared, but I held her hand as we continued to walk to Glen's house.

Glen

I was standing outside Chichi's house talking to Tshiamo until I heard a loud scream coming from inside the house. I was so alarmed that I rushed into the house without thinking twice.

As I got in I saw my Chichi on the floor being grabbed by that fat ass Aidah. I just had to act. I can't stand to see a woman being abused, let alone a woman that I love. Chichi never told me about her situation at home although she had hinted how unpleasant it was, I didn't think it was this rough.

I just had to sort Aidah out. The fact that she accused Chichi of lying about her stupid boyfriend was disgusting. I had to threaten her about Nathi even though I'm not very happy about their relationship. I love Chichi, but if it happens that she ends up choosing Nathi over me then that's something I'm willing to accept as long as we get to stay friends.

Koko just stood there without helping. I'll be damned if I let them hurt her again. As we walked to my house, I saw Nathi's M4 parked at the gate and took a deep breath. He was standing with Menzi just outside the gate and Nathi frowned as he saw Tshiamo and Chichi crying.

Glen:"Bafo (Brother)."

Nathi:"Ku vayang hier (What happened)?"

Glen:"Eish, uAidah (It's Aidah). Umshayile (She hit her)."

I could see Menzi tightening his jaw as he got in the car and drove off. Chichi, Tshiamo, Nathi and I got in the house.

Nathi:"Chichi, what happened to your face?"

Chichi: (crying) "Ke Mmamogolo Aidah (It's auny Aidah). Pabi told me that Joseph tried to rape her and she walked in and overheard the whole conversation. She hit me and claimed that I'm the one who poisoned Pabi and told her to say that."

I could see Nathi looking really pissed. It pains me to see Chichi crying like this, but seeing how Nathi looks at her is even more painful. Perhaps it's time I accept her as a friend since he's already claimed her. He held her close to his chest, leaving me heart broken. At that point I felt like I had lost my long term lover.

I felt like I was mourning the relationship Chichi and I never had. It's amazing how feelings can progress in a matter of days. I might not have Chichi as mine, but being close enough to her as a friend is the only thing that makes me feel whole right now. As some people say, half is better than nothing.

Nathi:"You guys stay here with Glen. Ngiyabuya manje (I'll be right back)."

With that said Nathi walked out.

Nathi

My name is Nkosinathi Dhlamini. I'm 26 years old and I'm a reformed gangster. I still mix with my crew, but I'm done with that life. I'm not proud of the things I've done

when I was doing heists, hijackings and robberies, but I'm proud of what I have achieved. It wasn't easy as I didn't have a choice. I was just 13 years old when my parents passed on and Glen was just 4 years old.

What could I have done to fend for us both without family to look after us? I never knew my father's family, but my mother's family rejected us. I only knew my Father's uncle Mzwandile, who tried to do what he could for us. He's the only family we have and he doesn't live very far from our home.

Menzi and I always did everything together, he's my ride or die. I've had a few relationships in the past, but none of them were very serious. The only serious relationship was with Ntombi, who broke my heart so badly and I swore I'd never love again after her. That's before Chichi. The moment I saw her I just knew that she would be my wife one day. She gave me that tingling sensation in my tummy and I just knew then I had to have her.

I'm really broken that she never told me what she was facing at home. Glen told me she moved her because her father left her mother, but that was it. Seeing her cry like that with her face swollen, I just felt so much rage inside of me. Clearly Aidah doesn't know me very well. When Menzi drove off I just knew he was going to sort out his stepmother.

Yes, Aidah isn't Menzi's biological mother, Julia is hence Menzi is very fond of Julia. Julia had Lebo when she was 15 and got married right away. When Lebo turned 9 and Julia was 24, she , so instead of dealing with her pain and misfortune, she decided to let her mother raise him. Her husband refused to raise a rape child, so she left him to her mother.

He grew up knowing Aidah is his mother, until one day Aidah revealed the painful secret. Ever since then Menzi was never the same. He was filled with anger and hatred for Aidah and his grandmother for never treating him like their own, but he longs for affection and acceptance from his biological mother, Julia. Julia has no idea Menzi knows about this painful secret and neither do the rest of the children.

Family secrets and things such as rape take its toll on families, especially the victims. Menzi wishes he wasn't born at times, he tells me everything. That's why he can't be in a serious relationship as he believes no woman can accept and love him if his own mother couldn't.

I decided to rush over to his house because I know he gets irrational when he's angry. I stormed in and found him dragging Aidah out of the house.

Aidah:"Menzi! Please! Let's talk about this!"

Menzi:"There's nothing to talk about! You let a rapist in the house and he nearly raped Pabi while you beat up my sister!"

Pabi was shocked while Koko was standing there quiet. Menzi got really angry and took out his gun while Aidah was lying in front of the gate.

Chapter 18

Nathi

People were staring as Pabi was begging. Koko was quiet and scared shitless, as Menzi had a gun pointed to Aidah's head.

Nathi:"Menzi, please. Ungaiyenzi (Don't do it). She's not worth it!"

Menzi: (fuming) "Do you know how much I suffered when all you had to do was love me?! Now you want history to repeat itself?! Do you want that useless asshole to rape Pabi so she can fall pregnant and desert the child too?!"

Aidah:"Please! Menzi, kao kopa (I'm begging you). I'm not the one who threw you away, Julia did."

Aidah was adding fuel to the fire as people were taking videos and pictures while Menzi didn't give a damn. As Menzi was contemplating what to do, Julia wormed her way through the crowd outside.

Julia:"Go etsagala eng mo (What's happening here)?!"

As Menzi looked at her I saw a tear escape his eye. This particular scene makes him think of his own mother, how she was raped and her own sister and mother even her own husband didn't give her support. How she decided to leave him and still have Chichi and Tshiamo after him. What baffles him is that she could love those two but failed to try to love him. She's always been nice to a certain point towards him, but never showed any extent of affection.

Everything was a shitty mess now. People staring at us, Aidah lying on the floor begging to be saved while Julia just seemed unphased by everything.

Julia:"Menzi, I asked you a question. What's happening here?!"

Nathi:"Mama, Joseph tried to rape Pabi and Aidah lay her hands on Chichi. Menzi is angry at everything. He knows, Ma. He knows what you did."

I could see Mam'Julia was a bit startled by my statement. She kept quiet for a while and regained her composure.

Julia:"Menzi, put that gun down. People are staring at us. Do you want to end up in prison like your father?! It's bad enough he gave me you and now you want to turn into a younger version of him!"

Wow. They say church women have evil hearts hidden underneath their church clothing. I never thought Mam'Julia or Ivy as some know her, would ever spit such horrible words out of her mouth. Menzi wiped his tear off his face, and put his gun back into his pocket.

Menzi:"Had you and your evil mother never been so evil towards my so called mother, she would have loved me. If you didn't abuse her while she carried me and told her I was a curse, then perhaps she would have an ounce of love for me. Koko, you see what you have done? You had favourites and now look what happened. The black sheep got raped and I became the product! The golden girl turned into a whore who fucks around with a rapist! Perhaps if I kill her then all will be well. Maybe then you'd forgive them for hating you when you needed them most and love me."

He cocked his gun as Pabi and Koko screamed and while Aidah begged for her life. Mam'Julia remained calm as fuck. Chichi and Tshiamo came running and were stunned upon what they had witnessed.

Chichi:"Abuti (Brother) Menzi, please don't!"

Nathi:"Let's get inside so we can talk, please."

Menzi lowered his gun slowly in defeat as Aidah sat there crying.

Menzi:"Grand shap, mara wena o vaye mo (but you need to leave this house)! I never want to see you set foot here ever again!"

Koko, Julia, Chich and Tshego walked into the house, while Menzi and I followed them. Pabi stayed behind to console her mother.

Nathi:"Give me the gun, bafo (Brother)."

Menzi: (fuming) No! I want to have it as back up. Kuzofiwa namhlanje (Someone ia going to die today)."

He said that in such a calm tone I feared the worst. We walked into the house and proceeded to the dining room. Koko was so scared she became sober same time and downed a glass of water immediately. We sat on the table with Menzi sitting right across of Mam'Julia, facing her.

Julia:"Can someone explain to me what happened today?"

Chichi:"Ma, Mandisa told me about Joseph. He told me that Joseph is a rapist and he was arrested for raping a ten year old. I got frightened because I didn't feel comfortable around him. He gave Tshiamo and I funny stares and glares this morning before we went to school.

When I came home to get a few of my clothes, Pabi told me he tried to rape her, ma! Imagine her own father tried raping her. If he could do that then he would most definitely do that to us. When I suggested that we tell Koko then Mamogolo walked in and overheard us. She hit me and claimed that I was planting ideas into Pabi's head and sge hit me, ma. She hit me!"

Chichi shed few tears and her voice began to be shaky. I felt really bad for her and I just couldn't understand why Mam'Julia was so calm about everything.

Julia:"Wena Chichi, did you see Joseph try to rape Pabi?"

Eh, so now the plot thickens. Is this woman for real?

Chichi:"Mama?"

Julia:"Ke re o mo bone na (I said did you see him)?"

Everyone became silent across the table while Menzi clenched his fists out of anger. Tshiamo was sobbing while Chichi was stunned to the core. I was just too shocked to even respond.

Julia:"You know what the Bible says about lies akere (right)? And you listened to your gay friend tell you about Joseph. You remember what the book of Genesis says about Homosexuals, right? Bjanong why le shupa batho ka menwana (So why are you pounting fingers) without proof?"

Chichi was so broken she just let the tears fall. I always thought this woman was full of grace. She's one of the well respected church women here. Even before she left she was always a good woman in people's eyes. I'm just shocked at what I'm witnessing now. This is really fucked up.

Julia: "Do you see why I never wanted you to mix yourself with that boy? (Pointing at me). Bona bjanong (Look now) you're even trying to bond with Menzi when I specifically told you to stay out of his way. That boy has poisoned you. Do you see what gangsters do to little girls

Tshegofatso?! You've fallen for a thief and now you've become a liar!"

Koko decided to finally speak up.

Mokgadi: "Julia ema nyana toe (Wait a minute)!"

Julia: "Wena ema pele (You wait a minute)! Akere you hated me all my life! You and Aidah made my life a living hell! You never loved me, never cared for me and when I got raped while you sent me to go buy beer! Ke go boditse (I told you) what happened and who raped me and what did you say?

Weren't you the one who said I deserved it?! Instead of giving me support you said I deserved it! I fell pregnant and tried to give Menzi a good life by telling Patrick he's the father and what did you and Aidah do? You told him about me getting raped! So if you want to blame someone, blame yourself because you're the reason Menzi grew up in such pain and misery!"

Wow talk about bitterness. Julia is sick as hell. How can she speak about me like that when she doesn't even know me. Worst part how can she show no remorse for just throwing Menzi away like that?

Menzi: "Ma.. Mam'Julia, why? Why didn't you just abort me or give me to a loving family? Why couldn't you at least try to love me?!"

By this time Menzi was crying, not having any care in the world what anybody thinks.

Julia: (deep sigh) "Menzi, your father was a gangster. One of the most notorious gangsters in Mamelodi at the time. I had come to visit home with Lebo and Mma sent me to buy her beer at 23:00 in the evening. I had to walk 20 minutes to get beer for her. This man had pursued me for years even before I got married. He finally got the chance to have his way with me and he raped me. I admit, I was never a born again at that time, but I was getting there. I was starting to mend my relationship with God and I had forgiven my mother and sister for treating me like trash all my life.

After the rape Mma scolded me for coming home empty handed instead of asking me what happened. I had to take a bath and sleep with the pain of being violated by your father that night, while my mother was moaning about her alcohol. When I told her I was pregnant she told me it's my duty to raise you. I couldn't do it. I hated you from the moment you were conceived. I could never love a rape child. I tried to abort you, mfana wami (My boy).

Believe me I did, but I failed. When Patrick found out about you he gave me an ultimatum; either I left you with someone else or I'd lose him. I couldn't lose my

marriage. I loved Patrick with everything I had. He was the man the good Lord gave me and I had to keep him. When you were born I tried to search for my motherly instincts, but seeing that you were an exact replica of him, I just couldn't. I begged Mma to look after you and she had no problem with it. I tried to at least give you a good life by not separating you with your own flesh and blood. Had I known they were going to abuse you the way they did, I would've rather given you up for adoption the proper way.

I'm really sorry for what you've been through, but I just can't love you. You have your father's blood, his genes and even worse, you've turned out exactly the same as him: a thief and a murderer. I can't accept anything from you nor can I love you the way you want me to. I can only love you from a distance. Now shoot me if you wish, but I, Julia Ivy Mashabela refuse to apologize for the choices I made."

The table went silent for a while, even Koko was sobbing. I don't buy those crocodile tears though, had she been a better mother none of this would have happened.

Chichi:"Mama, how can you say such things to Abuti Menzi? Menzi o itoketje e bile be a re thusha (Menzi has been nothing but good to us). Wa fihla sephiri se se kana mo wena Mama (How could you hide such a secret from us)?"

Julia:"Don't you dare judge me wena! I've said what I said, now you can leave in peace, Menzi."

Chichi:"If you're doing that then Tshiamo and I are leaving with Menzi. I'd rather stay with him than stay with a cold-hearted woman like you."

Julia: (calmly) "Go lokile (It's fine). Wena o kana wa tsamaya empa Tshiamo wa sala (You can go, but Tshiamo stays)."

Chichi:"Tshiamo o sepela le nna mma (Tshiamo is leaving with me)!"

Julia:"Akere o mosadi wena (You're a woman now, aren't you)? You believe thieves and murderers over the woman who raised you. I carried you in my womb for nine months and today you do this?!"

Chichi:"You also carried Menzi in your womb and look how he turned out."

Julia:"Go lokike, Tshego (It's fine). If you walk out that door, don't you ever come back. Tshiamo is my child, iketsetse wa gao o kgone go mo laola (Make your own so you can dictate to him or her)."

Chichi: (tearful) "Mama, you're choosing people who've never shown you love all your life over your own kids?"

Julia:"I'd rather be here and suffer than stay with a constant reminder of that unfateful night. I've forgiven Mma and Aidah, you should do the same."

I stood up as I couldn't take anymore of this bullshit.

Nathi:"Chichi, a re vaye (let's go)."

Chichi: (standing up) "Tshiamo, a re sepele (let's go)."

Tshiamo: (shaking head) "Ke shala le mama (I'm staying with mom)."

I could see how broken Chichi was as she slowly made her way towards Menzi.

Chichi: (patting Menzi's shoulder) "Abuti Menzi ga re sepele (let's go)."

Menzi was breathing fire without saying a word. He slowly got up and in an instant did the unthinkable. He pulled out his gun and shot Julia without thinking twice.

## Chapter 19

### Chichi

They say the age of 16 is when most people find out who they are. If I could turn back the hands of time, believe me I would. It's amazing how quickly a simple moment can cloud your judgment. In an instant, things can change and a decision which you made in your past can affect your whole present and future all at the same time. I ask myself had Joseph not showed up, would Mama have shown us her true colours?

Proverbs 20 v7 says: "The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them." Now when I think of everything that just transpired a few minutes ago, this scripture fits perfectly. Menzi pulled that trigger, releasing years of hatred, anger, sadness, guilt. The list is endless. Luckily mama didn't die. He shot her in the shoulder and the doctor said it was just a fleshwound, so in short, she'll live.

The police were alerted by neighbours and probably by Aidah screaming her lungs out in the yard. A few minutes after Menzi shot Mama he left to who knows where. I understand what he's going through, though. I really do. I never thought my own mother could spit so much venom, worst part towards the children she bore. I can only hope that she finds it in her heart to forgive herself and mend ways with Menzi before it's too late.

Everything makes perfect sense now; how Menzi was always nice to us and disliked Koko and Mamogolo. I now get why he is the way he is. It can't be easy living with the fact that you're a product of rape. I never saw the resemblance between us because Menzi is the complete opposite of Mama, He's darker and very handsome. I would have probably died after hearing my own mother spit such hatred towards me.

The police called the ambulance and Nathi sorted them out. How? I don't know. I guess he's got connections. Mama was wailing out of pain after she was shot and I followed them to the ambulance. When I tried to go into the ambulance, she blatantly told me to get away from her as I'm dead to her now.

Even with that much pain going through her body she still felt the need to remind me that she wants nothing to do with me. Just like that, my family was yet again torn into pieces. I no longer have a family, it's just me now. Maybe even Menzi, but he's also just a hectic mess.

I feel so bad and guilty about everything, that I just don't want to be a problem to Menzi. Nathi and Glen said I could stay here with Glen until they figure out a plan for me. I don't even know what to do or where to go. I hate being a burden, really. Nathi has been by my side ever since we came back from Hospital and Tshiamo refused to leave with me.

I can only hope and pray that Joseph doesn't go back to the house. I'm so distraught and worn out

emotionally and physically. I don't even think I'll make it to school tomorrow. My uniform is at the house and I doubt Mama would let me go in just to take it.

I was deep in thoughts with my head on Nathi's chest. I felt a huge sense of comfort and a million butterflies at the same time. I'm enjoying this feeling since I've never been this close to a boy before, let alone a man like Nathi. Feeling our hearts beat simultaneously makes me feel like one of those love struck girls in rom coms.

Nathi: "Ucabangani (What are you thinking of), Gorgeous?"

Me: "Nothing much, just thinking about my life. Everything is a mess. Ke rema le ke hlogo, Nathi, ga ke tshepe ke tlo tshoga gosasa (My head is killing me, I doubt I'll make it to school tomorrow)."

Nathi: "Don't worry about it. One day won't kill your academics, just don't make bunking school a habit."

I giggled and smiled.

Me: "I don't even have uniform. Mama o nhlapetje matsogo (Mama washed her hands off me)."

Nathi: "To be honest, Gorgeous, your mom had it coming. I can't believe she hid all that evil underneath her. No wonder your sister Lebo hates her."

On that note I need to find out why Lebo doesn't even bother with us at all. There's just so much going on and seems like Tshiamo and I are always the last ones to find out. I took a bath while Nathi kissed me goodbye on the forehead as he went back to his house, leaving me with Glen. I wore one of Glen's tshirts and shorts as I didn't have anything to wear.

I found Glen sitting outside on the porch having a beer and a smoke. Ai, Glen is too much for his age man. I decided to sit next to him and have a chat. What I like about Glen is that he comes across as rude but he's a very protective and sensitive guy once you get to know him. He guards his heart and those who are close to him. I've only known him for a few days, but I can tell he and I will be really good friends.

Pabi

Everything is a disaster now. I'm 16, pregnant, on the verge of expulsion and my mother has been kicked out. I nearly got raped by my own father. Talk about a lot of shit happening in a very short space of time. Everyone is tense in the house ever since Mmane Julia came back. I can't believe Menzi was never my brother. I know I never respected him, but at least he was going to be my back up in case things didn't work out between Thomas and I. I can't be here right now so I decided to call Thomas.

Thomas: "Pabi."

Pabi: "Hi, baby. Kopa o tlo nlata (Can you please come fetch me)?"

Thomas: "Bathong (Goodness) Pabi. Ke ten ya boshigo (It's ten o'clock at night)."

Pabi: "You've never complained before, mos Thomas?"

Just as I was waiting for a response I heard a female voice in the background.

"Baby bowa mpetong, hao (Baby come back to bed)."



I suddenly felt like I had been stabbed by a huge knife. I mean I sacrificed a lot and now Thomas does this to me?!

Thomas:"Eish, Pabi, re tla ringa kaosane ne (We'll talk tomorrow). Love you."

And just like that he hung up leaving me sobbing on the bed. Could life get any worse? I curse the day Chichi and her mother came back to this house.

Chapter 20

Chichi

It's Friday morning and for once since schools opened I woke up at 10am. I'm feeling so exhausted with a major migraine. At least I know now that I can move forward deciding on the time of person I want to be. Glen calls it "Chichi' Emancipation". I'm not okay with not being around Tshiamo, but I'll just have to suck it up for now.

Mama even blocked me on WhatsApp. I tried calling her and she blocked my number. I tried calling Menzi but he didn't answer which is well understood. Come to think of it he was never even arrested and the police never questioned him. Talk about connections.

Glen isn't around as he's at school so I'm left alone here. Nathi said he'll come fetch me in half an hour so I have to get moving. I don't have anything to wear, so I'll have to wear Glen's shorts and oversized T shirt again. I bathed and did my business and let my hair down today. I thought it might be good for it to breathe a bit.

Mam'Regina already started selling so it's a bit crowded outside. It's amazing how many people don't work yet spend their money on alcohol on a daily basis. Nathi texted me letting me know he's outside. I went out and locked the doors. He looked so nice in his jeans and Gucci shirt. This man loves expensive clothes. I greeted him as he pecked me on the lips gently and got into his M4.

I didn't even care if people saw me or not. Everyone gossips about everyone around here so who cares what people say? As we drove away I saw Micah's car waiting around my corner. He probably saw me but at this point I just don't care. We drove past our house and I felt a little bit of pain creep up in my heart. That home was prwtry toxic, but I miss the good person my mother was.

Glen

I decided to go to school today so that I could get the work Chichi and I need to do during the weekend. I wouldn't want the both of us to fall behind with school work. I saw Tshiamo in the transport this morning, but she didn't say much. I guess her mom

told her not to talk to non believers. I met up with Bree and Mandi as usual in the morning. They asked if Chichi was really okay, so I had to come up with an excuse saying she's sick or something.

I saw Pabi at school, I mean I assumed she would drop out or something after being under investigation. We had a good time during classes today since Mr. Legae hasn't been back and also since it's Friday. The cherry on top was Pabi and her crew were dead quiet today. Nothing could make us happier.

We decided to have lunch at our usual spot with Bongz, as Imza decided to keep his distance after I told him shit about running his mouth to Mr. Legae about the bet. That boy needs to learn not to be such a bitch.

Mandi:"So, Glenzito, since ong blofa bjana (you no longer want me), does this mean wena le Chichi le item nou (are an item now)?"

Glen:"Hai man, Mandisa. Chichi and I are just friends. She's dating my brother."

Eish, that slipped out. I don't know why my tongue gets so loose when it comes to Chichi. Mandi and Bree were shocked.

Bree:"So, ke nnete vele (it's really true)."

Glen:"Eish, I slipped, guys. Please don't tell anyone. The last thing I need is news being spread about Chichi dating older guys here at school."

Bongz:"But ke nnete mos  
jaive e kae (It's true, isn't it, where's the problem)?"

Glen:"Ag, man Bongz, ema nyana toe (wait a minute, man)."

Mandi:"Bophelo ke ntwala ka nnete (Life is tough). Chichi arrives here two minutes nyana and she already bags herself a gangster. Rena kgale re le mo mara maginza dololo (I've been here forever but never bagged myself a gangster)."

As we continued talking our phones beeped simultaneously. I thought it was odd but we all decided to check. Shit! Someone posted the list we made the day we made the bet. All of our names and the amounts were written with the title "Chichi's bet- whoever gets her pussy first wins". I'm fucked. Only one person had that list-Imza!

Pabi

I was so happy as I saw Glen from a distance. I finally took that list out of Imza's bag as Rea gave him a mini blow job during break in the boys' toilets. It was so easy for me to do it since he's such an idiot. I couldn't wait for the next phase of my plan: Eliminate Chichi and ruin Glen's friendship with Imza.

Once I got the list I didn't waste time. I created a fake account since I'm one of the admins of the Facebook page, I didn't want it to seem too obvious. I posted it using a fake account and the list was trending within a minute. I'm so glad all this is happening, at least I won't be the only one losing everything. I want Chichi to lose herself since everyone thinks of her as the golden girl of Mams.

Chichi

I was having such a good time with my Nathi that I even forgot it's Friday. He took me to almost every shop I know although some I've never even been to. He took me to Sandton Mall, and wow. This mall has got the best and most expensive shops I've ever seen. I went to a few boutiques and got a few designer clothes and handbags. He even bought me a new phone even though I protested.

I can't believe I'm just 16 and I already own a Louis Vuitton bag and a Versace outfit. I always heard Pontsho tell me that if a man loves you he wouldn't mind spending on you. I guess this is how a man shows his love to a girl he loves. I'm just glad he's not rushing me into anything like sex. I know it's a bit early, but I think I'm falling in love with him.

As we proceeded to eat at one of the fancy restaurants, my phone beeped. I checked it and my heart nearly fell out of my chest. I nearly dropped my new phone and Nathi was surprised.

Nathi: "Baby, keng (What is it)?"

I tried to speak but words failed me. I felt myself being overwhelmed with heat and sudden rush of pain from the pit of my stomach. I felt like dying at that point. It's only been a week at this school and now I'm already popular. How could Glen, Imza and Bongz do this to me?! They made a bet, a whole fucking bet on me?! I couldn't even speak as I showed Nathi the phone.

Nathi looked at it and tightened his jaw as his eyes became smaller and darker.

Nathi: "Glen o ntlwaela masepa waitse (Glen is full of shit, man)!"

I felt the tears building up. So all this friendship from Glen was fake? He did this to get into my pants? I've never been so hurt and so blindsighted in my whole life. I suddenly lost my appetite as Nathi tried consoling me.

Nathi:"Bona (look) baby, I'll sort it out. We can get takeaways. A re vaye (Let's leave)."

I slowly got up from my chair and Nathi gave me a reassuring hug. We left with tears rolling down my cheeks like waterfalls.

Chapter 21

Chichi

I was so distraught and overcome with too many emotions. Nathi was so pissed, he decided to take me to his place until further notice. I feel a bit bad for taking him away from his work, but I'm an emotional wreck. I trusted Glen and he decided to do this to me.

Nathi was outside having a smoke as I was in bed trying to take a nap. I've been tossing and turning for hours as I failed to sleep. My phone has been beeping non stop with messages and comments on the Facebook post about me. Some people calling me a Mrs. Know it all preacher's kid who thinks she can take all the high school boys. Some said the person who did this was jealous and that these boys deserved to be punished.

Why do men always feel entitled to a woman's vagina? How does a group of boys decide to make a list to compete for a girl's body parts? That's just sick. Glen has been trying to get hold of me for hours, sending me messages telling me he can explain. I ended up switching my phone off. I guess Mama has all the more reason to disown me now. I'm labeled as trash even before I lost my virginity. People are already crucifying me for something I'm not.

I walked to the lounge and found Nathi gone, so I followed the cigarette scent and found him outside in the yard. I decided to join him.

Nathi:"Mabebeza (Baby), feeling better?"

Me: (deep sigh) "A little bit."

Nathi:"Let me get you a drink."

Me:"No juice or coldrink today, I want to try some alcohol."

Nathi:"No ways, Gorgeous. You're underage."

Me:"Please, Nathi. It's just experimentation. You did say I needed to get to know myself."

Nathi:"Yes, kodwa (but) I didn't mean it that way. You shouldn't be drinking, Chichi. Once you taste alcohol and end up liking it, it's hard turning back."

Chichi:"That's a risk I'm willing to take, Nathi."

I could see he was contemplating it for a while and went inside the house. I just need an escape. Everyone around me makes me feel like I'm suffocating. I'm paying the price for the way I look I guess. I'm not mean to anyone yet everyone has pretty much told me shit.

How I miss my best friend Pontsho. She used to drink because her parents were always away. She said that alcohol tastes bitter the first time, depending on what you try first, but all in all you get used to the taste as time goes on.

Nathi came back with a bottle of red wine in an ice bucket full of ice while holding a wine glass in his other hand. I've seen people drink on tv and some even around us at parties back home. Even Koko seems to enjoy alcohol, so surely it can't be that bad. Nathi took the bottle out and it was written Robertson's Natural Sweet Red Wine. I got excited for a moment, I mean they always say a girl should enjoy her first of everything. Everyone's first is memorable. Nathi put a few ice cubes in the glass and poured it half into the glass and handed it to me.

Natho:"Ska tlwaela se, ke once off (Don't get used to this, it's a once off)."

I smiled as he handed me the glass. I took my first sip and it tasted a bit bitter. My taste buds have never had something like this. I took another sip and it was still bitter, but a bit sweeter on the other hand.

Nathi: (laughing) "Keo boditse bjala a se ba bana (I told you alcohol isn't for kids)."

I wanted to prove him wrong. All I wanted was to enjoy my wine in peace and forget about all my problems for a while. I'm basically an orphan while my parents are living. I have no family anymore-Nathi is my newfound family. I don't even know how long this thing will last between us before he also gets tired of my presence. I never thought life would be filled with such dysfunction as I grew up.

When I celebrated my 16th year of life I never thought I'd be where I am few weeks later. I took a few more sips of the cold beverage and it didn't taste bitter anymore. I was slowly warming up to the taste and seemingly enjoying it. If this is what emancipation feels like, then I'd rather be here than anywhere else. Nathi opened another one of his beers and took another smoke as we chatted away.

Glen

I tried to call Chichi time and time again but all I got was unanswered texts and messages until it lead to voicemail. Nathi sent me a message saying he'd deal with me later and I knew I was in serious shit.

I got so angry thinking of Imza's betrayal so I wasted no time going after him during first break. I found him standing with some random bitches and I wasted no time grabbing him by the shirt.

Imza:"Ah, Glen, mfo (bro)

what's your problem?!"

A whole crowd started surrounding us but I didn't give a shit.

Glen:"Why the fuck did you post that, Imza?!"

Imza: "I swear, I didn't do it. Someone must have taken that list from my bage, bra. I didn't do it."

This motherfucker walked around with the list in his bag? How dumb can he get?! I got so consumed in my anger, I just didn't believe him. I thought how I just lost Chichi to Nathi and now I've lost her as a friend, all in one fucking week! I wasted no time and punched Imza.

I started getting consumed by my anger as I kept punching and throwing kicks at h, even though he wasn't fighting back. The more the crowd kept cheering and screaming was the more I kept hitting him. All I saw was black until I felt someone pull me away from him.

Imza and I were taken to the Principal's office and he still didn't say anything. Instead he looked at me with sorrow and sadness in his eyes. At that Moment I felt like perhaps he was telling the truth. Imza and I gave been friends since Primary School. What if someone really did frame him?

Principal: "Tell me Glen Dhlamini, what consumed you to beat up your best friend, especially on school premises?!"

The principal was breathing fire, but I just didn't care.

Glen: "He had it coming."

Principal: "You're not even remorseful of your act, Mr. Dhlamini!"

Glen: "Then suspend me."

The principal doesn't like anyone challenging him, no teacher does. The more you act like you just don't care is the more you get him pissed.

Principal: "You're suspended with immediate effect. I expect to see your guardian on Monday morning!"

He filled in a suspension form himself instead of getting one of the teachers and handed it to me. I grabbed it from his hands and left his office without saying a word. I had to leave the school premises immediately as I was considered a "threat" to Glen and everyone else on that list.

Apparently I am the mastermind behind it. It's true yes, but I've had a change of heart and now I'll be seen as a dickhead for the rest of the year. I need to find out who posted that shit by the end of the day.

I got home after taking a cab. I thought of heading to Nathi's place, but he's probably with Chichi and it might just make things worse. I got home at 3pm and most students must be home by now. I got home and changed into casual clothes. I got a message from Imza on WhatsApp "Glen, mfanaka (my man), I'm sorry. I'm sorry I didn't get rid of that list but I didn't do it, I swear.

You know me better than most people and you know I never lie." That sounded so sincere and he was right, I know him better than anyone does. My gut feeling was telling me that there's more to this than meets the eye, so I decided to use the little bit of IT skills I taught myself and started digging. I finally traced the number of the poster after a whole two hours.

I sacrificed a good smoke and beer not to mention food to find this fucker. I dialed the number using a private number to see if the person would answer and luckily they did "Pabi hello?". This stupid bitch. I should have known better than to blame my best friend. She's so stupid she even answers a private number using her real name. I felt so guilty but I was more angry than anything else as I thought of how this bitch just never quits.

Glen: "Ja wena (yes you), sfebe ndini (bitch). I guess you aren't that clever after all. You fucked with the wrong guy, Pabi and now I'll make your life a living hell. You'll leave school before you even begin your Tenth grade, masimbakho (you shit)."

I could smell her fear on the other line and I hung up. She knows my voice very well so that wouldn't be a problem. She wants to play dirty, so can I.

Chapter 22

Glen

I went outside for a smoke and a beer while I thought about all of this. Nothing I do as of now will make Chichi forgive me, but I have to try. I lit a joint so I could be able to think. I let go of all my side bitches and even stopped fucking Mandisa just for Chichi. How pathetic am I? Leaving the life I know for a girl who was never mine?

After smoking that joint I logged onto Facebook. I also created a fake account using an old sim card. I logged onto the school page and started typing:

Paballo Mogashoa in Grade 10C is fucking Mr. Legae. She's even pregnant with his child as we speak. She got to Grade 10 by sleeping her way to the next grade, with Mr. Legae giving her fake marks in exchange for her rotten pussy. Mr. Legae is even fucking one of her best friends as well.

Don't trust this whore, she'll give you aids just like her slut of a mother. She's such a whore she even tried to fuck her own father, notorious rapist Joseph wa ko (from) Mamelodi West. Paballo is so dumb, she can't even do a basic Accounting function. Paballo Mabusela ke legosha la laas number (is a first grade prostitute)."

I even decided to add a little list of all the guys she's slept with at school with the locations where she got fucked by them. She thought she could humiliate Chichi and I in public like that without having it backfire? Unyile this time. It's war, and I'll win it while sleeping.

Chichi

I was on my third glass already while Nathi ordered us some food. I'm not even tasting the bitterness anymore. Nathi put on some music and I was feeling the music. By now I had completely shut everything out of my system. Now I see why everyone who drinks just loves alcohol so much. It gives you a sense of peace, an escape. I ate and Nathi told me to slow down on the alcohol. I was halfway the bottle already.

Nathi: "Baby, that's enough for you now. Bkala ga se ba bana akere (Alcohol isn't for kids, right)?"

I felt a little bit angered by that statement.

Me: "Mxm, Nathi, ga ke ngwana man (I'm not a child). Ke nale sixteen)."

Nathi: "All the more reason why you should stop. You see why I didn't want you to drink in the first place?"

I was really irritated as I attempted to get up, but failed to walk and I nearly fell.

Nathi quickly came to my rescue.

Nathi: (sigh) "O tagilwe bjanong (You're drunk now) Chichi."

So this is what being drunk feels like?

Me: "Ke hloka go rota (I need to pee)."

Nathi held me by my waist as we made our way into the house. My legs have never felt so wobbly before in my life. I felt so light like I was walking on air. He helped me sit on the toilet seat and walked out. I sat on the toilet seat and started thinking about everything that has been happening ever since my father ditched us.

Is life really supposed to be this rough, though? I felt myself feeling a bit emotional, like I was seriously overcome with emotion. Koko sometimes cries when she's had about four or more bottles to drink. I always asked myself why she cried and spoke about the past so much whenever she was drunk.

Mandisa says alcohol makes drunk people reveal their true selves. I wonder if this is the real me? The more I kept thinking, the more the tears flowed. It felt really painful reliving all those emotions, more painful when I was sober, but it also felt right, felt so good to be crying right now. I battled getting up to even put my pants on. I struggled for about ten minutes until Nathi came to get me.

Nathi: (knocking) "Baby, o shap (are you okay)?"

Me: "Ee, ke shap (I'm okay), but ke palelwa ke go emelela bjale (I can't get up)."

Nathi opened the door and laughed at me.

Nathi: (laughing) "Gorgeous, I love it when you speak your language. Bjanong keng o kare ne o lla (Why does it look like you've been crying)?"

Me: "Ah, it's fine. I just got emotional for a little bit in there."

Nathi: "Bjala ga se ba bana (Alcohol isn't meant for kids), Chichi. Come, let's go sit down while I get you some water."

I didn't even notice that he had changed into his boxers only. He packed everything away from outside and had already put on the tv. He went to get me a glass of water, and even though I felt like having one more glass, he insisted I have water to sober up. I don't feel like being sober again, but Nathi's instructions.

He handed me the glass and I drank all of it. He sat next to me with his arm around me while he opened a new bottle of beer. I don't get it. I only had three glasses of wine yet he's on his eighth bottle and still seems fine. Maybe alcohol really isn't meant for kids. He put on some Netflix and decided to put on a nice romantic movie for us, *The Notebook*. He took the fleece overthrow that is permanently on one of the couches in case it gets chilly and put it on top of us.

There was popcorn already on the table with a few snacks. Nathi can be thoughtful when he really wants to. This really feels romantic, hey. I never imagined I'd be in my boyfriend's house at this age, curled up on the couch, drunk and watching a romantic



movie. It feels so nice. The movie started and it was so romantic from the beginning. The sex scene came between Noah and Allie when they had sex for the first time, making me feel weird down there. It felt like some fluid was coming out.

Pontsho, my friend from Seshego, always told me about aex even though she herself was still a virgin the last time I checked. She used to read up a lot on it and would tell me that once a girl feels horny, she'll feel wet down there and at times colourless or white discharge will come out of your vagina. I know that when a boy gets erect his penis stands and becomes a bit hard, we learnt some of that in Life Orientation class and saw some few pictures on google. As I lay my head on Nathi's rock hard chest, I could feel him getting warmer.

I touched his chest and traveled my hand slowly down to his abdomen and his breathing suddenly changed. It felt like he was breathing more slowly and his body was tensing up. It made me feel good, oddly. The more I touched of his beautiful, chocolate skin, the wetter I got down there. I looked down and saw his penis standing and I swallowed hard. I've never touched or even seen a man's penis before. I looked up at him.

Me: "Can I touch it?"

Nathi: (laughing) "Are you sure you want to?"

I nodded and he signaled to me that I could go ahead. I put my right hand on top of his boxers and felt his hard penis. It really feels like a weird, hard yet soft object. I stroked it a little bit as I remembered Pontsho's little lessons.

I would sometimes wonder if she was really a virgin, though, but she would say she's preparing herself for her first time and she doesn't want it to be boring. The more I stroked it up and down the heavier Nathi's breathing got.

Nathi: "Shit! Chichi o nketsang (What are you doing to me)?"

I wanted to answer but hearing him talk like that made me feel so good. I've never even had thoughts of having sex or touching a man's penis before, but it just felt so good.

I put my hand in his boxers to feel his penis for the first time. It felt so clammy especially on the tip. It felt like there was some sticky fluid that was coming out of the tip. I kept stroking it and playing with his balls even. His hand kept traveling to my bums.

Nathi: "Eish, Chichi, ema nyana o tlo nkorisa di phoso (wait a minute, I'll end up making a mistake)."

I decided not to listen and looked up at him. His eyes were weird, so small I could barely see his pupils. His hand made me feel tingling sensations all over my body. I never knew a person could get goosebumps all over your body.

Me: "Kiss me, Nathi, please."

Nathi didn't think twice. I don't even know what I was thinking because I've never kissed anyone before. I guess wine really does give one courage. He kissed me and I

responded. I didn't even know what to do or if I was doing it right, but Nathi pulled out.

Nathi: (breathing heavily) "Just follow my lead, Gorgeous."

I nodded and he put his soft, pink lips on mine. I felt his warm breath against my lips and it made me feel warmer down there. He positioned himself so he could be on top of me and I at the bottom, as he proceeded to kiss me. It took me a while to get into the rhythm, but I followed his lead.

I did what he did, basically with my eyes closed as they always do it on tv. I hope I'm doing it right since he's moaning in my mouth. As he put his tongue inside of my mouth I felt so good. Damn. Why don't they show us everything on tv though? Nathi pulled out and kissed me on my neck and wow. I felt alive at that moment. A moan escaped my mouth and I never even knew I could do that. I guess it happens automatically.

Me: "Nathi..."

Nathi: "Keng, baby (What is it, baby)?"

He kept kissing my neck as he put his hand up my shirt and squeezed my rounded breasts. I could feel his rock hard penis poking me down there. The more he poked, the nicer it felt. I was wearing a jean so the impact isn't that much.

Nathi: "Shit, Chichi. You're so beautiful, lepyatla la ka (my beautiful babe)."

I felt myself getting wetter and wetter. He stopped as he pulled my shirt up. I didn't protest as I put my arms up allowing him easier access to take off my shirt. I don't even know what we're doing right now, but I'm loving it. He unhooked my bra and took a moment to look at my breasts.

I don't even feel weird or embarrassed as a man is looking at my virgin breasts for the very same time. He smiled at me and gently sucked my left breast while squeezing the right one with his right hand. I went wild. I was moaning and making sounds I've only heard on tv.

Me: "Uh... Nathi..."

Nathi: "Yes, Baby... I love your beautiful body... Yesses, Chichi, wa nkgafisa (you drive me crazy)."

He unclipped my jean and unzipped it, as he gently rubbed my clit with one hand, while the other was squeezing one of my breasts. It drove me insane. The amazing heat rush that overcame me.

Me: "Yoh, yoh, yoh, Nathi! E bose ntweo (that feels so good)!"

He kissed me and I responded as he stopped rubbing my clit to dip his finger in my vagina. I flinched a bit as it felt painful, but I could feel a lot of fluid down there.

Nathi: "Relax, baby. Shit, o thapile san (you're wet). Wang dronka, Chichi (you drive me insane)."

He stopped putting his finger in my vagina as it did feel a bit painful and went back to my clit. He kept rubbing it and increased his pace. The faster he went, the more I

enjoyed it. The more I felt this weirdly amazing heat rush coming over me. I was moaning and screaming. And I felt my body tense up

Nathi: "Let it go, Baby. Rota baby waka (cum, my baby)."

I didn't even know what he meant by that, but after a while I felt this surge of heat come over me as I let go. My body felt tense, but I felt tingling sensations all over me, especially down there.

Me: "Aaah!"

Nathi kissed me and laughed.

Me: "What just happened?"

Nathi: "You had an orgasm, baby wa ka (my baby). I watched you as you did your thing. I've never seen anything cuter."

He smiled and got up as he put my shirt back onto me. I got confused and looked at him with a frown on my face.

Me: "Why did you stop? Aren't we going to have sex?"

Nathi: "Because you're not ready, gorgeous."

Ai, ai, Nathi. This ready thing of his. I feel ready right now so we might as well do it after that nice session we just had.

Me: "But I feel ready now, Nathi."

Nathi: "You're not, it's just the alcohol talking. Come."

He pulled me closer to his chest as he kissed my forehead.

Nathi: "You'll thank me one day, baby. I want your first to be special with consent and we both have to be sober. I love you, Chichi."

I clicked my tongue and he chuckled. At least I had my first orgasm without him even putting it in. If an orgasm feels so good, then I have to have more of that.

## Chapter 23

### Chichi

Last night was fun. We ended up watching about three movies, until I had to ruin it all by vomiting. Luckily Nathi carried me to the bathroom before I made a whole shitty mess. He put me in a cold shower just before bed, apparently it helps when you're drunk. He tried to make me drink some black coffee before bed, but I passed out apparently.

Now I feel my head is so heavy and painful. I remembered what happened last night and immediately felt embarrassed. I feel like hell, like I was run over by something really heavy. I looked over to Nathi's side of the bed, yes, we shared a bed. His side was empty. I assumed he had gone to gym, but he walked in with a breakfast tray.

Nathi: (smiling) "Good morning, Gorgeous."

Me: (shy) "Good morning."

Yep, I feel so shy and embarrassed. I guess that's how you feel after a night of being drunk.

Nathi: (laughing) "Hao, Baby wa ka (my baby). You're so shy now, where's the Chichi I saw yesterday?"

Me: "She left with the booze. Yesses my head hurts, Nathi. Le te kwa bjana ge le tsoga mehleng le nwa bojwala na (Do you always feel like this every time you drink alcohol?)"

Nathi: (laughing) "Not really, baby. Only if you overdo it. It was your first time and you overdid it so now you're hungover. Here, take these."

He gave me two pills and I took them with a glass of water. He made me a nice greasy breakfast and I felt hungry immediately since I puked everything out last night. I felt so guilty and embarrassed thinking the bathroom must have my vomit all over.

Me: "Nathi, I'm sorry about last night. I'll clean up after I'm done."

Nathi: "No need, baby. I've already done that. Relax, it happens."

I smiled.

Nathi: "I'm very happy about one thing, though. I got to see you cum for the first time ever. Damn you're cute when you cum. E bile o rota ka sepedi, ngwana (You even cum in sepedi, babe)."

He laughed so hard I felt my cheeks get warmer from embarrassment.

Me: "Ah, voetsek (piss off), Nathi. "

Nathi: "Eh, banna. Wa rogana nou (you can swear now)? Ka bona o tlwaela pleke neh (I can see you're getting used to being around this place)."

Me: "Mxm, Nathi, tsamaya o hlapa or something (go take a bath or something)."

Nathi: (laughing) "Alright, e re ko hlapa then (Let me go take a bath then)."

I continued eating my food while he went to the bathroom. At least I can deal with Glen when the time comes. Right now I have to deal with myself. Menzi is still going through a lot and as a result, Nathi has to take over the handling all of the businesses they own together. He suggested therapy to him, but I guess you can't force someone to go to therapy. I even sent him a personal message of comfort. I just hope we can build our relationship after all this.

It's Sunday morning and yesterday was quite nice. Nathi and I spent the day nursing my hangover and lazing around. It felt really nice and at least we didn't do anything naughty. He suggested that we sleep in separate rooms, but I'm so used to cuddling with him at night I don't see the reason for that. I might be too young to be cohabiting with a man ten years older than me, but it's not like I'm doing it under duress.

I got up and wore one of my new outfits; a knee-length black pencil skirt with my versace blouse. I'm not big on branded clothing, but Nathi says what you wear determines people's impression about you. I wore my black heels and tied my hair into a neat ponytail and grabbed my handbag. I walked out of the bedroom and found Nathi watching tv in his shorts. I looked him puzzled.

Nathi: "Keng (what is it), gorgeous?"

Me: "Hao, Nathi. Ke kgopetje re ye kerekeng bathong (I asked that we go to church, man)."

Nathi: "Ah, nna ke lebetse, baby wa ka (I forgot, my baby). Let me grab my clothes and I'll take you there."

I raised my eyebrow while staring at him.

Nathi: "Did I say something wrong?"

Me: "When will you accept the Lord in your heart?"

Nathi: "I did long ago, even more when He gave me you."

He smiled and kissed me on my forehead as he walked to the bedroom to change. He came out and grabbed his keys as we walked out. We got into his car and drove off.

I'm so glad I got here early because I hate walking late into church when all eyes are on you. As I was about to walk out, Nathi didn't switch off his ignition.

Me: "Bathong (My goodness), Nathi. Be ke re o tse na le nna (I thought you were coming with me)."

Nathi: "Not today, baby. Nna le mo churchana ga re thulane (Me and church are not friends). Besides, wa itse Mma moruti o pretentious bjang, ga ke batle go ba topic ya morero today (You know how pretentious the pastor's wife is, I don't want to be the topic of today's sermon). I'll see you when you're done. I still have to sort Glen out."

Me: "Okay then."

I pecked him on the lips as I walked out. People were staring at me and some girls from my school were also around, whispering to each other, but I didn't care. As I was about to walk in I heard a familiar voice from the parking lot.

Mandisa: "Moghel (Girl)! Moge le nkemele (Girl wait up)!"

I turned around and it was Mandisa. I smiled as I thought how boring church would have been without someone by my side. He had a really cute Louis Vuitton blouse on with a pair of G star Raw Jeans and nice blinged up All Stars. I've never seen such before, so I guess he's the one that did all that. Mandi designs and makes clothes in his spare time.

He says no shop can compete with his level of style. His parents are pretty well off, much like Bree's, so money isn't really a problem. They've accepted that he's gay long ago, and he's also the only child. He and his mom share a really close bond.

Apparently she had always wanted a girl and when Mandi came, she treated him like a girl from birth, dressing him in cute girly clothes. He smiled as he looked at me from head to toe.

Mandi: "Yoh (wow)! (Clapping hands) Nathi nice wa di busa, ngwana mma (Nathi nice rocks, baby girl)! A week ago ne o le Ngwanenyana wa Seshego (imitating my accent), bona nou o apara di versace ka di Gucci handbag, ngwanyana (A week ago you were a girl from Seshego, now you're dressed in Versace with Gucci handbags girl)!"

We both laughed and high fived.

Me: "Hai, man Mandisa, wa phapha (You're forward)."

Mandisa: "You still have a lot to explain. You've been ghosting Bree and I on WhatsApp, and now you look this good while you're trending on Facebook. O shap mara (are you okay

Advertisement

though)?”

Me: (Sigh) “I’m okay, I guess.”

Mandisa:”Phela Glen o nyisitse Imza maobane during break (Glen beat Imza up yesterday during break). The idiot got himself suspended.”

My eyes grew wider in shock. Glen beat up his best friend?

Mandisa:”Ja, apparently Imza was the only one who had the list. So Glen assumed he was the one who uploaded it. Mara nna (but I) I don’t think Imza did it waitse (you know). Le bona it serves them well for doing such a stupid thing. Kuku ya kgopelwa, ga e rekiwi (Pussy is asked for, not bought).”

I shook my head. Mandisa doesn’t have timing shame. He can’t be talking about such at church. His mom and dad came to us and Mandisa introduced me to his lovely parents. I love how they are so proud of Mandisa, despite him being gay. That’s something you don’t see everyday, not even in Seshego.

We walked in and Mandi took me to the youth section. It’s my first time seeing Mandi at this church ever since I moved here, but he says he’s seen mama and I with Tshiamo before and Mama gave him a blank stare whenever he greeted her. So he decided he’d greet her everytime on purpose just to irritate the homophobe out of her. The Pastor and his wife, Mmamoruti, walked in with Micah and Rea after them. Ja ne, Rea looks so innocent, you’d swear her heart is pure. Micah on the other hand looked very handsome, one would swear he isn’t a rude and self centred, judgmental cunt. Mandisa seemed to be enjoying church a lot and even knew the songs they sing. He rejoiced and sang and oh, he’s got such an angelic voice.

Most people were very fond of him and he said Mmamoruti refused to let him sing in the choir because of his sexuality, but that didn’t stop him from being the loudest singer in the church. People don’t even bother paying attention to the choir, because he’s the one who always sings first. I kept laughing silently because we both know he does it on purpose to irritate Mmamoruti.

She can’t tell him kak in church, so he rejoices in his own way, while his parents look at him proudly and take pictures of him every now and then. It must be very nice having such a good support structure. I kept looking around to see if I’ll spot Mama and Tshiamo, but it was so full I couldn’t see a thing.

We sat down after singing and the pastor started preaching about forgiveness. He had some really nice words, telling us that if we don’t forgive those who hurt us, then who are we to ask God for forgiveness? If we don’t forgive, then we hold ourselves captive in distress and emotional turmoil.

We get so wrapped up in what was done unto us without even trying to walk a mile in that person’s shoes. Most of the time people hurt us when we least expect it and they do it without thinking or even realizing the extent of their actions. He said forgiveness is the first step to healing, we shouldn’t pray for revenge, but we should rather pray for salvation and in order to be saved we need to learn how to forgive. He quoted Colossians 3 v13 : “Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against

another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive". I felt myself getting a little emotional as I wiped off my tears. It's like Ntate Moruti was having an intimate conversation with me and that it was just the two of us at that present moment. Such powerful words that I'll forever cherish. I need to forgive my mother and forgive Glen. Firstly, I have to understand why they did what they did. I know Mama did what she did because she endured a lot of trauma that has left her so bitter. I'll keep praying for her and for the restoration of our relationship. Mandisa on the other hand was in tune with the holy spirit, shouting amen every now and then. He's always extra with everything he does, but it's adorable. You can't hate him at all. After the pastor was done preaching, Mandisa sang another song and then afterwards Mma moruti walked up to the podium. Oh, I really don't get why all the good pastors marry such fake women. Even back in Seshego, Mmamoruti was an evil woman. Mandisa: (whispering) "Ashiwe nnoga ya rera (The snake is about to preach)." He giggled softly as I smiled and shook my head. I guess I'm not the only one who dislikes her.

Mma moruti: "Amen, Bazalwane, Ameni!"

Congregation: "Amen".

Mandisa did his dramatic Amen while clapping his hands and we could both see how it irked her as she gave him a filthy, brief stare.

Mma Moruti: "Bana ba Jesu, Ke le dumedisa ka leina la Ntate Morena Modimo wa rena (Children of Christ, I greet you all in the name of our Father God)."

Congregation: "Amen."

Mma Moruti:"As we all know, bazalwane, my handsome son Micah is back. I need to all remind you that he's a handsome and very successful lawyer who's also going to be stepping into his father's shoes one of these days. He needs a good wife that will be by his side, so please, all educated, well respected girls avail yourselves. Let's not forget bazalwane that purity is of utmost importance."

This woman is the pits for a pastor's wife.

Mandisa: (whispering) "Ska mmona a le so wena, chomi, o godile a sokola and moruti o mo kereile a se le virgin self (Don't be surprised, she grew up poor and the pastor found her when she wasn't a virgin herself)."

I guess hypocrites are everywhere, especially in church clothes.

Mma Moruti:"As you all know, bazalwane, we had a very tragic incident at the Mogashoa home a few days ago."

That's Koko's surname. My heart started beating too fast as I panicked wondering what she was about to say about my family.

Mma Moruti:"Thieves, Murderers and gangsters tried to kill one of our very own and devoted members of the church, Mme Julia Mashabela, but God had other plans. She survived, bazalwane and as we all know, the perpetrator wasn't arrested."

I saw Ntate Moruti shake his head as she said that and I felt really angered. How dare she speak like that while the rest of the congregation was busy saying amen and whispering amongst themselves.

Mma Moruti: "Let us pray, Bazalwane, as the devil is working overtime in that household, producing gangsters, harlots and drunks. Let us sing a powerful hymn as I pray for that family."

This time Mandisa didn't sing as he was sitting in his seat in pure shock, while I remained frozen. As I thought that was the biggest bomb that was dropped today, Mama came out of the crowd with a shoulder sling and walked up to Mma Moruti.

#### Chapter 24

I sat frozen on the bench as Mama stood on the podium. Mma Moruti gave her space and the platform to speak.

Julia: "Amen, Bazalwane, Ameni!"

Congregation: "Amen."

Julia: "I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ. As I stand here before you, bazalwane, I stand here as a product of God's mercy and grace. I was about to die as I was shot by a product of the devil's work, but I made it. The devil is working overtime, yes, that is correct.

The devil stole my daughter from me and he invited a gangster into my life years ago who raped me, but I made it. The devil had turned my mother into a drunkard, and my own sister into a serial whore. The devil has turned my niece into a young harlot, impregnated by her teacher!"

The crowd was in shock and awe. This woman standing up there isn't my mother. She isn't the woman I know. The Julia Ivy Mashabela I know isn't this woman. Maybe she fell and hit her head after my father left, I don't know. She looked at me the whole time as she spoke. I've never felt so humiliated in my entire life. Everyone noticed where her eyes were as theirs landed on me.

Julia: "The devil has wormed his way into my daughter's life, bazalwane. She used to be obedient, and honest. As the Lord commanded in the Book of Exodus when he said 'Honour your mother and father so that your days on earth can be multiplied', yet she broke that commandment at the tender age of 16. She has fallen prey to the evil deeds of this world and has fallen in love with a gangster.

She is now draped in fancy, expensive clothes and even boys at school wrote a list to compete for what's between her legs! The devil stole my child's father away from me, bazalwane. Her father fell in love with the township whore and my daughter wants to fall into the same trap. Let us please pray, bazalwane. Put me in your prayers as I need God the most during this time.

Pray that she breaks loose from the devil's chains, bazalwane. A gangster, a whole thief and murderer is holding my child hostage! I'll close off with Isaiah 54:17 "No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn". Thank you, bazalwane."



Just like that my own mother crucified me the same way they crucified Jesus on the cross. She crucified me with the most powerful weapon on earth-the tongue. She killed my soul and killed my kindness that very moment. I was determined to walk out of that church as Chichi Mashabela, no longer as Tshagofatso Tersia Mashabela. The innocent, whip in me was no more. The saying it doesn't kill to be kind was written by an idiot because every kind person gets stomped on in this world. The pastor's forgiveness sermon no longer applies to my mother. I'm done with her-for good.

She has just emancipated a new me, without her in my life. People started singing as I stood up and stared at her when she walked down and proceeded to her seat. I saw Tshiamo crying with her head down.

I was tempted to leave, but Mandisa held my arm and pulled me down.

Mandi:"Don't go, you'll give them the satisfaction of gossiping about you while you're gone. Stay, as much as it hurts, stay and don't you dare cry. You'll cry when we leave here."

I nodded and we sat and rejoiced. I pretended to be happy and not mindful of what had just transpired in front of the whole church. But Mandi was right, I won't give them the satisfaction. If he could be his normal self while people call him fagget and all sorts of words on a daily basis

who am I to run from this minor setback?

Church finally ended after about three hours. I decided to pray while people were singing and Mandi sang some really nice hymns with his own twist as usual after he saw me feeling much better. I walked out hand in hand with Mandi after the service even though I had to endure glares and whispers from people.

I figured I owe them nothing and they aren't as perfect as they act. Mandi's mom and dad gave me heartwarming hugs, and his mom told me to be strong. Mandisa hugged me goodbye as they drove off. As I was walked out of the church and walked towards Glen's house, Micah came running after me.

Micah:"Chichi, wait up!"

I recognized the voice but I continued walking as he finally caught up to me.

Micah:"Yoh! Wa shesha (You walk too fast) even in heels, hey."

Me:"Nkao thusa (Can I help you)?"

Micah:"Hao, Chichi. Why o le snaaks so (Why are you being rude)?"

Me: (laughing) "Rude? Wow, I didn't even think you knew the definition of the word. Coming from the king of rudeness himself!"

Micah: (puzzled) "I don't follow, Chichi. You must be going through that time of the month."

I got so upset I decided to give him a piece of my mind.

Chichi:"Askies?! Kopa o nkwishe Micah, ene o nkwishe gabotse (Please listen Micah and please listen very carefully). Ga ke mogwera wa gao, neh (I'm not your friend, okay)?! Boela morago (Go back) to your perfectly pretentious family! You act

so high and mighty and so perfect just like your mom, no wonder you don't have girlfriend. No one would be attracted to someone of your calibre. You're an insult to the Bible because you have such a beautiful name, yet your a fucking asshole! Your two-faced mother aired my whole dirty laundry in front of the whole world along with my mother, forgetting that your little sister was Fucking Mr. Legae and sucking him off in class!"

Micah was so surprised by my outburst.

Micah:"Tjo, Chichi. So just because they told the truth about you, you decide to spread lies about my sister? Your mom was right, hey, Nathi really has changed you. I can only pray for you, hey."

I got even more pissed.

Me:"Fuck Off, Micah. Don't ever talk to me again if you know what's good for you." As he tried to talk to me, I attempted to walk away and he grabbed my arm. Nathi stopped right next to us and rolled down his window. Micah still had his hand on my arm unwittingly.

Nathi:"Ekse mfo, go nale jaive hier (Sure, bro, is there a problem here)?"

Micah:"No, there's no problem."

Nathi:"I have a problem, your filthy hand is on my woman's arm."

He quickly let go of my arm.

Nathi:"Know your place, Micah, or else ke tla go ntsha bathong (I'll reveal your secrets). Chichi get in the car."

His eyes were fixed on Micah, who looked a little scared. I quickly jumped into the car without protesting.

Nathi:"Keep your hands to yourself from now on, jou moerskont (you cunt)!"

He stepped on the accelerator and drove off.

Chapter 25

Glen

Nathi came to see me this morning. I expected him to be a bit nice to me, but he walked in without greeting me.

Glen:"Sho, mfo".

Nathi didn't respond, instead he slapped me so hard I nearly fell. I regained my balance and got back up. I respect my brother so much and we both know I'd never fight him back. He slapped me again a couple of times.

Nathi:"Be ucabangeni slima (What were you thinking, fool?!)"

I held my cheek and fought through the pain. I know better than to back chat Nathi.

Nathi:"Do you want me to repeat myself, Glen?!"

Glen:"No, bafo (brother). We made that bet on the first day when Chichi arrived. It's stupid, I know, kodwa (but) I had a change of heart. I swear, I didn't do it. I thought it was Imza and I beat him up at school. I regret acting out of impulse because I traced the number. It was Pabi, she's the one who posted the list. I don't know how she managed to get it out of Imza's bag."

Nathi was still fuming, but he managed to calm his breathing. I swear I thought he was going to kill me.

Nathi: "You're very lucky you're my brother otherwise you'd be in pieces by now. I'll go meet your principal k'sasa (tomorrow), but this had better not happen again, yezwa (understood)?"

Glen: "Crystal."

Nathi: "Ngiyabuya (I'll be back), I'm going to fetch Chichi From church."

Glen: "Sho sho."

At least I dodged a bullet right there. I started cooking so that we can at least have a decent Sunday lunch. We don't open the Tavern for sit ins on Sundays, we respect it as the day of the Lord. People can still come and buy, but not to chill here. I had just started peeling the vegetables when Chichi and Nathi walked in.

Nathi was even more pissed than he was before he left here. I know I don't have anything to do with that, so I just kept quiet. I was even afraid to greet Chichi, since she had been ignoring my calls. I carried on chopping the vegetables in silence, while Nathi went to the lounge to watch tv.

Chichi: "Hi, Glen."

I really didn't expect that as I was so nervous I was even shaking.

Glen: "Hey, Chichilicious."

Chichi: (smiling) "Can I help?"

Glen: "Sure. I thought you'd be mad at me."

Chichi took off her shoes and grabbed an apron and a knife. She's so beautiful, Nathi is really lucky to have her and he'd better not break her heart

Chichi: "I was really angry at you, until I heard Ntate Moruti's warm words about forgiveness. For some reason I don't believe that you would do that to me, Glen. My gut is never wrong, so I chose to hear you out."

I breathed a sigh of relief and told her everything that happened from the fight, to me exposing Pabi. She was really shocked and surprised at how I chose to play dirty but at least she understood where I was coming from.

We cooked in laughter as we spoke about school and the latest gossip. Mr. Legae is still suspended, thank goodness for that. He's a serious pest.

Glen: "Manje (And now), dintshang ka Nathi (What's wrong with Nathi)?"

She explained to me what happened at church all the way to what Micah did. This idiot doesn't understand boundaries at all. I'd also be as pissed as Nathi is. She should just relax, he'll come around. I really enjoy spending time with Chichi and I'm slowly making peace with the fact she won't be my girlfriend-ever.

We cooked and Nathi joined us. Chichi said a prayer for us and we had our delicious Sunday lunch. Nathi and I had our cold beverages, as Chichi settled for juice. Nathi then told me she had her first encounter with alcohol last night and woke up with a massive hangover. I was quite shocked because Chichi never seemed to be interested

in experimenting with alcohol, but I guess she is taking this emancipation seriously. As long as she doesn't change who she is, I'm happy.

Chichi

It's Monday morning and I have to go to school. I'm glad Glen gave me some of our homework we got on Friday which I completed yesterday after our lunch with him. I'm still hurt that Mama blocked me and probably told Tshiamo to do the same. It breaks my heart that I won't have that strong bond with her anymore but at least I'll be able to see her at school.

Thomas can't fetch me anymore since Nathi lives a bit far from Mamelodi East. Nathi had opted to drop me off and fetch me everyday. I don't know how to feel about it, but I figured we're already dating and people are already gossiping about me anyway. I have no reason to hide our relationship. Menzi is still a mess, so Nathi is going to drop him off at Denmar, so he can get medical assistance. Apparently he suffered a mental breakdown.

It's painful what stress can do to a person. I take a bath or shower while Nathi is in the lounge. He doesn't want me to get dressed in front of him so he doesn't get tempted. He says he's willing to wait for me which I find hard to believe, but very sweet. As I got out the shower, I went to the bedroom and found brand new uniform and shoes on the bed. I nearly cried though.

Nathi is just too thoughtful. Pontsho used to tell me that older guys are never this thoughtful when it comes to dating younger girls, but I guess Nathi is different. I put on my brand new uniform with tears glistening in my eyes. I'm truly grateful for Nathi's presence in my life. They say everything happens for a reason and I truly believe that people appear in your life for a reason. I said a little prayer as I always did at home before leaving the house and went to the lounge.

Nathi: (smiling) "You look so beautiful, lepyatla la ka man (my gorgeous babe)."

Me: (blushing) "Thank you, Nathi. Let's go before I get late."

Nathi:"Ah, man, baby wa ka (my baby). You really need to come up with a pet name for me, man. Nathi is so old fashioned and boring."

I laughed softly.

Me:"Okay, I'll think of one."

We left and drove to school. I even forgot I didn't have anything to pack for lunch today since Nathi hardly eats bread. I made a mental note to ask him to buy me some lunch things after school. We arrived at school and he gave me R50, which I felt was pretty unnecessary as I still have the money he gave me from last week. I know better than to argue with Nathi. He hardly takes no for an answer. I kissed his cheek and walked out of the car.

As I proceeded to the gate, I saw Thomas parking his kombi. I didn't see Pabi, which meant she probably wasn't coming to school again today. I saw Rea and Kamo and the others come out, and then I saw Glen and Tshiamo walk out. Thank goodness she's still using Thomas's komi as transport. She looked really down and unhappy.

She quickly ran to me and gave me a hug as soon as she saw me. Tears were falling down her face which caused me to cry as well.

Me: "Tshiamo, are you okay?"

Tshiamo: "Sesi (sis), I miss you so much. It's not the same at home anymore. Koko bosses me around and makes me do all the chores whenever mama is gone. She insults me so badly, sesi (sister)."

My heart broke for her. How can Mama be so selfish at a time like this?

Me: "Let me take you out of that situation, please."

Tshiamo: (shaking her head) "I can't, sesi. Mama said I'll burn in hell if I follow you. She's already told Papa everything about you and Nathi and now he won't pay school fees for you anymore. I don't want to be a burden, sesi. At least Nathi is your boyfriend, he'll take care of you. I'll be okay, sesi. You just make sure you take care of yourself."

My heart felt like it was broken into a million pieces. My poor sister is on the brink of depression and there's nothing I can do about it. She gave me a faint smile and went to her friends as the bell rang. I told her to come see me during break. We had a good morning and at least we got a substitute Accounting teacher in Mr. Legae's place. Yes, it's a female and she's very nice, Ms. Chokwe. She's also a bit young, but has a very lovely personality.

Glen made peace with Imza and they forgave each other. At least school was back to normal and even Kamo stopped being friends with Rea. I guess we can officially say the little clique is a thing of the past.

Break time came and I gave Tshiamo R20 to buy herself something. Glen, Bongz, Imza, Bree, Mandi and I were at our usual spot. Nathi spoke to the principal and begged him to give Glen one last chance. Luckily Imza also agreed so there wasn't a need to suspend Glen any longer. I've endured stares and glares from learners around here and I really didn't care. Yesterday was bad enough so nothing can hurt me more than my mother did. Yes, I'm dating a gangster or ex gangster. He's a loving and sweet guy so being a gangster doesn't define him.

Chapter 26

Two months later

Chichi

It's been one long term and a good one indeed. I'm so glad that today is the last day of school, I can't wait to relax. We're getting our reports today and I know I did really well. Glen and I have been doing our homework and tasks together and studying together as well. I still live with Nathi, and it has become such a norm now.

We still haven't had sex yet, although we kiss, fiddle and fondle each other every now and then, but it ends there always. I feel a bit bad about him not getting any from me, but he said he's willing to wait. Bree told me if a guy really loves you then he'll wait. She and Bongz have also never had sex and I find their love so cute and real.

My mother still doesn't speak to me nor does she allow me at home, so I've made peace with the fact that she doesn't want me near her. Tshiamo and I have been seeing each other at school and that's the only time we get to see each other. She doesn't want to defy our mother at all, and even though Nathi bought her new uniform and clothes a few weeks ago, Mama apparently burnt it all. This whole situation has taken a huge toll on Tshiamo and I am praying for her though.

Mandi, Bree and I are still besties and Bree even joined our crazy church. Mandi still does her best to annoy Mma Moruti every chance he gets and Micah has kept his distance ever since that day. Mma moruti can't even tell Mandi shit because his parents give hefty donations to the church. Talk about a hypocrite. If only people could sanitize their hearts. Pabi hasn't come back to school ever since I can't even remember.

Thomas comes to visit Nathi once in a while and apparently they're not dating anymore. Mr. Legae hasn't been around in forever, even Biggie said he hasn't seen him since the day he got beaten by Thomas. Nathi is taking me to Cape Town along with the gang's girlfriends and wives for a whole week. I'm a bit nervous since I'm the youngest one there. Apparently Thomas is bringing his new girlfriend with. She's 19, so it makes a bit of a difference. I just hope I can blend in.

Anyway, we're in our register class and anxiously waiting to receive our reports for the term. Rea has been sleeping in ever class ever since this morning. I asked her what's wrong before we got here but all she said was that she had period pains. They really looked like they were severe because she even bent over while walking. Her forehead was sweaty and she was wearing a jersey in this heat. It's 34 degrees outside yet she's draped herself in heat.

As Mrs. Chokwe was about to hand out our reports, Rea had her hand up.

Mrs. Chokwe: "Yes, Ms. Mabaso?"

Rea: (sweaty and shaky) "Ma'am, may I please... Be... Excused?"

She was even battling to speak, she looked so weak.

Mrs. Chokwe: "Alright, just don't be too long, okay?"

Rea nodded. She struggled to get out of her chair and as soon as she did, we saw her dress full of blood, so was her chair. The whole class gasped as she attempted to take another step and blood came gushing out of her. I asked Glen to give me his jersey as I quickly got up and put it around her waist. Mrs. Chokwe was in so much shock, but managed to help me get Rea out of there.

We left as there was a blood trail all over from her chair all the way to where we were walking. I've never seen so much blood in my life before. This can't be periods. As we walked past other classes, the learners came running out to see the whole thing. It was so embarrassing, but I think we were more concerned about Rea's health at this point. She fainted as we asked another male teacher to assist us.

Once we got to the office, there was no time to call her parents. She was taken into Mrs. Chokwe's car and driven straight to the hospital. I was assisted by one of the

nurses at school and got the blood wiped off me and my uniform changed. Rea wasn't my friend, but I couldn't let her be humiliated like that when she needed a friend. I went back to class and luckily one of the cleaners cleaned all the blood swiftly.

As soon as I walked back to the class, everyone wanted to know what happened, but I didn't pay attention to them. Mrs. Naidoo came to assist since Mrs. Chokwe was out and she handed us our reports. Our whole crew passed and I got a 92% average for all my subjects. I was so happy, but a part of me was just saddened by the fact that I can't even share such good news with my mom.

Mandi sent a picture of his results to his parents and they were so pleased. They're throwing him a party in two weeks' time just before schools open again, so as soon as I come back from Cape Town

I'll be attending along with our crew. It was just a bitter sweet moment for me, but at least I can celebrate with Nathi and Glen, my new little family.

After school finally and luckily school came out at 12:00 today. I asked Nathi to fetch me a bit later, so we could go celebrate. We even brought casual clothes to change in after school. I love how Nathi allows me to be my own person and enjoy being a teenager, while being his girlfriend. I still respect him as my man, and unfortunately I have to mature a bit faster than most kids since he's so old.

Glen asked Thomas to drive us today as we need to run a few errands. Luckily we all look a bit older than what we seem in casual clothes, so buying alcohol won't be a problem. I've been drinking a little bit here and there ever since the wine incident, but nothing hectic. Glen said I need to figure out what kind of alcohol I like, so he'll buy a few of everything that I might like today. He refused to let me buy anything, he said he's spoiling me for doing so well this term. I've gotten the hang of things a little bit as I've learnt how to speak like a true Pitori girl. Mandi is so proud shame.

I asked Thomas to make a stop at the hospital so I could go and visit Rea. I don't hate her, the least I can do is lend a shoulder to cry on for her. I got to the hospital and made my way to her ward. Thank goodness she was alone, I don't want to see Mma Moruti or Micah. I stopped by Woolies to buy her a fruit basket, since Nathi just showers me with money, unnecessarily. I found her staring at the wall looking sad and bleak. She tried sitting up as soon as she saw me.

Me: "Hey, it's okay. You don't have to. I just came to see if you're really okay."

Rea: (teary-eyed) "Why? Why Chichi? You really didn't have to save me. I've been nothing, but mean to you ever since you got here."

Me: "Because we all deserve a second chance and a friend, Rea. You're not a bad person, you just make bad choices."

Rea: (crying) "You should have just left me to die. Now I have to face my family after having an abortion."

My eyes grew wider in shock. What?! I was speechless as I just allowed myself to listen to her.

Rea: "Mr. Legae wanted nothing to do with my baby and being a pastor's child, I couldn't allow myself to disgrace my parents like that. They were already so proud of me so I just couldn't do it, Chichi. I went to some woman I met on Facebook. She sold me a bottle of herbs, she said it would do the job for a mere R500. I had to drink the whole thing. Imagine, I took such a risk and drank contents of something I had no idea of. I drank it all last night and started feeling stomach pains early this morning. After taking a bath, I saw I was bleeding, so I put on a pad. She assured me it would work and not be as painful as it was for me. Now imagine, the whole school knows I bled out in class and now I had to get emergency surgery done because the herbs had damaged my uterus so badly. I'm so fucked, Chichi. My mother is going to send me away after hearing this. I'll never be able to have kids. There's nothing more to live for."

My heart bled for her. I felt my eyes getting teary and I gave her a hug. As I was comforting her, her evil mother appeared.

Mma Moruti: "O dirang mo wena moloi (What are you doing here, you witch)?!  
Yep, speak of the devil.

Me: "I just came to..."

She didn't even let me finish. So much for a woman of God.

Mma moruti: "Ska bula molomo wa gao wa go nka (Don't even open your stinky mouth)! You came to finish my child off, akere (right)?! You're so jealous of her and now that you failed to kill her you came to finish her off!"

I see now why poor Rea killed her child. This woman is so wicked. I didn't even bother to say anything to her. I stood up from the bed.

Me: "Bye, Rea. O be shap (Get well soon)."

Mma moruti: "Etswa ka mo pele ke bitsa security (Get out of here before I call security)! Mxm, selo se sao sokola (This poor thing)!"

I just walked out while she cursed at me.

## Chapter 27

### Chichi

I left the hospital with Rea's situation and those last words weighing heavily on my mind. "There's nothing more to live for." I can't help but feel like that was a message, like her last words. I don't even have her number so I can't check on her even if I wanted to. I decided not to dwell on it and met up with the rest of the people in the Kombi.

Glen: "Ah, man Chichilicious, kgale re eme man (We've been waiting). I could be on my fourth beer by now."

Bree: "How is she?"

Me: "She's okay, hey. Recovering.

Rejoice, one of our classmates decided to tag along today. I don't even know why Inza brought her along. She's just not my cup of tea.



Rejoice: "Ba re flop keng (What's the problem)? O dirile abortion vele (Did she really have an abortion)?"

I got irritated by her question.

Me: "I don't know, really."

Glen could see I was bored by that and decided to ask Thomas to play us some music. Thomas was in the zone and he decided to stop by a neighbouring school of ours. A tall, slender chick jumped in the front seat. I guess he had it saved for her. Thomas lowered the volume to introduce us to the new queen bee.

Thomas: "Girls and gents, o ke (this is) Samantha, my new girl".

This Samantha chick didn't even bother to greet us, all she did was give us all one look and turn back to Thomas. Thomas likes them thin and very disrespectful.

Samantha, Nathi told me about her briefly, though. She's also coming with us to Cape Town with us. He said she's 18, but she looks way older than that.

Samantha: "Ah, baby, man. Why did you have to make so much noise when you came to fetch me with these kids? What do you want my friends to think?"

Not only is she rude and condescending, but she's a coconut too with a fake, American accent.

Thomas: "Ah, Sam, man. Ke di pens down (It's pens down). Tlogela go ba so uptight (Stop being so uptight). You're in matric, so you don't have to be this uptight all the time."

I saw her rolling her eyes and click her tongue while at it. Thomas didn't mind her as he drove off and increased the volume anyway. I felt the music was a bit too loud, but I decided to go with it. It's my first pens down, so I'd like to enjoy it.

We finally arrived at Glen's house. He instructed Mam'Regina to knock off early and gave her a little extra for her day off. It was time for us to have some fun at Glen's house. As we were preparing to leave the kombi, Thomas as trying to get rid of Samantha.

Thomas: "Baby girl

ka boa ne (I'll be back). Ke sa nale besigheid engwe nyana so (I have some business to take care of)."

Samantha: (annoyed) "But baby, you can't leave me here with all these ratchet kids! Can't I go with you?"

Thomas: "No, o ka se kgone (you can't)."

Samantha: "No, baby, you should've just taken me home."

Thomas: "Ah, Sam. Ska mbora toe (Don't bore me). Ge o re ke go ise dladleng o re ko ja mang nna (If you want me to take you home who must I fuck)? Ke go reketse 12 pack ya Heineken, e ka mo cooler box. Ke tla o bona ka di nako (I bought you a 12 pack of Heineken, you'll find it in the cooler box. I'll see you later on)."

Yoh, Thomas is rude shame. But I guess he doesn't love her as much as she thinks. He doesn't love her enough to respect her. We got out with Samantha and I tried to be nice to her by introducing myself.

Me: (extending my hand) “Hi, I’m Chichi.”

She just looked at my hand and gave me a dirty look, looking at me from top to bottom.

Sam:”I know who you are, Nathi’s new pussy. Don’t get too comfortable, honey. You’re too young for him.”

Okay, I’m clearly being tested here.

Me:”But you’re not that much older than me, so technically you’re also too young.”

Sam: (laughing) “I’m 20, honey. Turning 21. I’m technically legal.”

Hao, mos Nathi said she was 18. Why would he lie? And she’s way too old to be in matric, I guess she’s got beauty but no brains. I decided to leave her like that, but as I was about to walk in, she dropped a bomb on me.

Sam:”By the way, Ntombi will be coming with us to Cape Town. I bet after the trip you’ll be a thing of the past, Chichilicious.”

She walked past me leaving me stunned. What the hell is she playing at? That name rings a bell, man. Ntombi, I just can’t put my finger on it.

## Chapter 28

### Chichi

We got into the house and I just lost my appetite for fun all of a sudden. This Samantha chick is seriously getting on my nerves. I can’t even pretend to enjoy myself as she literally ruined my whole holidays before they even began.

Glen noticed the sudden damper in my mood and pulled me aside.

Glen:”Eh, Chichi, a re ringe nyana (let’s talk for a minute).”

I stood up and followed him outside.

Glen:”Kuhambani (What’s up)?”

Me:”It’s nothing Glen, really.”

Glen:”You do know that I know you, right? Nathi specifically gave me instructions to look after you so we’re not going back in there until you spit it out.”

Me: (deep sigh) “It’s that girl, Samantha. She rubbed me up the wrong way.”

Glen: (laughing) “Ah, o ra kgolo e la (you mean that chicken)? Bona man, she’s just trying to rub you up the wrong way on purpose since you’re dating her sister’s ex. Ntombi is her sister, she and Nathi used to date back in the day, but she broke his heart and they’ve been apart ever since. It’s really not that deep.”

Now I get it. My question is why didn’t Nathi tell me Ntombi was coming? He said the guys and their women would be there, nothing about Ntombi.

Me:”I see. But what did she do to Nathi exactly that was so heartbreaking?”

Glen:”He’ll tell you himself. All you have to do is ask. He really loves you, Chichi. Your age has nothing to do with them or anyone else. You intimidate people, a whole lot.

Nathi has never been this serious about anyone else since Ntombi. You’re legit the only girl he’s ever taken on these trips. Now leave that gogo and come and party.”

I laughed softly. I'm still not sure how to feel about Ntombi coming along and why Nathi never told me, but I'll make damn sure that I look my best. People always talk, that's one thing I've realized ever since I got here. So let them talk about how good you look at least.

Glen took me by my hand and we walked back into the house. We found Imza already mixing shooters and I know very well not to play like that after my first encounter with alcohol a few months ago. I decided against the shooters, while Sam the Giraffe sat on a couch alone trying to watch tv.

Glen had bought a few ciders for me to try and I decided on trying out Savanna. I really liked the taste, but he said I need to drink moderately in order for me to avoid what happened that night. I decided to drink slowly and enjoy the drinks and snacks Glen bought.

Sam the Giraffe kept giving me stares, but I ignores her flatly. Glen played some music for us and things were getting a bit hectic. After my third drink, I decided to drink some water and slow down.

I saw Bree and Bongz fondling each other and kissing right in front of us, while Imza wasted no time to get a room with Rejoice. Glen was eyeing Mandi and I knew what they were thinking, but Mandi was playing hard to get.

Mandi got me up from the couch and asked me to dance. I've seen Mandi dance at the Valentine's Day party so I know he can move as for me, I wouldn't be able to dance even if I were held hostage.

Sam the giraffe started getting up to dance leaving both Mandi and I annoyed. She went ahead to try and grind on Glen, but Glen just gave her a nasty look.

Glen:"A ke je difefe (I don't fuck whores)

Samantha. You should know that by now."

Sam sat back down embarrassed. I don't get why she would do such while her boyfriend left her with us. After my fourth cider, I was feeling a bit loose. I felt like I was able to dance while Mandi and Glen cheered me on.

Sam was so bored and irritated, she had finished her 12 beers by now and Thomas was still not back yet. It was pretty dark outside and we had lost track of time.

I checked my phone and found 12 missed calls from Nathi and one message: "You'd better still be in one piece, I'm on my way." I quickly went to the bathroom to splash some water on my face and try to sober up. I stopped drinking and took a bottle of water instead. As I was about to respond to the message, Nathi texted me that he's outside. I hugged Glen and Mandi goodbye since Bree was in the bedroom doing who knows what with Bongz. I didn't even try and waste any of energy on Sam so I ignored her. I got outside and found him smoking outside the car. This guy loves his car so much, I've never seen him smoke inside of it.

Me:"Hey, Nathi."

Nathi:"kudala ngi founa (I've been calling), Chichi. Keng? Ne ong maeza (What? Were you ignoring me)?"

Me: "Hao, Nathi. I didn't hear my phone ring as you can hear the music is quite loud."

Nathi: "Hmm. You're lucky Glen is my brother and I trust him otherwise you'd be dead by now."

I don't know if he was joking or what but that statement made me feel a bit weird.

Me: "Can we go now?"

Nathi: "Not yet. Go get Samantha, Thomas asked me to give her a lift to his house."

I got so bored by that request. Does he even know how rude she is? I walked back into the house sulking. I found her sitting alone on the couch busy on her phone.

Me: "Let's go, Thomas asked Nathi to give you a ride home."

Sam didn't even respond to me she just clicked her tongue and followed me out. I walked to the car and she tried to get into the front seat. I stood with my arms folded and gave her a look and so did Nathi. This chick is testing me shame.

Sam: "What?"

Nathi: "Don't you ever, I mean ever fucking disrespect my woman like that ever again, Samantha, yezwa (you hear me)?! This is not your boyfriend's car so get in the back before I leave you here!"

Sam: (annoyed) "Geez! You never had a problem with me sitting in the front when Ntombi was your girlfriend."

There she goes again with her condescending shit. I decided to keep quiet and see how Nathi would handle it. Nathi got in his seat, while Sam sat at the back and I got in the front passenger seat.

Nathi: "Was, focus on that. Either way Ntombi was never as important as Chichi is to me. If you want to survive the Cae Town trip, you'd better keep her name out of your mouth when you want to speak to me."

Nathi clicked his tongue and started the car as Sam became quiet. I smiled a little bit as his words warmed my heart. I guess the only thing that matters is that I'm important to him and that he loves me. The ride was unpleasant because of Samantha's irritating presence, but Nathi kept brushing my thigh and holding my hand, pulling it in for a kiss every now and then.

I could feel Sam's eyes on us during the whole ride, but I didn't care. Nathi is mine now and it's time she and her annoying sister knew their boundaries. We arrived at her house about 15 minutes later and she finally got out.

Sam: "I thought you were dropping me at Thomas's place?"

Nathi: "You can ask him yourself."

Sam: "Aren't you going in to greet Mama?"

Nathi: "Close the fucking dooe, Samantha, man."

She closed the door and watched us drive off. I don't know why Thomas decided to fetch her from school if he was going to ghost her all day. I kind of feel bad for her, but with that stinky attitude, I'd probably have ditched her too.

Chapter 29

Chichi

Last night was very nice for Nathi and I. We just got home, cuddled and slept. We still haven't had any sex and it's kind of weighing heavy on my mind after the stuff Sam said to me yesterday. I haven't confronted him about this Ntombi, I just want to see how he'll act around her when he get to Cape Town first. We're leaving today, so there's no time to have breakfast and everything.

Glen will be looking after the house while we're away. We woke up a bit late and since it's Midday, we have to get going in order to catch our 4pm flight. Nathi hired an Uber to take us to the Airport as Glen doesn't have his license as yet so he doesn't want to take any chances having him drive us all the way to the airport with a learner's.

I made sure I packed everything I'd need even though he complained that it's too many bags, but a girl can never pack enough clothes for a trip. We were off and arrived at the airport after an hour and a half. I feel so excited to be honest. I've never been anywhere, really. This is my first ever trip to Cape Town and I want it to be memorable. I even bought a bigger memory card although my phone's internal space is about 64gb, I don't want to take any chances. I have to take as many pictures as I possibly can.

When we arrived we found Biggie and a light, curvy woman next to him. She had flawless skin though she was wearing some really high heels with a very long weave and oversized Gucci sunglasses. As we approached them she looked at us and smiled broadly. She hugged Nathi first.

Woman:"Nathi, I'm so happy you're finally here. Biggie can be so boring at times, forever talking about soccer."

Nathi laughed subtly.

Nathi: "Eve, I haven't seen you in a while. Good to see you again."

She turned to me and smiled even more.

Eve:"You must be the famous Chichi. I've been dying to meet you, but Nathi has been hiding you away from me."

She hugged me as I returned a smile. She seems genuine. At least she was nice to me.

Eve:"You're so beautiful, oh, your skin! I love the natural look, and your hair! I wish I had great hair like that. I can't wait to introduce you to all the other girls. Don't worry about a thing, I've been with Biggie ever since I was 15. My parents had a fit, ofcourse, kodwa (but) after 15 years of being with him, they finally got the message." She talks quite a lot too, but other than that she's a really nice person. I gathered from that introduction that she's 30, nearly twice my age. That won't be a problem unless she stays polite towards me.

Nathi:"Hai, man, Eve. You're overwhelming my Chichi, give her space."

Eve:"Ai, Nathi. Leave us alone and go join Bigs."

She pulled me to one of the couches across Biggie and Nathi and asked me some general questions about myself, while throwing in her life story about how she met Biggie. I think she really wanted me to feel comfortable about being the youngest one

in the group. Thomas arrived a while later with his giraffe and I couldn't help but feel annoyed.

Eve: "Don't mind that pole, she won't last long."

She said as she smiled at me and I smiled back. I think Eve and I are going to get along just fine on this trip. Eve greeted Thomas and sat back down as Sam tried to give her a hug. Eve doesn't waste time, just like Biggie. I can tell she's not into pretending at all. Sam sat down looking defeated while Thomas greeted me and went to the rest of the crew.

Zoro, one of the crew members walked in with a girl who's just as tall as Samantha

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but a lot curvier. She had a very long weave on, much like Eve's, but I wasn't too sure about the quality.

She wore knee length leopard boots with a very short skirt and a crop top which exposed her large cleavage. I don't know which normal person wears boots in this heat, but I guess it must be fashion.

Zoro gave me and Eve a hug, and just greeted Sam with a handshake. Something tells me everyone avoids PDA with Sam for a reason. This girl walked up to Sam and gave her a hug.

Sam: "Sis, thank goodness you're here. I was bored up to my skull. We all know you're the life of the party."

This must be the infamous Ntombi. I could see the resemblance as they stood next to each other. I don't know what Nathi saw in such a tall chick, she's even taller than him. I guess I know nothing about love. I saw Eve roll her eyes while staring at them.

Ntombi: "Ag, you know how Zoro is. He took his damn time."

Yep, another coconut to try and ruin our trip. She came towards us and tried to hug Eve, but Eve blatantly refused.

Eve: "Ntombi, kucala nini si hugana vele (Since when do we hug each other)? Please, I don't want your negativity rubbing off on me before we even board our flight."

She tried to fake a smile but I could tell how hurt she was by Eve's refusal to her gesture. I got the feeling everyone respected Eve and wanted to be in her circle. It's not easy for Eve to like a person I guess. She's the big Boss's wife after all. Ntombi ignored my presence flatly, but Eve wouldn't let her get away with such a stunt.

Eve: "Since you're acting blind, I'll do the honours. This is Chichi, Nathi's future wife."

Ntombi gave me the same look Sam did when I introduced myself to her. I was a bit hurt by her filthy look, but I tried not to show her. I didn't want to give her the satisfaction.

Ntombi: "Since when do we bring tellytubies to our trips? This girl just came off her formula. No man, Nathi has clearly dropped his standards."

I felt like telling her kak right there and then, but that would make me look immature, so I kept quiet.

Eve: "Well, Nathi never dropped his standards, he clearly improved them. You're old and used, Ntombi. You even dated Zoro just to try and get Nathi back. Stay in your lane, sisi. You're trash."

Ntombi sat down and clicked her tongue while she mumbled under her breath. Eve kept me by her side and I really enjoyed it. I could see this trip was already going to be dramatic.

I thought we were all sorted, until Menzi appeared with a very beautiful, Melanin queen. He looked so different, much much better and well rested. I even felt so emotional just looking at him. I had no idea he was out of Denmark.

Menzi smiled as he walked towards us with the girl's hand in his. He ignored Sam and Ntombi and walked to Eve and I first. Even hugged him and the girl. She introduced herself as Pulane. She's so beautiful and Tswana as I picked up from her accent.

Menzi looks so good and I already felt his positive energy radiating all over the airport. He came towards me and gave me a nice, long hug.

Menzi: "It's good to see you, sis."

Chichi: "I'm so glad you're better."

Menzi: "I am. All thanks to this awesome woman. My Pulane, I'll tell you more about her once we get to Cape Town."

I smiled and nodded as he went over to the guys, while Eve squeezed Pulane in between us. Sam and Ntombi looked really pissed. They're not going to enjoy this trip at all.

Chapter 30

Chichi

We finally made it onto the plane. My spirits were really high especially after seeing Menzi looking this amazing. It shows that therapy really does wonders to a person's spirit.

We all walked hand in hand with our partners, well except for Zoro and Thomas. They really seem like those common kasi guys who don't do PDA at all. Ntombi kept trying to get Zoro to hold her hand until he got tired of it.

Zoro: "Kgante dintshang ka wena Ntombi (What's with you today)? Go thoma neng re tshwarana matsogo (Since when do we hold hands)?! Aowa man (No man)."

I could see the hurt in her eyes as Nathi kept holding my hand and kissing it. Even Biggie is so affectionate towards Eve. I ask myself how she ended up with such a big dude and how they do the deed with that tummy, but love knows no bounds I guess.

Menzi was just all over Pulane while Ntombi and Sam were sulking. We were flying business class and we were all seated with our partners, except for Zoro and Thomas, who were seated next to each other, while Sam and Ntombi were together behind Nathi and I.

I kind of felt Nathi was being overly affectionate to piss them off deliberately, but I wasn't complaining. I felt so nervous and scared when the plane was about to take off as I heard Ntombi try and make a nasty comment about my fear.

Ntombi: "You know, Sam. Some people are just not used to the high life. They don't even fit in it."

Sam laughed, but her laughter was short lived when Nathi made a bomb statement.

Nathi: "You know, Chichi. I love you so much, more especially for the fact that you're so humble and honest. Some women act like they know everything, forgetting that they were taken from the gutter to a brick house all because their pussies could take them places. You know what they say, you can take the girl out of the ghetto, but you can't take the ghetto out of the girl."

I wanted to burst in laughter right at that moment. I would have paid a fortune just to see the looks on their faces.

The flight was a bit long and tiring, but I loved seeing the view of the sky while I was in between the clouds. We finally arrived at our destination and were taken to one of the best Hotels in Cape Town. Thank goodness it's close to the beach because I've always dreamt of going to the beach. I wish Tshiamo was here with me but one day I'll bring her here.

Lebo lives somewhere in Cape Town. Maybe we'll get to see her one of these days. We got to the hotel and were taken to our rooms. I really felt like taking a nap, but Nathi was having none of that. He hugged me from behind and kissed my cheek as I was admiring the beauty of the ocean from our window.

Nathi: "I love you so much, Chichi. I really thank you for choosing me. I know it hasn't been easy, but you chose me over your Mom. I promise to make you happy and You'll never regret the decision you took. You're amazing, baby wa ka (my baby) and I appreciate you, my Pedi queen."

Wow, that got me a bit emotional. Nathi always says nice things to me, but not this nice. I hope he isn't proposing to me or anything. I turned around and I saw tears in his eyes. He was really genuine about what he just said. He got me all teary eyed as well and I kissed him passionately. I've gotten a lot better at this kissing thing all thanks to the best teacher ever. He's been really sweet and never thought of pressuring me into having sex with him. Maybe we'll have sex once I'm 17, I don't know. He surely won't be able to hold out that long.

Nathi told me to take a shower as they had planned a nice, little surprise for us girls. They booked us nice treatments at the spa, a whole full course. I've never been to a spa before, but judging from what I've seen on tv, it must be pretty relaxing. Mandi also told me how nice it is as he goes with his mom at times. He also suggested that since Nathi and I weren't having sex, I should try giving him a blow job every now and then.

I'm not even comfortable with the idea of thinking about a dick in my mouth, let alone putting it in there. Some women really have guts I tell you. I found Eve outside



my room as she pulled me to her while we walked down the stairs. Our rooms are on the same floor, along with Pulane and Menzi's. Ntombi and Sam's rooms are on a different floor. Call me weird, but I think they wanted it like that.

We were first to arrive at the spa and went to the changing rooms to change. Pulane came a few seconds later, while Sam and Ntombi arrived right after her. We had to be naked and I've never really been naked in front of any other women before apart from Tshiamo and my mom. I've never had any issues with my body so I decided to also get naked right there.

Pulane has a beautiful body; not too big and not even small. She's petite, with small boobs and small bums, with small curves too. No mokgaba at all.

Eve is a busty woman; she has nice, rounded and big bums with full breasts, also no mokgaba even though she has two kids.

Ntombi has the model package; Tall, no ounce of fat on her body, very small bums and average sized breasts also no mokgaba. She looked like a Victoria Secret model which made me feel a tad bit of jealousy.

Sam on the other hand is also think like Ntombi, but a bit shapeless if you ask me. Her bums are almost non existent, while her breasts look a bit worn out for her age. She hardly wears a bra, that's probably why, even though she has a beautiful face. She looks way older than what she is.

I on the other hand am a Size 36, I'm not fat, I'm just average weight. I have c cup breasts, which are nice and round and Nathi loves playing with them. I have caramel skin much like Eve and I have curves for days with fairly big bums, but not as big as Eve's. Those ones take the cup out of all of us. I could see Ntombi and Sam looking at me deliberately trying to scan and zoom in on my body.

Eve:"Chichi, your body is amazing, babe. I was that perfect when I was your age, but after two kids, I've gained a few kilos."

Pulane:"Nonsense, Eve. You look perfect. I'd kill for an ass like that."

Eve:"Thank you, babe. It's a mission caring for a big ass. At times I just wish I had a normal, small ass, you know. It gets in the way of the deed at times."

Pulane laughed softly while I smiled. Ntombi tried to be nasty once again.

Ntombi:"Let's refrain from talking about adult stuff around the toddler. We wouldn't want to corrupt her, now would we?"

I got seriously annoyed by this chick and I was on my last nerve. I expected Eve to answer, but Pulane did this time.

Pulane:"Ai, Ntombi. Ever since we hooked up you've been nothing but nasty towards Chichi. She's wktthe your ex now, deal with it. Take it like a lady and keep quiet with grace, man. O tla ka gore re ten, honestly (You're starting to seriously annoy us)."

Eve smiled with pride and so did I. I could tell why Menzi fell for Pulane. She also doesn't beat around the bush like Eve, but has this warmth that just makes you love her.

Sam: "You just got here two minutes ago and already you're acting like you know what you're talking about!"

Pulane: "I do know what I'm talking about wena Ms. Fake America. Instead of enjoying this trip which seems like its going to be your last with these guys, you're trying to be real bitches about it. You're just as tall as your filthy mouths. You'd better not step on my toes and you'd better leave Chichi and Nathi's names out of those cock sucking mouths before I show you how we Tswana women moer bitches like you! I can make you shrink in a split second!"

Yoh! Ba thate Pulane. Even just burst out laughing and I also couldn't help it. We walked out of the change room and left them standing there with their mouths hanging. I expected drama, but I just didn't expect it to occur this early into the trip. I'm going to enjoy this trip thanks to Pulane and Eve.

Chapter 31

Chichi

Eve, Pulane and I went to the spa ladies who were waiting for us, while San and Ntombi reluctantly followed us after they were aet straight by Pulane. We sat on our chairs as they started with our facials.

Eve: "So, Pulane, how did you andd Menzi meet?"

My eyes were covered with cucumbers, but I could tell she was smiling and blushing.

Pulane: "Well, I'm a Nurse by profession so I had gone to do my rounds as usual at Denmar, and that's when I met him. He seemed really down and lost and really seemed like all he needed was someone he could talk to. Dr. Stewart had been complaining saying in all his 20 years of being a psychologist, He's never had a problem like Menzi. Menzi was just not cooperating, he refused to speak as he was just staring in space most of the time.

It was pretty hard because he couldn't exactly give him any medication without proper diagnosis. Even when Nathi came to see him, he didn't speak, all he did was eat the food he brought and listen to Nathi talk. That's when I greeted him out of politeness. I kept asking myself how such a handsome man ended up in a place like Denmar.

I thought perhaps his wife died or something, but as soon as he explained everything to me, I felt so heartbroken. Even Dr. Stewart was surprised and thankful that I could get Menzi to talk. We sat and spoke for hours that day, Dr. Stewart even delegated my duties to another Nurse. Imagine talking from 9:00 in the morning until 7pm when it was my knock off time.

I've never had such a beautiful conversation with such a decent man. What I love about Menzi is that he's an open book. We even took a walk around the garden and just had a conversation. That's when I realized I've never had a fruitful conversation with the opposite sex before. He told me about what happened and how he doesn't know how to pick up the pieces, so all I could advise him on is to start with you, Chichi.

You guys only have each other now and that's all that matters. The rest will follow with time. My mom would always say "Go lla a go thusi (Crying doesn't help)", so it's important to heal from within before you start thinking of having a meaningful relationship with someone. We're all broken, but some are more damaged than others. I even told him about my past, which is something I never even told anyone. He's a very good listener and pretty sensitive. He didn't even want me to leave when it was time, so I gave him my number and he called me as soon as I got home as we spoke all night. The following day he was all smiles, he had shaved and put on his best outfit, and asked me to attend his session with Dr. Stewart with him.

During those sessions, I also learnt to forgive myself and the people who've hurt me. He stayed there for a week and we've been spending time together ever since. Two months later, here we are."

Wow, it just sounded like such a beautiful love story. I never knew Menzi was such a sweetheart.

Eve:"Hehe, Menzi is a real soft ball, Pulane, hey. When I saw you walk in with him at the airport, I knew you would be a good match for him. Menzi doesn't like skanks, at all."

Pulane giggled and I knew that was a shot fired at the two poles next to us. I trust Sam to try and ruin a beautiful conversation.

Sam:"Ag, why are we talking about such boring things? Life isn't a movie, you know."

Pulane:"Chee (No)! Ga ke gopole re bua le lena mos (I don't recall us including you in this conversation)."

Ouch, dankie Pulane. Queen of shade. Ntombi tried to defend her fellow giraffe.

Ntombi:"Ag, Sam, leave these people, hey. Some people just act like they're way better than us whereas they've only been fucked for a mere two months and suddenly they act like wives."

I expected Eve to jump in, but I think she knew Pulane had the same personality and could fight her own battles.

Pulane:"Hee, nnana (No, nana). Ge o batla go bua o ska bua ka do third person (If you want to say something, don't speak about people in third person). Ke nna ( I'm that somebody you're referring to) somebody oo, and I don't think I'm better than anyone. I don't even recall thinking I was married, but I do know that Menzi proposed to me." We were all stunned and took off our cucumbers from our eyes. We were so caught up in drama, we didn't notice the ring, but I don't recall her wearing it at the airport. She flashed us her ring finger and Eve and I were balling in excitement. Those two were so upset, they decided to leave. Good riddance.

Me:"Pulane, wow man, congratulations! When did this happen?"

Pulane:"Thank you, Chichi. He proposed last week. He took me to Harties and I just thought it was a normal baecation, but once we got on the boat ride, he proposed to me in the most romantic way ever."

Ja ne, it's true what they say: when you want something you really have to go for it, no matter what. I guess Menzi shot his shot.

Eve: "Hehe, I'm so happy Menzi is finally happy and I know you two will be okay. Don't mind those two, they are bitter and unhappy nje."

Pulane: (smiling) "My mother taught me to pay no mind to fools, empa ge o ka bua masepa ke tlo go bontsha gore Batswana re dira jang (But if you talk shit I'll show you how we Tswana's deal with that)."

The three of us laughed as we continued with our pamper session. We were now being massaged and I loved how these women worked their hands on my body. Nathi is good at giving me massages, but not this good. The conversation was nice and flowing, and after a few glasses of champagne, the topic obviously turned to sex.

Pulane: "Eve, ke kopa go botsa hle (May I ask you a question)? And please don't be offended."

Eve: "Shoot, babes. Ngilalele (I'm all ears)."

Pulane: "How do you and Biggie do the deed? I mean doesn't that tummy get in the way of things?"

I thought Eve would be offended and start throwing the F word around, but nope. She did the exact opposite. She burst out in laughter causing Pulane and I to laugh as well.

Eve: "I've been dying to hear someone ask me that question, hey. Nobody ever asks, not even my sisters or friends. I guess they're afraid of me. Biggie and I have a very active sex life. His bloody stomach is huge because he just likes to eat junk. I've been trying to get him on a diet for years, but he just won't budge. So, since he likes food more than me, he has to pick up his extra stomach while were busy. We can do pretty much any position and I make sure he hits it from behind to remind him that he just needs to lose weight."

I couldn't believe this woman. She's so open about everything and I'm so glad she loves Biggie for who he is, not for his money.

Eve: "Besides

his head game is on point. Biggie can muff me til I scream out all his names on his ID."

Pulane laughed while I blushed. I don't even know what muffing is. I'm so inexperienced, but I'm willing to learn so I paid attention.

Eve: "A lot of people judge us when they see us walking together. They think I'm just a trophy wife, but they have no idea what Biggie and I went through. I was there even when he had nothing and I still fell for him though he was fat. I hope one of these days he'll take his health seriously and lose some weight. Our kids still need their father."

She's so sincere and so in love with him after 15 whole years. Love is such a beautiful thing.

Eve: "Chichi, you're quiet. Don't tell me you're still a virgin."

Me: "Well, yes, I still am."

Eve was so shocked, but Pulane wasn't at all.

Eve: "Yoh! Serious?!"

Me: "Yes."

Pulane: "That's nice, love. I'm also a virgin."

Pulane said and Eve was double shocked. I was also surprised, I mean she's a bit old to be a virgin, right?

Eve: "Hayibo! How old are you, Pulane?"

Pulane: "I'm 22."

Eve: "Hai shem! You two are queens! I have mad love and respect for you now. Menzi and Nathi must be brave as fuck. Being around such hot girls and not having sex must be a killer!"

The three of us laughed. Eve is crazy shame. I'm pretty amazed that Pulane managed to stay a virgin for this long. I hope I can be able to hold it out a bit longer, even though I'm so tempted to give it up.

Nathi

Menzi, Biggie, Thomas and Zoro were at the Bar having a drink. I'm really glad I got to do this for Chichi. I've never felt this way about any other woman before, not even about Ntombi. I genuinely thought I loved her back in the day, but it wasn't this authentic. These past few months I got to learn a lot about myself. She keeps me calm and sane, and I can't sleep without inhaling her beautiful scent.

I know she's young, but she treats me with so much respect. I love how she's not even in it for the money. She's so genuine and I love her more for that. I just can't wait for the day I make love to her. I'm willing to wait, even though my dick is starting to hurt really badly. I even use my hand at times, but sleeping next to her every night makes it even more difficult. I've never stayed this long without sex, but Chichi is worth it.

The gents could see I was deep in thought and snapped me out of it.

Thomas: "Eh, Nathi mfo, o shap (are you okay)?"

Nathi: "Sho sho, Tman. Ngi grand (I'm good)."

Biggie: "Ah, he's whipped. Can't you see Chichilicious has him smitten? Phela kuku e mphya ya tsefa (New pussy is nice)."

Thomas, Zoro and Biggie laughed, except for Menzi and I.

Menzi: "Mxm, ah voetse (piss off), man Biggie. That's my sister."

Nathi: "Ja, man. Don't talk like that about her, besides we haven't had sex yet."

Zoro, Biggie and Thomas were astonished.

Zoro: (laughing) "Eh, Nathi, wa rocka ne (you rock). Go thoma neng wena o sa bethe pleke (Since when do you not have sex with a chick)?"

Nathi: "Since she's not just any chick. I'm in love bafwethu."

Biggie: "All I can say is that I'm proud of you. Love is a beautiful thing. I was like that when I met Eve."

Thomas: "Ah, love is overrated, gents."

Zoro: "You're just saying that because Pabi o go robile pelo (broke your heart)."

Menzi: "You'll find someone who loves you for you, the way Pulane loves me."

Zoro: "Hehe, how did that happen, Menzi?"

Menzi: (smiling) "I met her at Denmar and fell for her the moment I heard her voice."

Thomas: "Mxm, ah, that's sounds so cheesy, man. Le betha bo di Days of our Lives, hierso."

Nathi: "Ska ba le jealous wena (Don't be jealous, man). E le gore wena o dirang le suster ya Ntombi (What are you doing with Ntombi's sister)?"

Thomas: "Ah, ne e le bo di last minute plans, wa bona (It was a last minute thing). I couldn't rock up here alone, ke tshware kerese all week. Who was I going to fuck?"  
We all laughed. Thomas doesn't want to change.

Nathi: "Ah, Thomas man. Be o le waar maobane boshigo (Where were you last night)? I had to take your annoying chick home."

Thomas: "Ah, eish fan. Ne ke nale die ane medi wa bona (I was with this other chick of mine, you see). Eish, daai baby o nshapile bo ma five round and nako eo ntoto ne setse e panchitse (Eish, that chick gave me five rounds and that time my dick was already super tired)."

We all burst out laughing.

Biggie: "Bjanong why o sa tla le ena (So why didn't you bring her) instead of Sam?"

Thomas: "Ah, eish, flop Sam has been nagging me saying Ntombi o tlo borega hierso a le one (Ntombi would be bored alone here) with the new crew, and besides daai baby (that girl) o nale ntwana and o sale mfana (has a baby and the baby is still small)."

Ai, I trust Thomas to get involved in a sticky situation.

Zoro: "Eh, Nathi, I hope you don't have a problem ka nna le Ntombi (with Ntombi and I)."

To be honest, I couldn't care less. Ntombi and I are a thing of the past and I intend on keeping it that way.

Nathi: "Ska wara (Don't worry), Zoro. I don't have anything against you two. I'm just surprised you went for her though. You never liked her."

Zoro: "I still don't like her."

We all got puzzled and looked at him.

Zoro: "Keng (What)? I don't like her, e no na wa nyoba daai kind (She can really give a good fuck)."

We all burst out laughing.

Biggie: "You two, you'll learn the hard way that women need to be respected."

Zoro and Thomas kept laughing. While we kept on drinking and chatting, Sam and Ntombi came out of nowhere.

Ntombi: "Hey, guys."

She put her arm around my shoulders and I gave her a death stare.

Nathi: "Ufuna ukufa (Do you want to die), Ntombi?"

Ntombi removed her arm from my shoulders as soon as I said that.

Ntombi: "Sorry, I was just trying to be nice."

Menzi: "Go be nice, somewhere else."

Sam: "We thought we could join you."

Thomas: "Ag, man Sam Tsek (piss off). Vaya hier (Go away)!"

They both left looking humiliated. Those two are looking for trouble and I need to sort Ntombi out before she stirs up trouble between Chichi and I.

Biggie: "And that's what you get for trying to make a whore think she's the main chick."

Chapter 32

Chichi

The spa day was really amazing. We went back to our rooms to prepare for dinner. Apparently we all need to have dinner together tonight. I have no problem with that except for the evil sisters. I've been quiet and avoiding their comments and snirks all day, and them leaving us at the spa really helped.

This whole Ntombi thing is not sitting well with me so I want Nathi to tell me exactly what went down between him and Ntombi. I got to our room and found Nathi nicely dressed in Nike from head to toe, draped in his new Dior perfume he bought the other day. I decided to wear my Chiffon and Lace short strip Gucci dress with my Black Strap stilettos. It's high time those two got to know who I am.

I found Nathi fixing himself and waiting for me. He smiled as he saw me.

Nathi: "You look beautiful, beautiful."

Me: "Thank you."

He was about to grab his jacket and my jean jacket as well, until I stopped him.

Me: "Can we talk?"

Nathi: (frowning) "When a woman says that it's usually bad news."

Me: "What exactly happened between you and Ntombi?"

He raised his eyebrow in amusement before he could answer.

Nathi: "Why are you asking me about Ntombi? What did she do to you?"

Me: "Nothing, she just keeps making these funny remarks and unnecessary comments towards me. Sam even told me that after this trip I'll be a thing of the past as you and Ntombi belong together."

Nathi laughed. Well, I'm displeased that he finds my insecurities funny.

Nathi: "Baby wa ka (My baby), Ntombi is my past. She doesn't even qualify to be there any more after what she did to me."

Me: "May I ask what she did to you?"

Nathi: (sigh) "I used to love Ntombi, a whole lot. I actually thought she was the one. I was 20 then and I was prepared to marry her. I saved up a whole lot of money and even built her mother a house. I took her out of a squatter camp and placed her into a brick house. That's how much I loved her. I didn't have much then, but I was hustling my ass off. She told me she was pregnant, so I got some money to pay lobola for her. I didn't want my child to be born out of wedlock. I paid lobola, and once the baby was born, I found out it wasn't mine. To top it all off, she had organized people from the

street to pose as her uncles so that she could blow all my lobola money. I hustled for months and paid R50 000 for her lying ass. Can you believe it?"

I could see how angry that made Nathi, it broke me to see him so hurt. His voice was even shaky.

Me:"How did you find out it wasn't your baby?"

Nathi:"The baby came out white. That's when she confessed she had cheated on me with a white man."

Wow. Now I've heard it all. Little Miss Perfect cheated on Nathi and had a baby with another man. She even conned him out of his lobola money. Women can be so cruel.

Nathi:"She told me after the birth of her son how I would never match up to the white man she cheated with since I had nothing. I was so broken, I won't lie. Few months later she heard I had a chesa nyama and came running back, saying she's sorry and would like us to fix things."

Ntombi really isn't normal, at all. How can you hurt someone like that and still have the audacity to come back and say let's fix things?

Me:"I'm really sorry about what she did to you."

Nathi:"That was the day I lost it. I had been carrying around all the anger inside of me and I just lost it. I beat her up so badly, I broke one of her ribs. That was the last time I swore to myself that I'd ever lay a hand on a woman."

Wow, I never figured Nathi for a violent man. Yes, he gets angry and has a bit of a temperament, but I can't imagine him beating up a woman. I held his hands and kissed his lips passionately.

Me:"I love you, my Nathi."

Nathi: (smiling) "I love you too, baby. Don't you worry About Ntombi, I'll soet her out."

I nodded and smiled. Now at least I know there will never be a loophole for Ntombi to get back with Nathi. I'm safe, so I can relax. We walked out hand in hand and met each other at a nearby Beach restaurant. I love the amazing view and the cool breeze that hits you while you sip on your beverages. We found Eve, Biggie, Pulane and Menzi waiting for us already. Everyone was sitting next to their partners, so Nathi sat next to Eve as I sat next to him.

Eve:"Let's order some drinks while we wait for the rest of the crew."

Pulane:"I agree."

There were so many cocktails to choose from and I had no idea which one was best. All I remember is watching a few tv shows and people would order Sex on the Beach, Mojito's and Martini's. I didn't want to embarrass myself so I whispered to Nathi and asked him which cocktail would suit me best since I'm still pretty much an alcohol virgin. He suggested I order a Mojito as it wasn't very heavy on alcohol.

I smiled and thanked him as he kissed my cheek and kept rubbing my thigh gently.

That sent electrifying waves across my body and some tantalizing signals down to my pussy. Nathi calls it that, so I have to get used to it. Eve ordered a glass of red wine,



while Pulane ordered a Corona. I never figured her to be a beer lover, but good for her. She's a breath of fresh air.

Biggie:"Ao man, Menzi, o te kereyetse mosadi wa go nwa beer, mfanaka (you scored yourself a beer lover)."

Menzi: (smiling) "Yes, she's low maintenance."

We all laughed while Pulane rolled her eyes.

Eve:"Pulane, uyikhona kanjani into leyo (How do you cope with the taste of that thing)? Imbi (It's so bitter)."

Pulane: (laughing) "E ya ka di taste buds

ngwaneso (It goes with your taste buds, sis). I've never been able to stomach sweet things except champagne when we make toasts. Other than that, I stick to beer."

Nathi:"I like a girl who knows what she wants. Menzi, you've got yourself a keeper, man."

Menzi smiled with pride as he kissed Pulane's cheek. Biggie was also all over Eve, I just love their relationship. Eve is not ashamed of her husband at all, she says that true love is when you don't fall for the looks, but when you fall for someone who loves you more than you love them. She says a man who loves you like that would never break your heart.

Zoro appeared with Thomas, while Thomas had Sam clinging onto him like he was about to escape. Ntombi was nowhere to be seen.

Biggie:"Manje (And then)? Uphi uNtombi (Where's Ntombi)?"

Zoro looked so annoyed he sat down next to me and I was grateful for that. I can't have myself sitting next to Ntombi.

Zoro:"Mxm, that one. She kept saying I must walk slowly with her because her shoes were getting trapped in the sand. Nna ga ke na nako ya the bold and the beautiful, ke nyaka go nwa bjala (I don't have time to play The Bold and the Beautiful, I want to drink alcohol)."

We all laughed while Sam looked seriously pissed. Thomas yanked his arm out of her grip and sat next to Zoro.

Sam:"I thought we're going to be seated as couples. Zoro, my sister is supposed to sit next to you."

Zoro:"Ah, man Samantha, wa bala bala yoh (you complain too much). Nna gona daar o tla nna le ena man (Sit right there, she can sit next to you)."

Sam sat down looking really defeated, I don't get why they keep appearing if we truly bore them so much. As the conversation started flowing, Ntombi appeared after about 15 minutes. She saw no one except Sam was paying attention to her so she decided to be her dramatic self.

Ntombi:"But Zoro, How could you just ditch me like that?! I could have been killed or something!"

Zoro: "Well you're here now, aren't you? Nna fatshe o tlogele go bolela thata (Sit down and stop complaining)."

I actually feel a bit sorry for her and Sam. I don't get why they keep pestering guys who're just not interested in them

Sam: "Wow, Zoro. Is this how you treat me in front of your friends?! Look at how they're acting around their girlfriends and you treat me like this?!"

Zoro was seriously unimpressed with Ntombi's little performance.

Zoro: "Ey, ey, ey Ntombizodwa! Ke rile nna fatshe or fokof, man, fok (I said sit down or fuck off, man, fuck)! I'm not here to nurse your feelings. Ever since this trip started you've been nothing, but an annoying bitch, nywe nywe ke wena voreg, motshegare, boshigo (you complain morning, day and night)! Sit down and behave or else I'll book you a flight back home tomorrow morning. Better yet o tla boela ka Train, seso (you'll go back via train, sis)."

Everyone kept quiet and looked at them. Ntombi seriously looked like she was about to burst into tears. My heart actually broke for the little devil. Eve and Pulane didn't seem bothered at all.

Ntombi said down and apologized to the unbothered Zoro.

Eve: "Now that that's out of the way, I'd like to make a toast since we're here to celebrate the engagement of Menzi and Pulane."

Sam muttered under her breath.

Sam: "Must we celebrate something everyone knows of?"

Thomas looked at her.

Thomas: "Voetsek, Sam (Piss off, Sam)."

She quickly reprimanded herself and kept quiet.

Eve: "To the beautiful new couple. I wish you nothing, but the best and the finer things in life. You two complement each other and are a true definition of true love. May God always be at the center of your marriage and may He bless you with dozens of Children. Cheers!"

We all held our glasses up, including the two evil sisters and toasted together.

## Chapter 33

### Chichi

The dinner was really nice. The conversation was flowing and so were the drinks. I decided to have Savanna after that one Mojito. I wanted to avoid the vomiting scene again. After a few hours, everyone was all over their partners, even Zoro and Thomas switched seats to sit next to their partners. Thankfully Zoro never moved next to me so I was safe.

Biggie suggested we go to a club nearby. I've never been to a club before, I'm only 16. But these people treat me like an adult so I guess it's time I act like one. Nathi noticed that I wasn't too keen on it.

Nathi: (whispering in my ear) "Are you okay with us going to the club, baby? We can stay in if you're not comfortable."

I like how Nathi is always ready to drop everything for me, but I figured perhaps it's time I do something for him.

Me: "It's okay, baby. We can go."

He smiled like a little boy when he heard me call him baby for the first time since we started dating. He couldn't keep his hands off me while Ntombi kept side eyeing me, but I just didn't care. Biggie paid the bill as a token of appreciation to Menzi and we were celebrating him being all healthy again and his engagement to Puleng. The ten of us got into our rented Mercedes Viano. Although it's a 7 seater, Thomas and Zoro didn't mind having Ntombi and Sam on their laps.

By the time we got to the club Nathi showed me how Zoro and Thomas had boners poking from their pants. We both laughed and thankfully no one bothered to ask what that was all about as we all were minding our business. We got into the club and it was a bit packed and loud. The disco lights and coloured lights could make one dizzy, but I felt I could handle it. Thankfully Biggie hired a VIP booth for us and we got there. We could still hear the music, but it was a lot better than being around hundreds of people we don't know.

The guys left us girls in the booth so they could order alcohol for us. I sat in between Eve and Pulane, while Ntombi sat next to Eve and Sam next to Ntombi.

Eve: "So, Chichi, are you feeling okay? I bet this is your first club scene."

Chichi: "I'm okay, thanks, Eve. I'm actually liking it."

Pulane: "Be careful that you don't get corrupted. I can tell Eve was a wild one back in the day."

The three of us laughed while Ntombi decided to be a mood killer yet again.

Ntombi: "Ug, is this trip a baecation or all about Chichi?! Why do we always have to nurse her fucking feelings?!"

I decided that I had kept quiet for way too long. This chick doesn't even know me and yet she has a problem with me. I had had a few drinks in my system and I was not about to let her have her way with me-not again.

Me: "In case you haven't noticed, Ntombi, nobody gives a shit about you here, not even Zoro. I've tolerated you enough for one day and I was just trying to be polite. You can either decide to keep your fake ass shut or be nice to me, before I send you back to Stoffel park, where you come from! Don't think nobody knows you fucked a white man and hurt Nathi, you little shit. Ke ngwanenyana wa Seshego nma (I'm a Seshego girl), you don't know me. So you'd better stay in your lane pele ke go pharola mogwete (before I rip your asshole into two)!"

Everyone was beyond shocked and stared at me. I wasn't even moving an inch.

Pulane was the first to burst out laughing, while Eve followed afterwards.

Eve: "And that's what you get for calling a grown woman a child, Ntombi. Serves you right for testing Nathi's woman's patience like that. Uyaphapha nawe (You're too forward)."

The guys came back and squeezed themselves inbetween us. I didn't even care anymore, I decided I was done being the nice teenager who let people walk all over

her. Ntombi doesn't know me from anywhere and she's always been on my case since she met me. Nathi kissed me and I responded.

Nathi:"O shap (Are you okay), beautiful?"

I nodded, but Pulane couldn't wait to let the guys know what had just happened.

Pulane:"Heh, Nathi! Nkabe o bone mosadi wa gao a roga ntwe ya go hloka mekgwa hle (You should've seen your woman awear at this ill-mannered thing)."

Nathi looked at me and I gave him a reassuring look that I was okay.

Biggie couldn't stop laughing while Zoro seemed unbothered. I guess I'm really not the only one who was tired of her attitude. We got up and started to dance. I could see Pulane was a good dancer and she pulled Menzi to go dance with her on the dance floor. Eve was busy grinding on Biggie's lap, while Zoro and Thomas were smoking. I know Nathi is a good dancer and I'm not very good at it. I learnt a few moves from Mandi, but I think I lack rhythm. Nathi knows how much I hate dancing, but he just wouldn't budge. He pulled me to the dancefloor as well and danced with me.

Nathi: (whispering) "Follow my moves, beautiful."

I smiled and nodded. I tried to follow, I really did. It's amazing what alcohol and music does to one's body. Alcohol convinces the mind that you're good at whatever it is you feel like doing and the body responds. You feel like you rock, when at times you don't. Nathi was impressed though. He seemed to be enjoying my dance moves, but I bet even if I was horrible at it he would still be nice about it.

He turned me around as my ass was facing his crotch, and we danced while grinding against each other. I've seen this scene on too many movies and now that I'm experiencing it myself, I'm feeling tons of wetness down there. His hands were traveling up and down my breasts and down to my waist, while I could feel his warm breath against my neck.

Nathi:"Shit, Baby, you're so beautiful."

Those words just drove me crazy. We danced the night away and left the club at 2am. My legs were tired as hell and my pussy was screaming for Nathi. I don't even know what to expect, but we're both drunk and very much horny. We got in our room and the moment the door closed behind us Nathi gave me a passionate, deep kiss. I didn't hesitate and I responded immediately. He kept moaning in my mouth and I in his. Tasting your lover's alcohol scented saliva in your mouth feels so amazing. I felt so hot and tingly everywhere. I felt so invincible, so I decided to act on impulse. I removed his shirt as he dropped my dress. He rubbed my breasts and uncupped my bra a while after. He stared at them for a minute.

Nathi:"Shit

Chichi, o nketsang (what are you doing to me)?"

Me:"Oh... Nathi, I need you."

He kissed my neck as I unbuttoned his pants. He took off my panties, while I took off his briefs. We were both naked and it was the very first time I got to see Nathi's dick. It looked so huge and long, I swallowed hard while staring at it.

Nathi: "Baby, we don't have to do this."

I know we didn't have to, but I wanted to. It might be a bit too premature, but I wanted to.

Me: "I want to."

He nodded and lay me flat on the bed. He kissed me so deeply and slowly this time. He pulled out and his lips nibbled and sucked on my breasts. It felt so magical, I loved every moment of it. The louder I moaned, the better he got at it. He kissed me all the way down to my waist. As he planted kisses on my waist, I felt tickly butterflies down there. He opened my legs wider as he planted wet kisses on my inner thighs. I realized he was about to muff me as Eve calls it and I pushed his head away. I'm not sure if I want his face down there.

Nathi: "Relax, baby. You'll love it, trust me."

I nodded and slowly let go of his head. He proceeded to lick my clit and I went wild. I've never felt such amazing sensations in all my life. No amount of food has ever tasted this good. I opened my legs wider voluntarily and he enjoyed that. He continued to eat me up as I screamed out loud. I felt so hot as my body tensed up just like that day he was fingering me and rubbing my clit.

Nathi: "Let go, baby. You taste so good, baby. Shit, come for me, Chichi. Rota fela baby (Cum, baby)."

His commands were driving me insane and I let loose. I felt myself shake and vibrate in a way I've never done before. I felt so embarrassed and covered my face.

Nathi: "Look at me, Baby. Please, look at me."

I slowly removed my hands and looked at him.

Nathi: "I love you, baby. Are you sure you want to do this?"

I just nodded.

Nathi: "I want to hear you say it."

Me: "I want to do this with you, baby."

He positioned himself on top of me.

Nathi: "It's going to hurt, baby. If you want me to stop at any given time, please don't be afraid to tell me."

I nodded as he kissed me and I kissed him back. I felt him try to enter me and it felt like something was forcing it's way into my small hole. I flinched a bit and he told me to try and relax. I tried to relax, but the pain was unbearable. He poked a few times until it went in eventually. I couldn't help but moan out in pain and an involuntary tear escaped my eye.

Nathi: "Fuck, Chichi. You're so tight."

The more he kept going, was the more painful it got.

Me: "Nathi, go bohloko (It's painful)."

Nathi: "I'm sorry, baby. Ke tlogele (Should I stop)?"

For some odd reason it was painful, but I didn't want him to stop. I shook my head.

Nathi: "I need to hear you say it, Chichi. Do you want me to stop?"

Me: "No, baby, continue."

After a while of him stroking inside of me, I felt a little bit of pleasure creeping in. It was still painful, but this time it got a little nicer. He kept stroking and cursing.

Nathi: "Fuck, Chichi, I love you. Kao rata san (I love you). You're so fucking tight."

He was moving slowly until his breathing started to change. He was breathing much faster and also stroking a lot faster. After a while I heard him growl as he gave me one big stroke and stopped. I assume that's when he ejaculated. It was flipping painful and I hope this is the last time I ever feel this pain during sex. He kissed me on the lips.

Nathi: "I'll be right back. Stay here."

I nodded as he got off and he came back with a towel to wipe me off. Shit, I just realized we didn't even use a condom!

Me: "Nathi! We didn't use a condom!"

Nathi: "Fuck, Chichi! I'm so sorry, I really don't know what got into me."

He felt so bad and guilty, but this was all my idea.

Me: "It's okay, as long as we get morning after pills tomorrow morning."

Nathi: "I'm so sorry, baby. The last thing I want is for you to become a teenager mom."

I'd also kill myself if that had to happen.

Me: "I know, baby. Let's try and sleep. I'm so tired."

Nathi: "Okay."

He kissed my forehead and looked at me.

Nathi: "Thank you so much for this gift, baby wa ka (my baby). I promise I'll never hurt you."

I nodded and dozed off.

Chapter 34

Chichi

I woke up with my vagina so painful. No one ever shows this part on tv after the first time you have sex. I looked around and Nathi wasn't in bed. I really hope he didn't ditch me in Cape Town. I checked my phone and it was 10am in the morning. Thank goodness I didn't wake up with a hangover this time. I guess Savanna is really my thing now, thanks to Glen. I tried to get out of bed and Nathi walked in holding a plastic bag.

Nathi: (smiling) "Good morning, Gorgeous."

Me: "Hey, baby."

Nathi: "How are you feeling?"

Me: "Yoh, Nathi. Ke kwa bohloko (I'm in pain)."

Nathi: "Askies, baby. It gets better with time. Here."

He passed me a small plastic with morning after pills in it. He gave me a bottle of water which he came with and I took the pills. The plastic bag also had grof salt in it with a bottle of tea tree oil.

Nathi: "I'm going to run you a bath. This will help soothe your pain."

Nathi is so sweet. I thought I'd wake up full of regret, but I actually regret nothing. I smile as I reminisce on what transpired last night. It's not everyday you hear a girl saying she got her virginity broken in Cape Town. Nathi came out and carried me to the bathroom bridal style. He didn't have to do that, though, but I'm not complaining. He kissed my forehead and left me to do my business. The warm water with the salt stung me a bit down there, but it felt really good after I was done. I felt much better. As I got out and dried myself, I found a nice maxi dress and shoes laid out for me on the bed, with a small note on top. "Thank you so much for last night, Baby wa ka (my baby). Meet you downstairs for breakfast. Xoxo Nathi".

I smiled to myself thinking how lucky I am to have him. I got dressed and let my hair down today. I walked downstairs and found the whole crew eating breakfast, even the evil sisters were there. I was the only one they were waiting on, which made me feel a bit embarrassed. Nathi saw me approach and he had the biggest smile on his face, that dimpled smile could make any girl fall for him. He quickly got up and pulled a chair for me to sit. I sat as he kissed my cheek and sat right next to me.

I greeted everyone and they greeted me back. Biggie and Eve looked at me smiling. Biggie: "Eh, baby, motho o kare o jele joy maobane (Someone got it all last night). Bona gore Nathi o ja di smarties bjang (Look how Nathi is all smiles)."

Everyone laughed except The evil sisters, while Nathi and I blushed.

Nathi: "Mxm, Tsek (piss off), man Biggie."

Biggie: (laughing) "Askies (sorry), Nathi nice."

We carried on eating even though I was a bit embarrassed. Nathi was all over me, kissing my hand and rubbing my thigh under the table, much to Ntombi's dismay. This girl really can't get over my Nathi, shame."

We had a long day ahead of us, going sight seeing. We went to our rooms to get the necessary items needed like hats, shades, cameras and not forgetting sun screen. Nathi got his shades as well and we headed out. We walked around in couples and at least Thomas and Zoro tried their best to get in tune with their partners by at least holding hands with them every now and then.

Nathi and I took so many pictures together, even some silly ones. I just love how he breaks out of his shell when he's with me. Biggie is like a silly toddler when he's around Eve, even with that big belly of his. I've gotten used to it now, I don't even notice it anymore. We took a few group photos as well, even though I didn't like the giraffes being part of it. But we came as a group and we had to make an effort as a group.

Today was just couple's day, there was no time for girls gossip. We had nice group lunch and headed back to the hotel a few hours later. Nathi told me that we're checking out and moving to a rented beach house today. So we took our bags and headed out. The house wasn't too far away, so it only took us about ten minutes from the Hotel. The house is really big and stylish

with six bedrooms. Werew ten people, so I guess we'll be sharing and one bedroom will be a spare. It's our second day here and I suppose things are about to get nicer.

Biggie and Eve picked the biggest bedroom. We didn't mind, since all the bedrooms were nice. Nathi and I got the one next to them, and Menzi and Pulane got one next to us, while the rest sorted themselves out. We were really full from the lunch, so The guys took out some alcohol and put it in a cooler as we headed out to the beach. We had our beach wear on and I had my shades and hat on, with my camera in my small beach bag.

While we were on our towels, the guys went into the water. It was now official gossip time.

Eve:"Whoo! Finally bathong! I thought they'd never give us some space!"

Pulane: (laughing) "You feel my pain."

Me:"Hao, guys. I thought you were enjoying the nice, quality time with your men."

Pulane:"O ska iketsa bhari hle (Don't act like a fool). You know what we want to hear. We want the juicy details about what happened last night."

I blushed from embarrassment as Ntombi made a comment. I was so looking forward to not hearing anything from her mouth for the rest of this trip.

Ntombi:"Oh, please. Do we really have to talk about Nathi's sex game? We all know he's good in bed, well I have the receipts."

Eve:"Who the fuck asked you for your dumb opinion? Ke tla bitsa Zoro (I'll call Zoro) to sort you out nou so (right now). Actually, let me call Nathi. Wa tella wena (You're disrespectful)."

Ntombi saw Eve attempt to get up and quickly apologized.

Ntombi:"Eve, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that."

Eve:"You never mean anything. Know your place. You're on your last chance, sesi. Next time I'll mess your face up."

Ntombi kept quiet and looked down.

Pulane:"So? How was it?"

Me:"Hao, guys. Did Nathi tell you?"

Eve:"He really didn't have to. I heard the whole show from next door. Oh, My Nathi, ke kwa bose hle (This is so good). I need you, my Nathi (imitating my voice)."

I felt myself get heated as I blushed as she and Pulane laughed.

Pulane:"Yoh! Eve mara! Wa tla wa mo tsholla hle (You just had to dish out everything)!"

Eve:"Askies, so out with it, miss thang."

Me:"Eish, it was fine, but bloody painful yoh!"

Eve:"It gets better with time. The next time it won't be so painful."

Me:"What was nice about it was that he sucked me down there before we even began."

Eve:"Hehe, I'm impressed! Nathi is into oral sex, I dig that. You do know you'll have to suck his banana one of these days, right?"

I don't know if I'll ever be able to do that.

Pulane:"Trust me, all men love it."

Me:"How do you know since you're a virgin?"

Pulane:"I'm a nurse, love. Trust me, all men love it. I can't wait for Menzi and I to get down and dirty. We've been patiently waiting."

I couldn't wait any longer. I'm just glad I don't regret it.

Pulane:"Please tell me you used protection."

I dreaded that question, but I had to be honest. I think they both saw my reaction as I looked down.



Eve: "Babe, no offence, but that was a dumb move. You're so smart, I wouldn't want you to end up like me. I fell pregnant at your age."

I know, I wasn't thinking straight.

Me: "I know, guys. It was the alcohol and everything that he was doing to me just made me forget a lot of sensible things. He brought me a morning after pill this morning."

Pulane: "I hope for your sake it works and get tested for hiv soon."

I love Pulane and Eve. They call a spade a spade without being judgmental. They are for sure going to be playing big sister roles.

## Chapter 35

### Chichi

It's Thursday now, we've been in Cape Town for nearly a week. We're leaving tomorrow and I'm a bit saddened by that fact. Nathi and I have been good, having the time of our lives. We went to get tested few days ago and we started using condoms right away.

He even applied to put me on his medical aid and suggested that I get on contraceptives just to be on the safe side. Condoms break at times so rather be safe than sorry. I'll be going to a gynae soon when I'm on my period so that I can get an IUD inserted. I have to get it done when I'm on my period, though.

Eve, Pulane and I have formed a great bond, while the two sisters remain miserable. They somehow had fights with Zoro and Thomas, and they ended up sharing the spare bedroom while those two slept alone in the other bedrooms.

Menzi and I had a great time during the course of the week. It's so nice to finally have a big brother who can protect and advise me. I asked him if we could go see Lebo, and although he was reluctant, he agreed to do so. I guess closure and answers are very important in one's life.

Nathi wants to be supportive though, as he asked to come with. Pulane and Menzi are basically two peas in a pod now so she's also coming with, for moral support. Luckily she also lives here in Fresnaye, so we don't have to drive very long to get to her house.

I texted her few days ago and literally begged her to see us and she agreed after a few days. It's tough being related to such people. We arrived outside her big mansion.

Lebo is a housewife and has been ever since she got married straight after high school. Her husband is a rich doctor who also comes from a well off family. She doesn't have money problems, although she doesn't have kids yet. She's been struggling to conceive and as much as it hurts her, she never shares that with any of us.

We arrived just outside and rang the intercom.

Lebo: "Yes?"

Yep, that's Lebo for you. She can be rude when she wants to.

Me: "Hi, it's me."

Lebo: "Do you have a name, 'me'?"

I got irritated, but kept my cool. I mean she has cameras outside facing gate so surely she can see who's in the car.

Me: "It's me, Chichi."

Lebo didn't respond after that, she opened the gate instead. So much for hostility. Her house is very majestic and beautiful. It just screams serenity. The waterfalls and roses and big garden are very much her style. The yard is big enough to host any event. As we drove in in silence, we were met by her helper at the door. My heart started beating way too fast. I'm pretty nervous for some reason, but Nathi held my hand and gave me a reassuring pat on the back.

Helper: "Good morning, Mrs. Mokoena will meet you just now. Please follow me."

We walked in and we were led to the lounge. Her house is beautiful with gray and white colours everywhere. It's too big for two people though. We sat as we were offered some drinks, but gently declined. We waited in silence for about ten minutes. I find it rude to keep your guests waiting, no matter what kind of animosity there is amongst you. I could see Menzi tapping his foot and I could tell he's frustrated. I just hope Lebo doesn't lose her cool and say mean things to him. He won't take it very well, especially after making such tremendous progress.

Lebo finally came down the stairs dressed like she was going to some Polo club. That was the typical country club outfit; reminding me of those Texas housewives who just spend their husband's money for a living.

Lebo: "Hi there, you made it."

Me: "Hi Lebo. Long time no see."

I stood up hoping she'd open her arms for a hug, but she was just hostile as fuck. That kind of hurt my feelings.

Lebo: "What do you want? Make it snappy Because I have elsewhere to be as you can see."

Wow, she didn't even beat around the bush.

Me: "Lebo, I just wanted to come see my sister. Menzi, our brother wanted to get to know you."

Lebo: "Ai, Chichi. You're just wasting your time, hey. Did Mama set you up to this?"

Me: "No, Mama disowned me."

Lebo: "So it's true? You're actually dating a gangster?"

She laughed out loud.

Lebo: "Well, good for you

Chichi. I'm glad you finally got out of that evil woman's claws."

I'm so clueless right now. What does she mean? From my understanding Mama has always been good to us until the recent situation with Menzi happened. She just changed in an instant according to me.

Nathi could sense how heartbroken I was and I was on the verge of crying. He quickly stood up next to me.

Nathi: "Look, Lebo. We didn't mean to disrupt your peace. All we came here for is to talk. Can you at least spare us a few minutes of your time? We came all the way from

Mamelodi. Your brother and sister came to see you, please. Just allow them the opportunity for closure.”

At least Nathi spoke some sense into Lebo. She stood there in silence for a few seconds contemplating her next move. She nodded and asked her helper to bring us some drinks.

Lebo:”Ausi Tshidi, ke kopa o re tlele tsa go nwa (Please bring us something to drink).”

Ausi Tshidi:”Okay, Madam.”

I don’t like the fact that such an old woman is calling Lebo madam, but anyway, she sat down on her own couch. Ausi Tshidi brought the drinks, all alcoholic, some wine and whiskey for Nathi and Menzi I assumed and some champagne for herself.

Lebo:”I assume you drink now, right Chichi?”

I nodded in shame. I don’t know why I felt ashamed. Lebo hasn’t been in touch with me for a long time. We poured ourselves a few drinks to loosen up. Alcohol can either bring out the best in any situation or the worst. I guess that’s why so many people relate to alcohol.

Lebo:”I’m all ears.”

I explained to her what happened with Menzi, from Joseph almost raping Pabi, to Mama calling Menzi a curse, to her disowning me and laying it all bare in front of the whole congregation. For some reason I expected her to be shocked, but she seemed really unphased by all this.

Lebo:”Why are you surprised, Nana?”

She used to call me that when I was younger before shit hit the fan between her and our mother.

Lebo:”Your mother has always been evil, man. Why do you think I left and never looked back?”

I looked at her confused.

Lebo: (sigh) “I once overheard her talking to Papa about the rape. Papa told her that he would never be a father to a rape child. I was hurt finding out that she dumped Menzi like that without even giving a damn. I was so angry at them both. I stormed into the bedroom and they were shocked that I stood outside listening in on their conversation.

I confronted them for being bad parents, and I told your mother shit for abandoning an innocent child. Papa got so angry at me, calling me disrespectful and all sorts of names. He dragged me to the kitchen floor and started beating me so badly with his belt. It wasn’t enough that I was getting bruised and had started bleeding. He started kicking me on my stomach continuously, saying these exact words to me “You’re filthy and don’t deserve to be a mother.

The Bible says honour your mother and father.” He gave me one hard kick and I bled immediately. That was the first day I got my period, and your parents’ actions that day is the reason I can’t conceive today.”

She narrated her story with tears falling down her cheeks. I've never seen Lebo cry. It broke me inside and I could see Menzi and Pulane crying too. Nathi held my hand tighter as we let Lebo finish.

Lebo: "I lay on the floor begging Mama to help me, but she just stood there telling me I deserve it. He got up again from his chair and beat me up again. All I remember was begging her to let him stop, and she just stood her, saying nothing and watched him kick me like a damn dog. I woke up a week later from hospital. My one fallopian tube was damaged due to the abuse I suffered at the hands of my parents that day, and as a result, I can't conceive. Doctors say I'll need a miracle to conceive, but 17 years later, I wouldn't bet on it."

That time she was hospitalized Mama had told us she had a bad fall. I cried so much thinking I hated Lebo for all the wrong reasons. How could Mama be so cruel to her own child? I don't blame Lebo for leaving us and never turning back.

Me: "Lebo, I'm so sorry. I really had no idea."

Lebo: "It's okay, Nana. It's really okay. I've tried forgiving her, but I just fail at that. I just thank God that Donald has always been loving and kind towards me even though I can't give him the one thing he needs. Menzi, I'm truly sorry for what you went through because of Julia, and I'm sorry I was never there for you-ever. Perhaps we can try and work something out. After all, we're all we've got now."

Menzi smiled briefly and wiped off his tears as Lebo got up to give him a long hug as they sobbed in each other's arms. I also craved her hug, but at that moment, Menzi needed it more than I did.

## Chapter 36

### Chichi

Yesterday was an emotional day and I thank Pulane and Nathi for being there for us. Lebo and I made peace and we ended up catching up on the good old days. I suggested that she learn and try to forgive Mama and Papa, and I told her God would bless her with a child as he did Sara in the Bible.

God is a God of wonders and as he says in Jeremiah 29 v11 "For I Know The Plans I Have For You' Declares the Lord, 'Plans to Prosper You and Not to Harm You, Plans to Give You Hope and a Future.'" I know indeed that better things await.

We caught an early morning flight and finally made it back home. We took an Uber back home and on our way I decided to check my phone. I haven't been online in days and Bree, Glen and Mandi have probably divorced me now. I checked my WhatsApp and I saw tons of statuses with Rea's pictures with the caption "R.I.P".

No ways, I suddenly became overcome with emotions as I went on Facebook. My newsfeed was filled with posts from people who knew her, even the school page that always posts gossip and negative news, had her pictures all over. I saw a post from Kamo "Rest in Peace, my dear friend. I'm sorry you couldn't cope with life, Heaven couldn't wait for you."

I was so confused, someone was talking about the video she posted, so I decided to scroll down on her wall and there was a video she posted just last night.

Rea: "This is for everyone who knows me, whether you loved me or not. I'm sorry to everyone I've hurt and I'm sorry for being such a bitch to some of you girls, especially you, Chichi. I'm tired of this life, this life of pretence and of lying to genuine people of God.

My own mother has made me this way. She has always raised high expectations of me and planned my life for me. I've had to live a lie in all my 16 years of life on this earth. I never wanted to be a doctor like she forced my brother to be, but I tried going down that route to please her.

Yes, I was sleeping with Mr. Legae, and as a result I fell pregnant. I couldn't face the shame it would bring unto my parents, so I got an illegal abortion done. My mother found out and instead of being supportive, she wants to send me away to Limpopo because she's ashamed of me. I ask this of you parents: please stop dictating your children's lives. Love and support them and be there for them at all times.

I leave you with the scripture from Matthew 7 v1: "Judge not and therefore you shall not be judged." I wish you'd find it in your hearts to forgive me friends and one last request to Micah, live your life and break free from Mama's evil chains. You are what you are today because of what she did to you. I love you, brother. Goodbye."

And just like that, those were Rea's last words to the world. Now I remember her last words to me that day "There's nothing left to live for." How I wish I could have saved her. Perhaps I should have lend a helping hand, but I failed a girl in need of a friend. Tears fell down my cheeks and Nathi got alarmed.

Nathi: "Baby, keng (what is it)?"

Me: "It's... It's... Rea... She, she killed herself."

Nathi held me so tight as I sobbed in his arms. We weren't friends or close for that matter, but she didn't deserve to die of depression and so alone like that. And just like that my Cape Town trip was clouded by a very dark cloud.

Since there is only one week left of the holidays, Mma moruti saw it fit to have Rea's funeral on Friday, the day before Mandi's birthday party. I was going to go alone with Glen and other classmates, but Nathi decided to join. Eve and Biggie joined us too along with Pulane and Menzi. It was really nice to see them go to church for once. I wore a black Versace dress with red stilettos while Nathi settled for a black suit. I've never seen him in a suit really and that body of his doesn't do that suit any justice. This is one of the reasons I hate wearing black clothes, they just remind me of funerals and sorrow.

We got into Nathi's car and drove off. We made it to the church after half an hour of driving. As we got out we were met by a very packed parking lot. We even had a hard time finding parking space.

I saw Menzi and Pulane and gave them hugs, and Biggie and Eve followed afterwards. Thomas and Zoro, the two naughty boys came alone this time and thank goodness for that. Glen came with Mandi and Bree and we hugged each other. As we were about to proceed to the very full church, we saw Mma moruti with Micah just outside. She was dictating to the ushers who they should let in and who must leave. This woman is really satan's wife. She should be crying and appreciating everyone who made it. She saw us approach and immediately walked briskly to us. Mma moruti: "What are you doing here?! It's bad enough your name was mentioned in that video Rea posted before she died, now you came here with your whole gangster squad?! Are you trying to shame me on my daughter's funeral?!"

I was so annoyed and I was about to answer, but Nathi did the honours.

Nathi: "Waitse keng Mma mfundisi (You know what)? We really don't have time for this. I don't want to call you names since I'm in the house of the Lord and I came to support my woman. If you keep annoying me and acting like you're better than these people you're trying to chase away, I'll get up on that podium and tell the whole world about what you did and still do to your son."

Nathi was so serious, he stared her right in the eye. Mma Moruti must have caught what Nathi was on about as she suddenly had a change of heart.

Mma moruti: "Fine, but I'm watching you."

I need to ask Nathi about all that, but right now I'd like to honour Rea's memory.

## Chapter 37

### Chichi

We proceeded to the church and it was so packed, I was in shock. Our school mates had a whole section filled by them and even some of our teachers made it. I looked around and spotted Mr. Legae in the crowd. The nerve of this guy, though. I saw Pabi sitting in front looking a little bigger than usual. I guess she's still pregnant.

We proceeded to take a seat in front, along with Mandi and Bree. We saw her beautiful, white coffin with a beautiful picture of her right in front of it. She really looked a bit younger in that picture, but a lot happier and peaceful.

She looked innocent then. Mandi started singing and the crowd just started bawling in tears. Mandi's voice is so angelic, it can make a person cry especially in a situation like this. It just taps into your soul.

We saw the program and it had Mma moruti written all over it. The whole church was decorated with red and white drapings and bows on every chair. Talk about going all out when the one person you're doing it for can't even thank you for it.

A few of our classmates went up to the podium to speak about her. I'm so glad they had nothing bad to say about her. Kamo even got up and apologized for not being there for her when she needed her most. She even spoke about Rea's beautiful art work.

There was even a slide show in front of us of her pictures. As Kamo spoke, a few pictures of Rea's art work and of her painting in her bedroom were being displayed.

She looked so happy and at peace. It's sad how our choices land us in the grave far sooner than we should be.

Micah walked up to the podium as it was his time to speak up. I can't help but think of Rea's video and her words to him. What did this woman do to him, though?

Micah:"I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ, bazalwane. Firstly, I'd like to humble myself before you and thank you for being here for my sister's farewell. She's smiling peacefully where she is right now. I'd like to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about Reamogetswe.

Rea was a very sweet girl from birth. She had always been free spirited and artistic, but our mother never liked that part about her. She always felt the need to control us." This is about to go sideways. I can feel it.

Micah:"Rea decided to end her life for a reason and one reason only: My mother. Mma Moruti isn't who you think she is, and if I don't speak up today, I'd be failing my own sister."

Mma Moruti wanted to walk up and stop him, but Ntate Moruti held her and pulled her back into her chair.

Micah:"Most of you have no idea that I was adopted. Mama and Papa had been struggling for years to conceive and they decided to give me a warm and loving home. Those moments were short lived as Mma Moruti started molesting me."

The whole congregation gasped in shock as Micah had tears falling down his face.

Mma moruti tried once again to get up from her chair

but Ntate Moruti held her down.

Micah:"She started fondling me at the age of four. I still remember how she would tell me that this was my way of repaying her for saving me. Papa never noticed a thing, poor man of God. He's been nothing, but a good father to me. At the age of 13, she saw me old enough to sleep with her.

She would sleep with me every single day after school when Papa was away on missionary work. My own mother became the first woman I slept with. As a result, I sleep with old women, some even older than her because that's what I've been groomed to do. I stand here before you a broken, black man all because of this woman (pointing at her)!"

I couldn't help but cry. I've been judging poor Micah, but he was under this woman's sick spell.

Micah:"I know this isn't the platform to do this, but Rea left me a personal letter asking me to expose this witch. If I didn't do this today, I'd never be able to have peace and move on. Rea, thank you so much for giving me the courage to stand up for myself and do this. I'll always love you. Death had brought you peace and made you escape the evil of this world."

With that he stepped down as people were astonished. Mandi sang a beautiful song while Ntate Moruti refused to let Mma moruti leave. I think he wanted her to see what

her actions did to poor Micah. I'm so glad that even though secrets were revealed, the people never became disrespectful. They still carried on with dignity.

We proceeded to the funeral and Mma moruti had hired loads of white Mercedes Benz SUV's to transport the family and a few other people. Ntate Moruti took a separate car from hers to the graveyard. Everything was done really well, with grace. It took a bit longer since they placed a tombstone straight away. A beautiful tombstone of Rea's picture engraved in gold. It was sombre and sad, and Ntate Moruti refused to let Mma moruti speak and even engage in anything.

After the funeral we all went to the house to eat. Of course, the marquee was so huge, it filled the whole street. Top notch food was the order of the day as caterers and waiters were serving us food and expensive alcohol. Mma moruti was nowhere to be seen and neither was Micah. Ntate moruti went straight to the house after the burial and I think he hid from us out of shame. How could he face the world after all that?

Chapter 38

Chichi

The funeral was just like any other funeral, just extra lavish. I didn't see Mama or Tshiamo or even Aidah and Koko. I guess they decided not to bother. The other people decided to host an after tears but I left with Nathi soon after. Glen stayed with Mandi while Bree also went back home.

It's the day of Mandi's sweet 16 and I just can't wait. Nathi isn't too pleased with me going to a party without him. He's been so clinyy ever since we started having sex. Yes, it's gotten a lot nicer and it's not painful anymore. He forever goes down on me before or during sex, apparently I taste too good. I still haven't tried giving him a blow job, but maybe I might try that tonight.

He is always calling me every few minutes to check if I'm okay when we're not together. We pretty much do everything together now. He's forever on my side and I'm not even complaining. He's dropping me off at the party in an hour and refused to let me sleep over. Apparently school boys will take advantage of me.

I haven't heard of Mma Moruti, Micah or Ntate Moruti since yesterday, so we'll see what happens tomorrow at church. I'm settling for casual wear today, jeans, a sleeveless vest and all stairs. Mandi's theme is all white, so I packed my all white Versace jumpsuit with my gold wedges in my bag. I'm a huge Versace fan now ever since Nathi keeps buying me Versace and Gucci.

I walked out of the bedroom and found him already waiting for me in the lounge.

Natho: (smiling) "You look so gorgeous, baby."

Me:"Thank you, babe."

Nathi:"Do you really have to go? I can make it worth your while."

He said that smiling and hugging me from behind. He started kissing my neck and fondling my breasts. I know what that means and I'm not falling for it today. Nathi and I have sex three to five times a day now. I can't wait for schools to open so that my pussy can at least breathe.



Me: "No, baby. I promised I'd go to Mandi's party. I'm on the program already."  
Nathi was sulking but I wasn't having any of it. We got into his car and drove off. We arrived at his house and already the marquee was set up and the décor looked lovely. All white with a touch of gold. I kissed Nathi goodbye as I made my way in. He said he'd go visit Menzi, as they have some business to discuss anyway. I was met by Mandi's friendly mother and we hugged.

She took me to Mandi, who was in his bedroom having a manicure and pedicure done, with a facial of course. I put my gift bag on the bed, which has a limited edition Dior bag and perfume, which he told me he liked before schools closed. I was trying to fish for a gift idea, and he was putty in my hands by the time he told me that he liked that.

Mandi: "Mogele (Girl)! I'm so glad you made it, bathong! I need help choosing an outfit."

Mandi is so dramatic at times. I told him we can do that afterwards and we chatted while they were busy pampering him.

Mandi: "We never got a time to talk, man. How was Cape Town?"

As I was about to answer, Bree walked in.

Bree: "Hey, divas!"

I hugged her as Mandi and I greeted back.

Mandi: "Now back to Cape Town. How was it? I'm waiting for all the gorry details."

I blushed as I told them everything from Ntombi and Sam's drama, to the trips we took. I even showed them all our pictures.

Mandi gave me an inquisitive look.

Me: "What?"

Mandi: "I'm sure you're not that stupid. We want to know EVERYTHING."

Me: "I told you everything already."

Bree: "Oh

Modimo (God)! Did you give it to him?"

I blushed and looked down.

Mandi: "Ah, ah ah! O mo file kuku (you gave him pussy)?! I knew it! I knew it when I saw you yesterday draped in that dick glow. It was even confirmed as I saw him coming to the funeral with you. The way he was all over you. Nathi's got it bad, girl! Ba bolela nnete (It's true what they say), new pussy ya hlansa (drives you crazy)!"

Bree and I laughed.

Bree: "Seriously though, how was it?"

Me: "Well, it was so painful at first, but as time went on it became nicer and nicer."

Mandi: "Hehe! Welcome to the squad, mogel (girl)!"

I laughed out loud.

Bree: "On a serious note, though. You need to take extra care of yourself. Just because you're having sex, doesn't mean you're immune to illnesses and pregnancy."

Bree is always the reasonable and responsible one amongst the three of us.

Me: "You're right. I'm taking the necessary precautions."

Mandi: "Don't tell me o jewa ka nama (you're having unprotected sex)?"

I felt a bit guilty but I just had to lie to them. I wasn't in the mood to get hectic and judged about it.

Me: "Of course not."

I'm so bad at lying, but I think I convinced them at this point. We went on with our business and he was finally done. Bree and I decided to give him our gifts right there before the party.

Bree got him a really nice Louis Vuitton bag and he loved both our gifts. We helped him choose an outfit and as dramatic as Mandi is, he chose to wear a very shiny white short jumpsuit with his own designed All Stars.

He even had a make up artist available and pretty much forced us to get our make up done too. Bree had her natural afro styled very nicely today, while Mandi instructed her make up artist to curl my hair for the event. Who was I to protest? He gives me all my fashion and beauty advice.

Once we were done we took a few pictures. We really looked so hot, just like the three divas as Mandi calls us. As we headed out, Glen met up with us and gave us all hugs. I saw the vibe between them, but Mandi wasn't bothered.

Apparently he and Glen are just fuck buddies but what do I know? Glen gave Mandi a really nice gift, a very expensive perfume, just the way Mandi likes her stuff.

We got out and the party was almost in full force. Mandi is the one who did all the décor and everything in the marquee. There was even a dj hired, when I checked properly it was DJ Zinhle!

I knew Mandi's parents had money, but I never knew they had this much money. Bree was so excited about seeing all these people and not to mention DJ Zinhle. It's not everyday you get a famous dj at your party.

The speeches began and everyone said really nice things about Mandi. Glen, Bree and I also said humble things about Mandi. He looked so teary eyed in his big Gold and white couch on that stage.

After his friends took center stage, his parents walked up and surprised him with a brand new white Mercedes Benz G63! A whole G wagon for a 16 year old! I couldn't believe it. Mandi is really so blessed and he's got such a good heart, he deserves it.

We had our food and the fun began. The next thing I knew alcohol was flowing. Hia parents are really chilled, mine would never serve alcohol at my party. It was really nice seeing a few of our friends from school and the next thing I saw Mr. Legae and Pabi. What are these two doing here?

Chapter 39

Chichi

The last time I checked Pabi and Mr. Legae weren't on speaking terms. He was at the funeral yesterday and so was Pabi and now they're here together. Is it a simple coincidence? I think not. He came up to us with an already showing Pabi by his side.

Mr. Legae: "Good evening, learners."

I decided to keep quiet and so did Glen and Bree. Mandi greeted him back, I guess to avoid drama at his party.

Mandi: "Good evening, sir. How can we help you?"

Mr. Legae: (laughing) "You cant call em sir anymore since you kinds practically got me fired. Anyway, I just came to have a good time."

Me: "Sure you did, since school girls are your fetish."

Mr. Legae just gave me a smirk looking unoffended by my statement.

Mr. Legae: "I see ever since you started fucking that boy you've grown some clits, neh."

Glen got so mad, he wanted to charge at him, but I stopped him.

Me: "Glen, don't. He's not worth it."

Mr. Legae: "Listen to your little slut, boy."

Glen was fuming, but I held his arm. Pabi just seemed so weird, she even had a drink in her hand. How can she drink alcohol while she's pregnant? And how does she go back to a man who just told her where to get off after she told her she's pregnant?

That baffles me. Mr. Legae looked like he was about to leave us until he turned around and looked ne straight in the eye.

Mr. Legae: "Chichi, tell your boyfriend I'm back and that he should watch his back. You should also do the same."

He gave me a smirk and walked away. I felt such a cold chill down my spine as he said that. I thought of calling Nathi immediately, but didn't want to give him the satisfaction of being pleased with instilling fear in me.

Mandi suggested we use this opportunity to enjoy his party since we're going back to school on Monday. We relaxed and had our drinks. There was even a bar with barmen making cocktails for us.

What I liked about this party was that Mandi's parents were there and they hired people to watch us. If you behaved out of order and drank too much, they'd take you home.

I danced the night away, trying to get Mr. Legae's words out of my mind. He was sitting at a table across us with Pabi staring at us while drinking the whole entire time. It's a bit creepy and uncomfortable.

Bree and I needed to pee and we went to one of the hired toilets at the back of the marquee. Glen and Bongz wanted to accompany us, but we decided against it. It's probably the alcohol talking.

As we walked towards the toilets, the music faded away as it was a bit further from the tent. We weren't bothered about security since there were bouncers everywhere even outside the toilets. Bree got in her toilet as I got in the one next to hers.

I was done with my business and decided to wait for Bree outside. I called out for her and she answered me from inside. I looked around and the bouncers that were outside just before we got in were nowhere to be seen.

I didn't think too much of it and as I was about to ask Bree if she was done, she walked out.

Me: "Chomi le wena kgale sela (You've been in there so long)."

Bree: "Askies, had a lot to drink."

As we were approaching the tent, I felt someone grab me from behind. I panicked and looked at Bree and she was also gone in a split second. I tried screaming but the person's big hands had covered my mouth.

My heart was palpitating at massive speed. I tried to squirm my way out of his grip, but it was pointless. Mr. Legae came out of the bushes and I saw another big guy holding Bree in his grip.

Mr. Legae: (with a cigarette in his hand) "If you scream, I'll kill you, wa nkutlwa (understand)?"

Me: "I nodded."

The guy slowly removed his hands from my mouth. I saw Pabi approach us and stood next to him. What the fuck is going on?

Mr. Legae: "You thought you could get away with everything, didn't you? You just got here two minutes ago and already you fucked up everyone's lives. If you hadn't showed up, I would've still had my job, my brother would still have trust in me, Rea wouldn't have killed herself and I'd still have my bitches. But you decided to ruin everything! Sfebe sa ko Seshego (A whore from Seshego), fucking up my life!"

I had tears streaming down my face. I'm about to die at the hands of Mr. Legae.

Mr. Legae: "It's time to teach you a lesson, don't you think, Baby?"

Pabi: "Yes, love. Teach this whore a fucking lesson."

Wow, Nathi has told me countless times I'm too good for my own liking. I tried helping Pabi and this is the thanks I get?!

Mr. Legae: "What do you think I should do to her?"

He took out a knife from his pocket and Bree and I were scared shitless. I thought I was about to piss myself but I had just emptied my bladder.

Pabi: "Rearrange her face, akere sefahlego seo ke sona se mo phaphisang (That face of hers is the one making her so forward)!"

He stepped closer and I screamed, he grabbed me by the throat and I closed my eyes preparing to accept my defeat, and the next thing I heard a gunshot.

Chapter 40

Chichi

After the gunshot went off I refused to open my eyes. I thought maybe I had been shot. I no longer felt a grip against my throat nor my body. I felt warm hands touching my arms.

Nathi: "Baby wa ka (My baby), it's me. You're safe."

I slowly opened my eyes and saw Nathi standing in front of me. I cried in his arms as I saw Menzi hold Bree in his. Thomas was slapping Pabi around and Mr. Legae was

bleeding from his arm as he lay on the floor. Luckily the music was so loud, no one heard anything.

Nathi: "It's okay. Come, let's go."

I was so worried about Bree, I looked at her and tried to ask Nathi about her.

Nathi: "She'll be fine. Menzi will take care of it."

Thomas: "Mara Pabi why o se na tsebe bjana sfebe kwena (why don't you have ears, bitch)?"

Pabi: "Sorry, Thomas. He.. He forced me to do it."

Thomas just kicked her to the side and picked Mr. Legae up roughly as we walked behind them.

Thomas: "A reye wena moerskont (Move it, cunt)!"

I saw them taking a different direction, far from the lights and the people. Menzi took Bree to the house. I hope she's really okay. I walked to the car while crying in Nathi's chest. Thomas threw Mr. Legae in the boot, while Nathi and I sat in the back. I was too traumatized to speak. Why would Mr. Legae do such a thing to me? Will life always be like this with Nathi?

We drove for a while with Nathi comforting me. I looked out the window and I saw us driving out of Mamelodi, towards the direction of Nathi's house.

Me: "Where are we going?"

Nathi: "I'm taking you home, baby. I just have to sort something out."

No way is he leaving me alone in his house at this time of the night.

Me: "I'm coming with you. You're not leaving me alone in your house."

Nathi: (sigh) "Baby, you can't come with me. I don't want to expose you to such. You've already been through so much."

Me: "That's fine. I've already seen a lot. I want to go with you and you can't change my mind."

I could see Nathi wasn't comfortable with this at all, but truth is if I want to be with Nathi, I need to know all about who and what he really is. Nathi nodded even though I could see he just wasn't too comfortable with this whole setup. Nathi has become like my drug, I want to be involved in his every deal the same way he knows everything about me. It sounds ridiculous and probably toxic, but he is just what I need.

Thomas turned the car around and took a different turn. He was driving towards the direction of Hans Strijdom, the same road we took when we went to Biggie's house that day. We arrived at Biggie's house and it looks a lot different at night.

Thomas got out and pulled Mr. Legae roughly out of the boot. Mr. Legae was screaming and cursing at Thomas, while Thomas kicked him to keep him quiet. Nathi looked at me for a moment.

Nathi: "Are you sure you want to do this?"

I nodded and he pecked my lips gently as we walked out the car. He held me by my hand and we were met by Eve who looked really shocked to see me.

Eve: (hugging me) “Ohmy gosh, Chichi! Are you okay? Why are you here? You shouldn’t be here! She shouldn’t be here, Nathi.”

Nathi: “I tried telling, but she said she wanted to be here.”

Eve:”Let me have a word with her.”

Nathi nodded and disappeared into the passage. Eve held me by both hands as we sat on the kitchen chairs.

Eve:”Chichi, I don’t know how much you actually know about Nathi’s dealings. Are you really sure you want to?”

Me:”Yes, Eve. I chose Nathi the day my mother disowned me. I knew that things weren’t always going to be smooth, but I choose him and I love him.”

Eve:”This life isn’t for the fainthearted, okay? So, I’ll be honest with you; Nathi is still a gangster. He doesn’t do shit as much as he used to back in the day, but he’s pretty much still a gangster-they all are. Nathi and Menzi are Biggie’s right hand men, so you need to grow a thicker skin because things like what happened tonight could happen again.”

I swallowed hard and began to shake as I thought of everything Eve was telling me. How dangerous can things get?

Eve:”You’re still young, Chichi. If you want to walk out Nathi won’t hold it against you.”

I thought about life without Nathi and my mind just couldn’t picture that. I can’t be without Nathi, I just can’t.

Me:”What exactly do they do?”

Eve:”Heists, Bank Robberies, fraud at times, and drug dealings. It’s not as bad as it sounds, but they have made enemies along the way and they can come at us, their families at any given moment. So if you want to be a part of his life and be exposed to this, you need to ready. I need to hear you say that you’re ready to learn to be a gangster’s wife.”

I swallowed hard thinking I might be betraying my God and going against my values and beliefs. I’ve already made a deal and chose Nathi so it would be pointless to walk away right now.

Me:”I’m ready to learn, Eve.”

Eve: “Okay then. Let’s go get your first lesson.”

## Chapter 41

### Chichi

Eve and I walked towards a room I’ve never been in before. She held me by my hand as we walked into the room which looked like a Study downstairs. I thought it would be a bedroom, but she told me all the bedrooms are on the top floor.

As we walked through the study we approached a door that was hidden behind a huge painting of Biggie and Eve on their wedding day. As we walked in we found Mr.

Legae tied onto a chair with blood oozing from his arm, nose and mouth. His left eye was half closed and bruised. I felt a cold shiver down my spine as I saw Nathi holding a huge chain and wrapping it around his fist.

The room looked so dark, with bla black coloured wall and different types of weapons hung onto the wall. Chains, whips, cuffs, different types and sizes of guns, knives of different kinds, axes and saws. You name it, it's there.

I felt like I was in some kind of Horror movie like Wrong turn or something. The room smelled like blood, I could tell a lot of people bled out here and most probably died in here as well.

Nathi looked so different, like the Nathi I've never met. Almost like he had transformed into an angry beast with bloodshot eyes and his veins popping all over his body. His shirt was off, as he was just in his jeans. Biggie and Thomas sat down and looked at him without blinking once.

I could tell they were so used to this. I turned to my left to look at Eve, but she wasn't even bothered or scared. She seemed too calm for my liking, that sweet and bubbly Eve wasn't present at that moment.

There were many other chairs from where we were standing, it was as if it's a little cinema room where we get to watch someone being executed. Eve pulled me to a chair next to her just behind Thomas.

Me: (whispering) "What is this room?"

Eve:"It's our Retribution chamber."

I kept my cool but deep down I was scared as fuck. Nathi kept beating Mr. Legae with that chain wrapped around his hand as he screamed out in pain. He wasn't even bothered that I was in the room. I guess this is what I signed up for.

Eve: "You see, everyone who fucks us over, gets to die in here. No one, I mean no one gets to mess with The Lions and gets away with it."

They call themselves the Lions. I never thought much of it, but I remember Mandi saying it in passing that The Lions are the biggest gang in Mamelodi. I guess he was trying to hint at me and prepare me for what I got myself into. Perhaps I should have asked before things got this real. I should have probably paid more attention to the signs. Nathi would walk in at night with his fists bruised at times and sometimes he likes it rough. Now I see that he has an ulter ego which I have to accept.

Eve:"This motherfucker was sent by Nathi's long time enemy, Negra. He couldn't get to Nathi easily, but now that Nathi has you

you've become his weak spot. You see, all of these men will kill for their women, their children. I'm the only one who's able to witness all these because I'm not sensitive and weak. You being here right now is a priviledge, Chichi. As young as you are, I see great potential in you. Puleng also has that as well. I know I'm the Queen here, but I'd love it if you became my right hand woman. I want to promote you to Sovereign status in this crew, but only if you're up for it."

I didn't know what to say. What does Sovereign status even mean?

Me: "Before I answer, what does that even mean?"

Eve: "It means you'll be on the same level as me. You'll be present in all the meetings, Nathi won't even have to lie to you anymore. We control all these men, they bring in the money and we take care of their hustle. You've got brains, babe, so I'd like you to take over the finances. We're looking at expanding and I know you're the perfect girl for the job."

Being a gangster queen isn't exactly what I had in mind few months ago when I met Nathi and agreed to be his girlfriend. Will this mean I'd have to handle guns and shoot people? I don't know if I'll be able to stomach all this, but I'm always up for a challenge.

Me: "Okay, I'll do it."

Eve smiled at me and gave me a hug. She looked at Nathi who was staring at her like he was awaiting confirmation. Eve nodded at him, which I think was a signal for him to go ahead with something.

Nathi: "Ja, Kg. Now tell me where Negra is before I kill you?"

Mr. Legae: (laughing and coughing) "Why should I? You're going to kill me anyway. All I can say is that he's right under your noses. You've got a mole and you don't even realize it because you're so pussy whipped. He's coming for your precious Chichi and you had better watch out. She won't be safe for too long."

He tried to laugh to irritate Nathi even further, but he coughed out blood and failed to laugh. Nathi was so pissed and frustrated and he took a sword from the wall.

Nathi: "See you in hell, motherfucker!"

He sliced Mr. Legae's head off like it was a piece of meat. His head fell off and they were all so unphased and unbothered. I tried to find an ounce of sympathy in me, but I just couldn't find it. The sight was horrific, with blood splashing out of his neck.

Nathi looked at me and I just had a blank stare on my face as I sat frozen in my chair. Eve held me by my arm and walked out with me. As we approached the kitchen, I vomited profusely in the sink.

Eve handed me a paper towel and patted my back.

Eve: "It's okay. It gets easier the first time. At least you didn't shit yourself. I pissed and shit myself the very first time I saw someone being killed in front of me."

This life is way too deep. She gave me a glass of water and I gulped it in full force.

Me: "Have you ever killed anyone?"

Eve: "Yes, and I don't even regret it at all."

I decided I'd ask her about that another time. I guess I was still in shock after witnessing my first murder.

Chapter 42

Chichi

Nathi walked out of the study all cleaned up and came towards me. He held me by my hand and greeted Eve goodbye. We got into his car and drove home in silence.



So I almost got kidnapped and nearly got my face sliced into two by my ex Accounting teacher and my cousin. I witnessed a murder and I got promoted to being a Gangster Sovereign. I never knew life could be so hectic.

I expected to feel like I signed a deal with the devil, but nope. Nathi isn't a devil, none of them are. They are very kind and loving people and I guess we don't know how many people kill out there behind closed doors.

Look at Mma Moruti, she was a molester behind closed doors and a judgmental bitch in public. Gangsters are always judged for being thieves and murderers, but at least they don't steal from or kill the innocent. I understand Nathi and The Lions, I really do. Sometimes you have to do what you gotta do to live. At least Nathi and his crew don't pretend to be something they're not.

Nathi parked the car in the garage as we walked into the house still in silence. I went to take a shower and heard him come in right after me. He held me from the back and started kissing my shoulders, and rubbing his hands on my breasts from behind.

His lips traveled up and down my neck as I tilted my head to the side to allow him more access to my neck. Feeling his soft, juicy lips on my neck with his soft hands on my breasts while under the warm, drizzling water felt so amazing. He traveled his hand to my pussy and I just went wild. The water droplets made me feel even more intense.

At least now we get to have sex anywhere and everywhere since I got the IUD inserted last week while I was on my period. Yes, we hardly use condoms now but at least we got tested and I don't have to worry about being pregnant.

I turned around and we kissed passionately. Nathi was so soft and slow, it felt like he was thanking me for staying. Somehow he felt guilty about the whole Mr. Legae thing, he blamed himself. Yes, if I probably never accepted his proposal I wouldn't have been in that situation, but what's done is done.

This time our lovemaking was about to be different than all the other days. I was giving him reassurance that I'm here to stay and not going anywhere. I chose this Nathi with all his flaws and I'm prepared to learn. I wanted to show him just how much meant to me. I went down and kneeled in front of him as I held his shaft in my hand, while my other hand was playing with his balls.

I was about to suck and he stopped me with his hands.

Nathi: (looking down) "You don't have to, Baby."

Me: "I want to."

Nathi nodded as I looked at his blurry image due to the water dripping all over us. I proceeded to suck the head first and he moaned out of pleasure.

Nathi:"Aah, Baby. Shit, Chichi."

I liked hearing him moan and call out my name. I went ahead and sucked all of him in my mouth. It was a bit of a struggle, but I was willing to please. I sucked in circular motion alternating at times going up and down. I started slow and went faster and

faster, with Nathi's hands rested gently on my head. His eyes were closed as I devoured his manhood and he indulged in pleasure.

Nathi:"Fuck, Baby, you drive me crazy!"

I kept going while he moaned and I could feel him getting close as his breathing changed.

Nathi:"Shit, baby, ka rota nou (I'm about to cum). Shit, Chichi, move!"

I didn't move, instead I let him release in my mouth. He let out a loud growl, gripping my head with both hands and released his load into my mouth. I spit it out right there in the shower. Mandi says sperm tastes like off milk, depending on how healthy the guy is. Nathi is pretty healthy, and lives off his shakes and exercise and drinks a lot of water daily. It didn't taste that bad, but I don't think I'm ready to swallow yet.

He pulled me up and kissed me so passionately and pulled out after a while.

Nathi:"I love you, Chichi."

Me:"I love you too, Nathi."

We switched off the water and headed to the bed. We didn't even bother wiping the water off ourselves as he lay me gently on the bed. We made sweet love over and over until the early hours of the morning. Nothing makes me happier than sleeping in Nathi's warm arms.

It's Sunday morning and I started tossing and turning after midnight. I kept having that image of Mr. Legae's head being cut off my Nathi playing over and over in my dreams. I struggled to sleep so Nathi and I ended up having sex instead. I woke up Without him in bed this time and as I was about to get up he walked in with his famous breakfast tray loaded with nice food.

Nathi: (smiling) "Good morning mfazi wami (my wife)."

I smiled at that. It warms my heart to see Nathi thinking of us having a serious future.

Me:"Good morning, baby."

Nathi:"Breakfast is served."

Me:"Thank you. Why are up so early today?"

Nathi:"Hao, baby. We're going to church together."

I was so surprised. Nathi never really goes to church with me-ever. He only went on Friday because it was Rea's funeral. I like this sudden change, but I just hope he isn't trying to ease his conscience.

Me:"I'm shocked. What made you change your mind? I've been begging you for weeks."

Nathi:"I figured it's about time I do stuff you like too."

I smiled and pecked him on the lips. Nathi is a thoughtful soul. He looked a bit sweaty so I assume he went jogging before making breakfast. After I ate we took a nice shower together. There was no time for the deed as we were going to run late for church. I wore my black and white knee length dress, while he wore his black jean and white shirt. We kind of looked like we were matching. It's couple goals, I guess.

We finally arrived at church and as I was about to walk out, I saw Biggie, Eve, Menzi and Pulane. I smiled broadly as I hugged them. So the whole squad attends church now, well except Thomas and Zoro. I'm humbled and impressed that Sundays will be family day from now on. Mandi wasn't around today and I assume he must still be hungover from his massive sweet sixteen party. I made a mental note to check on Bree later today.

As we walked in we saw people talking amongst themselves as Ntate Moruti walked up to the podium. The choir had already started singing, but he cut them short. He looked like he hasn't slept in weeks and like he's aged overnight. His eyebags were darker than usual and his face looked like it was about to fall flat on the floor.

Ntate Moruti: "Dumelang Bazalwane, I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ. I won't be long so please bear with me. I realize I had been married to the devil all this time. My family is broken, my daughter is dead and my son is damaged all because of the woman I thought was a woman of God. So, to cut the story short, I'm stepping down as the pastor of this church."

People were murmuring and gasping in shock as he announced that. I was so saddened, I mean Moruti did nothing wrong. He's always been so genuine and everybody loves him in this neighbourhood. I couldn't imagine the church without him. As he was about to walk down the podium, an unexpected surprise made a turn of events.

Eve stood up and started preaching.

Eve: "The Bible says, 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'" That's John 8:7. I remember as a young girl who fell pregnant at the age of 15, my parents had thrown me out and you gave me hope, Ntate Moruti. You helped me put on a brave face and you saved my marriage. You made me the woman I am today. You made my parents see the importance of forgiveness and as a result, they forgave me and accepted my husband.

Because of you Ntate Moruti I was able to raise my children with the word of God without teaching them how to judge people. You have always been the heart of this church, you built it from scratch, you made it what it is today. Just as God tested Job in the bible by taking away everything from him and rewarding him with double the blessings, He so is using you too as a test. You shall be rewarded greatly, pastor for you are moral but you're God's messenger.

Yes, Mma Moruti polluted this church and ruined your family, but if you leave us, who will we turn to when we are lost and need guidance? I stand here before you as a woman who's been judged profusely by some members of this congregation. Others don't even know me but see it fit to let my name slip through their tongues as they speak ill of me. I for one don't wish for you to step down."

As she sat down another person got up and shared her testimony as to how Ntate Moruti helped her. Many others followed after that and today's session ended up being a motivation session and a day of thanksgiving to Ntate Moruti. He cried as he

collapsed in his chair filled with tears of joy, heartache and a sense of peace. I could see a few members being so embarrassed as they were outed as being Mma moruti's cheerleaders, while some walked out in shame. I even saw Mama walk out with Tshiamo on her arm. My heart broke but there was nothing I could do.

Today, I learnt that when we stand united in the name of God, we shame the devil. Love is spread in many ways, and I'm thankful that God is doing the most in my life.

Chapter 43

9 months later

Chichi

It's been 9 months since Ntate Moruti nearly stepped down as the church pastor. He's back to his old self thanks to Eve who saved the day. She still managed to surprise and shock me and even her husband never knew she could preach like that. Ever since that day, we've been going to church together every Sunday. Some days Thomas and Zoro come with too. Bree has been okay and Menzi organized her some therapy after the whole Mr. Legae thing.

I ended up getting some nightmares ever since that night Nathi killed him, so they got their traditional healer, Rre Naka to sort me out. Apparently he cleanses them all after a killing, which hasn't happened since that night, thankfully. Negra is still nowhere to be found, but The Lions are keeping major tabs on him. It's hard going to school and watching over my shoulder everyday, but Nathi got me a few men to be on the lookout while I'm at school.

It sucks a lot because I hardly get to go out alone without Nathi. If I do, I have to have one of his guys acting as a bodyguard. I only manage to see Tshiamo at school and it has become really stressful for the both of us, but more especially her. She hasn't been doing so well at school and even though I tried speaking to Mama, she wouldn't hear the end of it.

Lebo and I talk a lot nowadays, even with Menzi. She was here for Menzi's wedding. Yes, he and Palesa finally got married in April, few months after the Cape Town Trip. I guess if you know, you know. She's now almost 5 months pregnant, and Menzi has been super protective of her. Their lobola was so full of drama since Koko took her time asking her brothers to be part of the lobola negotiations.

They nearly even ruined everything by trying to be rip offs. Menzi had given the R50 000, and they claimed they were given R30 000. Menzi nearly killed them that day, I doubt they would ever be able to agree to be present for my lobola negotiations when Menzi and I tie the knot. Nathi's Uncle Mzwakhe represented Menzi as a father figure and everything went smoothly. Pulane's family heard rumours of Menzi being a gangster, but they accepted it after seeing how respectful Menzi is towards their daughter.

She is also into this lifestyle now and has accepted it. We have our weekly meetings where we check up on the stock, the businesses where I check the books and Eve is the boss bitch of our crew, while Sam and Ntombi haven't earned their place into the

crew as yet. Yep, they are still with Thomas and Zoro and I don't even know why. None of us do, really, but it is what it is. We only see them on social occasions since every Friday afternoon is a business meeting. The guys haven't done a heist in a while as things have been going okay, for now.

She goes after those who don't pay up and who try and mess with our livelihood. I've settled in so nicely, that they even forget I'm the baby of the family. I've gained so much respect as I realized how much these guys were slacking.

They weren't investing much into the business and weren't checking the books properly. I made the books balance nicely and I'm able to keep track of the expenditure of each business, as well as the salaries of everyone who works under us. Nathi and I have been doing so well, he even asked me to marry him. I explained to him that I'm only going to be starting Grade 11 soon

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so I can't be married so young. So he got me a promise ring instead and we'll be getting married straight after my matric year. He's been paying my fees and pretty much been my 'husband'.

I did so well this year, acing all my subjects. It wasn't easy, but Glen and I have been studying together and Nathi takes no nonsense when it comes to my study time. He's been monitoring me like a hawk, making sure I don't get up to no good.

It's the first week of the holidays and Nathi and I decided to spend it indoors since we needed to do some spring cleaning and just rest for a bit. It's been a hectic year after all. Yes, we as in him and I, we clean together and cook together. We pretty much do everything together. I love how he can transform into the monster he becomes when he's ready to kill and be my Nathi whenever we're together.

We got up early today to do our spring cleaning. We got our gloves on and started cleaning and scrubbing the pots in the kitchen and the oven. After that we headed to the bedrooms. I started in one of the guest bedrooms, while he worked in ours.

I hardly even go in there unless I want to clean and change the bedding. I got up the ladder to clean the top of the wardrobe and I saw a really weird, big square in the wall. It really looked like it had been dug in. I pushed the square in and it fell right out and I was in total shock that I nearly fell off the ladder.

I had never seen so much money in my entire life. Nathi had been hiding money in a hole in the wall, mara. Ai, I guess you can take the man out of the kasi, but you can't take the kasi out of the man. Come to think of it I never ask about his money, all I do is manage the business accounts, ut the money never goes to the bank.

How will The Lions grow and be well known and respected business men if they keep money in such a shady way? Imagine if someone broke in and stole all this money out of our house and then what? All his hard work would be for nothing. I decided to call him in and have a serious talk about our finances with him.

Me: "Nkosinathi! Kopa o tle mo (Please come here)."

Nathi: "Yoh, baby! Ma ung'biza kanje ngiyazi ukuthi ngisemasibeni (When you call me like that, I know I'm in shit)."

He walked in and found me in the bed with some of the money.

Nathi: "Ah, baby, man. You can't sit around with so much money. What if someone walked in and saw you swimming in money like that?"

I chuckled. Nathi can't be serious for one moment nje.

Me: "Sit."

He gave me a weird look and sat next to me.

Me: "What's with all this money hidden behind a wall in a guest bedroom?"

Nathi: "Ah, man baby. It's all my savings."

Me: "You can't keep savings hidden in a wall, baby. How will it grow?"

Nathi: "Ah, it can grow once I get more money and stuff it up there."

He can sound really stupid at times.

Me: "And how will you keep track of it? What if someone saw it and decided to rob you?"

Nathi: "Then I'd kill them."

Ai, Nkosinathi Dhlamini.

Me: "Be serious, baby man. Do you even have a bank account besides your usual account? I mean like an investment account?"

Nathi: "No, baby. I don't invest my money. I don't want the bank to rob me of my hard earned money."

Me: "I get that, but think about it. If the house burnt down with all your money in here, we'd have to start all over again. Tell me, what are your dreams and goals? Like what is the one thing you want to achieve?"

Nathi: "I want to be a serious business man, baby. I want to give you the world and make all your dreams come true. I never want you to complain about money-ever." I'd really love a comfortable life, but seems like The Lions haven't been thinking much out of the box. It's time to change that. It's time they make enough money to so that there wouldn't be a need to do crime anymore and be legit businessman.

Chapter 44

Chichi

Two weeks later

I have been working on a very legit and serious plan for our crew to step up and make more money. Nobody wants to do crime forever, that's a fact. It's Christmas Day, and my very first Christmas without my family. It pains me that life will never be the same again, but I've found a new family in Nathi and the Lions.

Glen will be joining us for lunch at Biggie's house. Apparently he's got a new girlfriend now, but doesn't want to rush things. We haven't met her yet as he says he wants to make sure that she's the one before they go ahead with meeting each other's families.

Nathi and I arrived at Eve and Biggie's house and Eve went all out. She had set up the table in the patio, with a real Christmas lunch. Soul food was the order of the day with drinks galore. Biggie and Eve's home made twins were somewhere in the house. I call them home made twins since they're one year apart.

Funny enough they're girls and Biggie's gems. He would kill for them. Eve named the first born Bentley and the second born Ferarri. I know, she's crazy like that. They are the only black kids at their school named after fancy cars. Apparently the story behind their names was that Bentley was her favourite car and Ferarri was Biggie's first sports car.

Speaking of Biggie, after a nice sermon from Eve who preaches every now and then at church about gluttony and how over indulgence of food can cause your death, he finally saw the light and decided to be healthier. He started exercising with Eve and even lost some weight.

He went on a Banting diet and lost all his fat. He even managed to get surgery to get rid of his excess tummy fat. Eve says he's never looked this handsome and now, she's throwing him a party on the 31st of December, which is also his birthday. It's also the day before my birthday. So we're going to have a whole weekend of celebrations that weekend.

Thomas and Zoro came with the two giraffes and I really got annoyed. I don't know if it would be proper to announce the plans I have for us with them around. I just don't trust them. They were as hostile as ever, but Ntombi had stopped being mean to me after Pulane jumped her one day during dinner.

She kept making funny remarks about us with our "rural" accents and Pulane beat the shit out her. She beat her up so badly, it was the first time I heard Ntombi speak Zulu. It's amazing how violence can take you back to your roots and get rid of the fake accent.

Menzi and Pulane came and we wasted no time. We prayed and dug in.

Eve:"So, Pulane, how is the pregnancy treating you?"

Pulane:"Yoh, I'm so tired already and I still have four months to go. I just can't wait."

Menzi was just smiling with pride.

Biggie:"Enjoy it because once the baby comes, you won't be able to sleep at all. One thing I love about pregnancy is the good sex that comes with it."

We all laughed while Pulane was left embarrassed.

Eve:"Ai, baby mara nawe."

Biggie chuckled as we ate and had our drinks. Nathi was too excited for me to share the plans I have been working on and he was wondering why I was being mum about it all of a sudden. So Nathi being Nathi decided to be the first one to break the news.

Nathi:"Anyway, Guys, Chichi has been working on an awesome plan that could get us into the business industry. This could get us a seat with the top dogs."

Everyone was so interested to hear what I had to say, even the evil sisters.

Biggie:"Let's hear it."

Me: "I think we can talk about it after dessert, you know, with the crew."

I was trying to be subtle about not involving the Sam and Ntombi, but Thomas and Zoro just dropped a bombshell.

Thomas: "Ah, there's no need to isolate Sam and Ntombi anymore, guys. The four of us went to Home affairs two days ago and got married. We wanted to surprise you all."

Wow. What a way to get married. No lobola, no wedding or celebration even. Zoro didn't even look chuffed about it. Thomas was just being Thomas. Sam tried to fake a smile but I could see deep down she was trying to act happy, while Ntombi was just chuffed. I feel like this was their plan

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but anyway. I don't like the idea of them being part of our crew. There's just no certainty when it comes to these two.

We had our dessert and then it was time for serious drinks while poor Pulane settled for juice and sparkling water.

Nathi: "Bathate baby (Take it away, baby). The stage is yours."

I smiled at Nathi as I took a deep breath and laid out the plan.

Me: "Well, I started working on something that could help us all make more money instead of hiding money in our houses. When your money is just lying somewhere hidden in your house or in a ditch somewhere it doesn't really grow. Instead, you pose a huge risk for yourself in case the police come and search your house. That money, your whole savings would be gone just like that, putting us all at risk of having to do another heist in a rush to cover the money lost."

They all looked so interested while Nathi was so proud.

Biggie: "I like what I'm hearing. So what were you thinking?"

Me: "Well, I was thinking that it's high time you invested the money. But obviously you can't just invest hundreds of thousands of rands as a lump sum without the police picking it up and being suspicious about it. Which is why we're going to open businesses as a decoy and actually clean the money and turn those businesses into legit money makers.

In time, we'd have so much money and probably be millionaires and have enough to stop doing crime. We'd all be able to sleep at night without worrying if one of us might end up in prison. We'd also be able to save enough money in case the police start sniffing around, you know, for legal costs instead of digging into our pockets everytime one of us gets into trouble with the law."

Everyone was so impressed as they wanted me to go on. Eve was so happy and proud of me, but Ntombi just had to burst my bubble.

Ntombi: "Are we seriously listening to a child telling us how to run this crew?"

Biggie: "Ntombi, you'd better shut the fuck up. I don't even know why Zoro married you. He didn't even pay lobola for you so e no didimala man (just keep quiet man)."



Ntombi kept quiet and looked down. I was hurt for her that Zoro didn't even try to defend her.

Biggie: "Sorry about that, continue Sovereign."

Me: (I nodded) "Well, we have to start small, so that people don't start questioning our dealings. So, we're going to open a beauty salon for Eve, since she really loves beauty and is good at what she does. That way we'll be able to clean the money you all have stashed in your houses. This salon will be so upmarket that everyone even celebrities have to come to Eve's beauty parlour to get their nails and hair done."

Eve was all smiles while Biggie was impressed. Nathi just gave everyone that whole "That's my girl" look.

Me: "Once Eve is known for her Salon, we'll be able to purchase more taxis, which will be Thomas and Zoro's babies. They know more about the taxi industry than we do. After a few months of buying the taxis, we register a shuttle business, where we'll be able to use our very fancy and modern Kombis to transport people to and from the airport and all over the country. The rest of the ladies will be involved in catering and events. If Sam and Ntombi are willing to join, they'll have to run that side with Eve as their Superior. I'll probably be done with matric so I'll be able to get my degree."

Menzi: "I like where this is going."

Sam and Ntombi looked irritated, but kept quiet since I included them in the plan."

Me: "Remember, the key is to make sure all of you stand out, but we have to make it seem like you started small, with nothing. So once we hit it off and become known, we buy our first piece of land and build flats for people to rent.

Once that kicks off we can be able to buy more land and more property. Property is the fastest and biggest way to enter and stay in the business market. We'll be able to run our own company as the women, while you men handle the taxis and property. We'll also be able to invest our money in a legit way and everyone will be able to live in a house and suburb of their choice."

I could see that I wasn't selling them a dream, but a reality that can be easily achieved.

Chapter 45

Chichi

I could see everyone thinking about what I've said and they all seemed to like it.

Menzi was so impressed as my big brother, Nathi was just beaming with pride and joy.

Biggie: "From the moment I saw you walk in with Nathi, I knew you were going to change our lives. Nathi, o itse go kgetha mfanaka (You've chosen well, my man)." We all laughed as Sam and Ntombi kept quiet as usual.

Eve: "So, when can we kick this plan off?"

Me: "We can start now and launch the Salon towards the end of January. We need to get people to know who we are before things kick off. Therefore, all of us need to chip in so that we all get a stake in the salon and get a share of the profits. Remember,

all the businesses will be about team work. The Chesa Nyama and the Taverns are our side hustles, so we'll gradually turn them into bigger things. The key is to think big here in order to build a legacy."

They were so impressed, they just kept asking me for more information. Luckily I had been using Nathi's laptop to create the proposal and outline all the projections. Instead of each one doing their own thing, we can work as a team and achieve greater things together.

Biggie:"So, how much are we all supposed to chip in?"

Me:"Well, roughly about 100k each, we don't have to move away from Mamelodi, the key is to make our business stand out."

Sam:"Why would anyone build a posh salon in a township?"

Everyone looked at her and I could tell they were thinking what I was thinking. This chick just just made it through matric. We're all awaiting her results and I bet they're as unimpressive as her thoughts.

Biggie:"Now I see why it took you so long to finish school. We all grew up in Mamelodi, and you even still stay there. Do you have a problem with Mamelodi?"

All eyes were on her as we awaited her response.

Sam:"No.. No I don't."

Biggie:"You're just a new wife here, not a shareholder. Know your place, Samantha." She kept quiet and looked down.

Thomas:"Ai, Sam, ga o lahle man (you never learn)."

Biggie:"Continue, Chichi."

Me:"As I was saying, the 500k will include property costs and transfer costs, as well as the building and furniture, advertising thereof. There's vacant land in Mamelodi West, just across the new development near C1, so we should be able to purchase it before the year ends if we make an offer now. Nathi contacted the owner and made an offer.

They accepted an offer of R150 000. If we act now, we can be new owners of the land by next year. All five of you men will be the owners, while the women will automatically be co owners as you're married in community of property. Nathi and I will be married right after matric so it shouldn't be a problem."

Ntombi raised her hand right after I made that statement and I wanted to laugh at her sudden display of manners and respect. She'll learn to respect me this one.

Me:"Yes, Ntombi?"

She looked annoyed but tried so hard to fight it.

Ntombi:"The four of us aren't married in community of property. Thomas and Zoro chose to marry us out of community of property."

Me:"With or without accrual?"

Ntombi looked at Sam to try and get an answer from her, but Sam remained blank. I'm guessing these two are clueless about things like that. Thomas surprisingly came to the rescue.

Thomas: "With accrual and an Antenuptial agreement."

Wow, these two are smart little devils. I don't know how much they're worth, but seems like they have no interest in sharing anything with these two.

Ntombi: "What does that mean?"

Ai, I have no idea why she got married without checking the facts first.

Me: "Basically when marrying out of community of property with accrual means that During the marriage each spouse retains control of his or her own property, builds up his or her own estate and each is responsible for his or her own debts. On dissolution of the marriage by death or divorce, the value of the assets obtained during the marriage (the accrual) will be shared equally."

I could see Ntombi's face light up at that last statement, giving her hope of ever acquiring something from the marriage.

Me: "However, given that both these gentleman have given you two antenuptial contracts which I assume you read before signing, they could have included terms and conditions in there, which could cancel a few terms from your marriage agreement."

I could see Sam and Ntombi getting worried now.

Ntombi: "Manje (so), what kind of terms and conditions does an antenuptial agreement state?"

Wow, I'm schooling my man's 24 year old ex and I'm loving it. Has this chick never heard of google?

Me: "Well, ever antenuptial contract is different, but depending on your agreement upon marriage, the person who suggested the contract could stipulate you get something from the marriage or nothing at all upon divorce or death."

They were really starting to panic. And Zoro decided to toy with them for a little bit. I guess they both saw that these two are clueless about money and business and that they're just gold diggers.

Zoro: "But akere wena baby since you love me and all of me, you're not after my money ne? As you said, til death do us part."

Ntombi faked a smile while Sam had regret written all over her old looking face. I think this was Ntombi's idea and they just signed everything without reading the fine print. Shame, I pity them. I'm impressed with Zoro and Thomas, they're not clueless kasi boys after all. We all laughed after Zoro made that statement and Nathi kissed my cheek while he just couldn't stop smiling at me. Biggie decided to get up and make a toast.

Biggie: "A toast, to the brains of The Lions, the baby of our family. Mkami (My wife) always says that God sometimes brings people into your life for a reason; some are there to make teach you life lessons, while some are there to stay. And you, my darling Chichi, future Mrs. Dhlamini, are here to definitely stay. Cheers to you."

I smiled as I felt humbled by his words, I even became teary eyed. How I wish my own parents could be this proud of me. A mere 16 year old made such a huge impact in men almost twice her age. My name is Tshogofatso Tersia Mashabela, and I'm indeed about to make history.

## Chapter 46

### Chichi

The plans for the upcoming salon worked out just as expected. Needless to say Sam and Ntombi never enjoyed the rest of the lunch that day. All the men pitched in their share of the money as we paid the owner of the land we required in cash, with the presence of a lawyer.

Biggie came with Eve, while Menzi came with Pulane. Nathi came with myself as Thomas and Zoro came alone without their new wives. I assumed they were probably trying to adjust their little brains to what they had just agreed to.

I asked Zoro and Thomas the following day about the Antenuptial agreements they made out of curiosity when they came to visit Nathi and I. They said that they clearly stipulated that neither Sam nor Ntombi would get a share of their acquired estate, neither before nor after the marriage and that should they conceive any children during the marriage, that the estate would befall the children and not them. Not even Ntombi's son with her white ex would get a share in Zoro's estate.

I even had to ask where they got such legal advice and why, and that's when Thomas told me that his brother was a lawyer. He hadn't had any luck finding a law firm to take him on and once I met him I knew he was perfect for us. I knew right then that Njabulo would be perfect for the job. Everyone else liked him and he agreed in an instant to be our lawyer. As time goes, we'd be able to pay him enough to open his own practice.

Thomas and Zoro, the naughty duo as Nathi calls them, clearly told us that they'd rather die than let bitches like Ntombi and Sam take their money. I was curious as to why they married them then, and they gave us the dumbest answer on earth.

They said and I quote: "Banyana bale ba nyoba (those chicks can fuck)". Apparently their sex life is so freaky, they swap them on occasion and even have threesomes at times. I don't ever think I'd be able to do that let alone share Nathi's dick with anyone. I'd probably chop it off before he could even finish his suggestion.

Anyway, Njabulo drew up our contract and we signed the deal on the 31st of December, Biggie's birthday. The Lions are now officially land owners and Eve had a massive weekend planned for us. We all went to Hartebeespoort Dam for the weekend. Since I'm turning 17 tomorrow, our weekend would be lit. Pulane is five months pregnant now, but that doesn't stop her from enjoying life with us like she used to.

We arrived at Harties and everyone got nice Chalets at the lodge. I've been craving such peace and tranquility for a while now and since schools are opening in a week, this is the perfect time to just relax and unwind.

I changed in my swimsuit as Nathi wrapped his arms around me while I was basking in the beauty of this place. The trees and environment makes you not even think of leaving. The beautiful sight of the Dam from the balcony makes you really realize that God took his precious time creating Mother Nature for a reason that is.

Nathi: (inhaling my scent from my neck) "Hmmm."

Me: "What are you thinking, Nkosinathi?"

Nathi: "I'm just thinking how blessed I am to have you in my life, Chichi wami (my Chichi)."

I smiled as he said that. We've been together for almost a year now and I can't believe how so much has happened in that short space of time.

Me: "No, I'm blessed to have you. Had you not have made a move on me that day, I wouldn't be who I am today. You've really taken the term emancipation to a whole other level."

He laughed subtly.

Nathi: "What would you like for your birthday, Sthandwa sami (My love)?"

Me: "As long as I have you, I'm good with anything, my Nathi."

He turned me around and kissed me passionately. He started touching my bums and I knew things would get out of hand so I pulled out.

Nathi: "Ha ah, man, Baby. Just a little bit."

Me: "No, baby. We need to go join the others. I know once you start you won't stop."

Nathi: "Okay

e re ke no e mona fela (let me lick it a little bit then.)"

Me: (giggling) "Not a chance. Save it for later. Come, let's go."

We walked out hand in hand while he was sulking as he had to get his buldge to go down. He'll be fine. We met the rest of the gang outside the patio near the pool.

Thomas and Zoro were braaing, while Sam and Ntombi were preparing Salads. The evil sisters helping out at our gatherings is a very unusual and very rare sight. Maybe they're finally trying to blend in, but a whole year being with this crew I know not to trust them. I'll just have to keep an eye on them.

Pulane was sitting next to Eve while Menzi and Biggie were getting the drinks ready. For a change we get to sit while those two work so I also decided to sit and join them, while Nathi got the ice ready.

Me: "And then, bale ba babedi (those two)? Dintshang ka bona (What's up with them)?"

Yep, I've acquired new skills and that includes speaking Mamelodi Taal all thanks to Mandi and Glen. My Seshego accent seems to be fading, but rocks up every now and then when I'm pissed. I've gained a lot of respect from The Lions and I love it. Sam and Ntombi have no choice but to fall in line and take orders from a teenager.

Pulane: "Ah, le nna ke maketse hle (I'm also surprised, hey). I think they're trying to get into those two's good books in order to get a share of their assets one day."

Eve: "Securing their future, shame."

We all laughed as Sam and Ntombi placed the salads on the table. They were both so chirpy and all smiles we could see how fake it was.

Sam: "Hey guys! I hope you like the salads, hey! Pulane, would you like something to drink? I know pregnancy can make mommy pretty thirsty!"

Pulane gave her a very obvious frown.

Sam: "How would you know that, Sam since you've never even been pregnant?"

Sam: "Ah, come on, now. I was there when my sister was pregnant, so I basically took a few tips. Isn't that right, little one?"

Sam was about to touch Pulane's belly, but Pulane gripped her hand so tightly Sam squirmed a bit. Pulane is a tough cookie for someone so small. I know when someone bothers me, I fetch her or Eve. They have iron fists while I have a lethal tongue. I can't beat someone up even if they paid me.

Pulane: (furious) "Don't you fucking dare ever touch my belly without my consent! You got that?!"

Sam was shocked and didn't realize just how wrong it is to lay your hand on someone's pregnant belly without asking, man.

Ntombi: "Sorry, Pulane. I'm really sorry on Sam's behalf."

Okay, Ntombi apologizing without looking annoyed or being forced to? Something is most definitely not right.

Pulane: "She should know better."

Sam: "Askies, Chichi and Eve always touch your belly without asking you. I just thought you wouldn't mind."

Pulane: "You're not Chichi nor Eve and yes, I do mind."

Pulane yanked Sam's hand out of her grip and gave her a filthy look. Sam apologized once again as she left the table with Ntombi to go and get the rest of the food.

Eve: "Okay, something is definitely up with those two. We'd better keep a close eye on them."

Me: "I thought I was the only one who thought so."

## Chapter 47

Our weekend went really well and we entered the new year on a serious high. We drank like there was really no tomorrow. I can't even recall the last time I had so much to drink.

We got up the next day and it was my birthday and the party went on yet again. We went on the boat cruise and just forgot about everything happening in the world.

We entered the New Year in style, popping Bubbly and leaving the previous year behind with all its troubles, drama and negativity. It was officially time to be a new person this year.

We went home on the 2nd of January, the day after my birthday. On our way home Nathi kept acting funny, like asking me if I'm okay and if I really did enjoy my birthday. I was too tired and hungover to even dwell on his new behaviour.

He got us an Uber to drive us to our house. Yes, he doesn't like it when I refer to the house as his only, so I call it our house.

As we approached our house, he asked me to close my eyes. I did as he said and as we stepped out of the car I walked with my arm around his to use him as my aid. We walked for a few seconds until he asked me to open my eyes. I slowly did and I was beyond surprised.

I saw a brand new Polo Vivo in front of me! It's not an expensive car but I'm not bothered. It was grey in colour and the number plate was customized with the words LEPYATLA GP. I was in so much shock that I just had tears flowing down my face.

Nathi: "Hao, baby. If you don't like it I can take it back and get you a new one."

Me: "No, baby. I love it. I'm just so happy that I'm shocked. I can't believe you did this for me."

Nathi: "I told you, I'd do anything for you."

I smiled and even though I won't be able to drive much since I only got my learners a few months ago. He said he'd let me drive myself to school and he'll come fetch me again with the car until I get used to driving.

Once I eventually get my license I'll be able to drive freely. Of course he says I can drive myself with just my learners. Ai, Nathi and his bad habit of bribing police officers.

I can't thank God enough for giving me a man like Nathi. Just then I remembered the famous verse from Jeremiah 29:11 "For I Know The Plans I Have For You' Declares the Lord, 'Plans to Prosper You and Not to Harm You

Plans to Give You Hope and a Future."

Nathi was indeed part of God's plan for me. I'm so humbled and grateful to have him in my life. This is truly the beginning of many memories we'll be making together.

Schools finally opened and I'm now officially a Grade 11 learner. Thank Goodness Glen, Mandi and Bree are in my class yet again. Imza and Bongz as well although we hardly see Imza that much. He's got a job after school or something. Apparently he's saving for tuition fees. Nathi has been paying my fees and taking care of me, so I don't have a problem with that. I get to see Tshiamo quite a lot now, but Mama still won't forgive me. I've slowly made peace with that. Apparently Pabi gave birth few months ago and the baby suffers from birth defects and the only income she has is SASSA. Mmamogolo Aidah has been gone from the house ever since. Mama got a job at a hotel as a cleaner, so she's able to take care of Tshiamo the way she wants to now. It's Monday morning, a new day and new week and I decided to approach Tshiamo just to catch up.

Me: "Hey, ngwaneso (sis)."

Tshiamo: "Hey, sesi (sis)."

We hugged and I noticed she looked a bit down.

Me: "Dintshang (What's cooking)?"

Tshiamo: (sigh) "Ah, nothing much. Just That Papa o boile (Dad js back)."

I widened my eyes and felt a huge wave of shock come over me. My dad is in Pretoria? Why would he be here after dumping us like that?

Me: "O ra bjang (What do you mean)?"

Tshiamo: "I mean Papa o boile and o dula le rena now (I mean Dad is back and lives with us now)."

I couldn't believe it.

Me: "Why?"

Tshiamo: "Apparently his new wife left him once all the money ran out. He seems too broke for mg liking and Mama just took him back just like that. I really can't stay there anymore, Sesi (sis). It's really bad. I can't even concentrate on my studies without them breathing down my neck telling me I need to do better so that I don't end up like you.

The pressure is mounting on me as they keep telling me that I need to be a Chartered Accountant and take them to higher places and build them a proper house. I do chores like a damn slave and I hardly get to have peace.

Pabi leaves her baby and goes out at night and the baby cries non stop. Koko doesn't help either and at times I have to look after the child. Please help me, Sesi (sis). Get me out of there. I'll do anything."

She pleaded with me while holding my hands with tears flowing down her cheeks. It hurt me so much to see her in such pain. To think I thought it was getting better.

Me: "Okay. After school you can go with Nathi and I and we'll sort this out. Don't stress about it, okay?"

Tshiamo was so delighted by my answer as she wiped her tears off her face and her face began to light up. Soon as she left for class, I felt so much pain. I cried thinking I have failed my sister. I truly wish that I had taken her with me that day.

No one is perfect but my parents are pushing their own kids away. They keep instilling the idea of us being Chartered Accountants in our heads. It really feels like My mom is trying to live her dreams through us and it's painful as fuck.

I couldn't even concentrate that day thinking of how much Tshiamo actually had to endure while I was living the high life with Nathi. Maybe I should have chosen my mom instead just to be able to have peace. Could I have been selfish?

Chapter 48

Chichi

It was finally after school and my mind has been adrift all damn day. I just couldn't wait to get away from here. I texted Nathi and briefed him about the situation during break and he was okay with it.

I met up with Tshiamo and we went to Nathi who was standing outside my brand new car. I hopped in the driver's seat as they greeted each other. Tshiamo was so happy.

Tshiamo: "Tjo, Sesi (Wow, sis). Abuti Nathi o go reketse koloi e nswa (Nathi bought you a new car)?! Yoh, Sesi, you're so blessed. I wish le nna ke kereye boyfriend wa go loka bjana ka ena (I wish I could also find a nice boyfriend like him)."

That statement doesn't sit well with me at all. What kind of example am I setting for Tshiamo? Does she think that men are the way out of poverty?

Me: "Nonsense, you'll make your own money and buy your own car as you said, you're going to be a doctor."

Tshiamo: "Yea, but it wouldn't hurt to have a boyfriend."

I shook my head while Nathi laughed as he seemed so unbothered by my concern.

Tshiamo is just 14 turning 15 soon. She's still a baby and will always be a baby to me.



We arrived at Koko's house and I suddenly felt so nervous. The last time I saw Mama she outed me in front of the whole church. Nathi could see my hesitant behaviour as I switched off the ignition. He held my hand.

Nathi: "Don't worry, I'm with you. I'll always have your back, baby."

I smiled and thanked him. We got out as Tshiamo blatantly refused to get out of the car and looked scared shitless. She was even shivering. Something isn't right.

Tshiamo didn't tell me the whole story.

Me: (opening the door) "Tshiamo, etswa (come out)."

Tshiamo: (Shaken) "Sesi, please. E re ke sale ka mo (Sis, please, let me stay in the car)."

I got really worried and started panicking.

Me: "Tshiamo, come. I'll be with you. No one will hurt you."

Tshiamo: "Please, sesi."

She had tears streaming down her face and fear written all over her.

Nathi: "It's okay, come. I'll be with you guys. Woza (come)."

Nathi extended his hand as Tshiamo slowly got out the car. I was sad, but the sudden feeling of rage came over me. What the fuck were my parents doing to Tshiamo that was so horrible it got her so terrified?

We walked into the yard and Nathi held Tshiamo by the hand. We found Koko holding a baby which I assumed was Pabi's baby.

Koko: "Hehe! Jehova (God)! Spoko se tsogile bahung (The ghost has risen from the dead)!"

I got so annoyed by that comment.

Koko: "O boile gae na (Have you come back home), Tshhegofatso? Or o tlisitse magadi (Have you brought lobola), Nkosinathi?"

This woman has no shame. She turned the baby so it could face me and I was beyond shocked. The baby was an albino, but looked like he or she had down syndrome and without one hand. Mara Pabi.

Koko: "Wa di bona tse (You see this)? Ke segole sa Pabi (This is Pabi's cripple).

Akere ne a sasanka le bashimane kamoka a nwa le bjala a imile (She was running around with all these boys and drinking while pregnant)."

My heart bled for the little baby. No baby deserves to have their mother choose their life for them like that.

Koko: "Wa bona (You see)? Le gona bjanong ga teng (Even now she's not here). Ai, waitse keng, o te phalla ke wena (You're so much better than her). O te kereyetse Monna wa tshetele e bile o sa tsena skolo (You found yourself a rich man and you're still in school). Nou re phela ka Sassa (Now we survive on Sassa)."

Mxm

only now she says I'm better than Pabi but all along I was nothing but trash in her eyes. I decided to ignore her stupid comments and do what I came here for.

Me: "Mama le Papa ba teng (Are mom and dad home)?"

Koko: "Ee, ba teng (Yes, they are). Ntatao o la o mo useless o no tlile ka jockey le baatjie ka mo (Your useless dad just came here with his undies and jacket). O nnetse go lekelisa marete ga reke le borotho (He's busy hanging his dick around without even buying bread). Ai, mmao o flopile shem (Your mother made a bad choice)." I ignored her once again and made my way into the house. I found them sitting in the dining room, while mama was drinking tea, he was drinking beer. They were laughing away like he never left and stopped as soon as I walked in.

Me: "Dumelang (Hello)."

Mama didn't respond, instead she gave me a filthy look from head to toe and clicked her tongue. Nathi was standing next to me while Tshiamo hid behind him.

Papa: "Hey, wena, Tshagofasto! O se kereya kae sebete sa go tsena ka mo (Where do you get the audacity to come here) after what you did?!"

I got so fired up, I was fuming from the core of my being. This man has the fucking nerve. I gave him a death stare and decided to say my piece. I felt all that anger I've been storing for him come back again. I just lost control of myself.

Me: "Wa reng (What did you just say)?! Please don't tell me you have the audacity to tell me that shit in my grandmother's house?! You left us when we needed you most and now that you're broke you just waltz in here like you own this house?! What kind of a father does that?!"

I could see him get fueled with anger but I wasn't bothered.

Mama: "Wa bona (You see), Patrick? I told you. I told you this child belongs to Satan now."

My father got so angry he tried to get up and raised his hand, but Nathi grabbed his arm with his bloodshot eyes. I got worried because he could transform into the Beast he becomes when he gets angry. My father got so scared when he saw Nathi's eyes and I could see fear in his eyes.

Mama: "Hey, wena, Nkosinathi! Where do you get the right to come in here and beat up my husband?!"

Really, mama? Who beat who here?

Me: "You know, what? I don't have time for this. I won't stand here another minute and watch you do to Tshiamo what you did to Lebo. You two should be ashamed of calling yourselves parents. Beating and kicking your own child like a useless dog, making it almost impossible for her to conceive!"

I was so angry that I didn't even realize I was shouting at the top of my lungs. Mama was so shocked to hear me spit those words. She was probably asking herself how I knew about that.

Me: "Tshiamo, let's go. We can buy you new clothes. These two don't deserve you." Nathi finally let go of Patrick's hand and he sat back down, shocked as hell. I turned around and we were about to walk away.

Mama: "If you walk out that door, Tshiamo, you'd better not come back. You're dead to me."

Me: "No, Julia, you're dead to us. Both of you."

Proverbs 16 v32 says "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil." That's exactly what we did. We got angry and walked away instead of killing those two.

Chapter 49

Chichi

After that unpleasant meeting with my evil stricken parents, Tshiamo was in a state. I had to sit with her at the back while trying to calm her down. Every time I patted or rubbed her back, she kept wincing in pain. Something tells me she's got bruises on her back and that makes me bloody angry. Those two are going to pay for what they did. We arrived at the house and Tshiamo had calmed down a bit. Nathi opened for us and I led her into one of the bedrooms, while Nathi had a drink. She sat on the bed and I had my arm around her.

Me: "Do you want to tell me what really happened?"

Tshiamo: (sobbing) "They... He hit me. I went to take a bath and foundama going through my phone. She found out that you sent me some money and called papa to come and sort me out. He wasted no time and hit me with his belt. Mama didn't even protest, Tshego. All she kept saying was I deserved it and that I was conversing with the devil. Imagine he ripped my towel off me and beat me while I was naked."

I cringed as she said that while she had tears flowing down her face. It pained me to see her going through such. I've never experienced my parents' violence, though.

Why would they do such to Tshiamo and Lebo?

I asked her to remove her uniform so I could see the extent of her wounds. She slowly removed her clothes with my help and I was horrified. It looked as if he had hit her with the metal part of the belt. She was so red and swollen, while she had a few open wounds on her back.

Me: "When did this happen?"

Tshiamo: "Last night."

Tears burnt my cheeks as I looked at her. I hugged her for a while and took her to the bathroom and ran a bath for her. Nathi was in the kitchen cooking. I put in some grof salt to ease her pain and got her in the bath tub. She winced in pain as I washed her body, but I asked her to hang in there a little bit more.

How could my parents beat her up so badly and expect her to go to school like this? Something tells me it wasn't the first time they did such to her. No wonder her marks were so bad for her first year in High School.

She told me that during the December holidays, she was told to study six hours daily in order for her to make up for her bad marks. Mama and Papa didn't even care about the well being of their daughter. I'll have to get her assistance at school, but first I have to take her to the doctor tomorrow.

It's going to be hard juggling school, the gang and Tshiamo but I'll make it work. Soon after she was done with her bath I took her to her bedroom to get dressed and gave her some painkillers. She lay down and dozed off within minutes. I walked out of the room and went to change. Afterwards I headed to the kitchen and found Nathi making some Mac and Cheese. He gave me a warm, long hug and we stood in each other's embrace for a while.

Nathi: "How is she?"

Me: (Dee sigh) "Broken, baby. I've never seen her like this. My parents are not okay, you know. Ba sleg batho bale (They're evil)."

Nathi: "Ngibacishe (Should I get rid of them)?"

Me: (horrified) "Nathi!"

I thought he was joking, but he was dead serious.

Nathi: "Yini (What)? I'm serious. I'm tired of them hurting you and everyone you love. When you hurt, I hurt."

He was dead serious and I must admit I'm also very angry at them, but murder isn't the solution.

Me: "No, baby. Leave it all in God's hands. Besides, Julia has lost all her children, all four of us. I don't think she'll cope."

Nathi: "I'm telling you, she'll try and make life harder for us now that we took Tshiamo. If she and that useless Rra Baadjie (homeless man) of hers try some funny shir

ngizoba sorta out (I'll sort them out)."

Ai, my Nathi though.

Me: "I hear you, Ntate (Mr) Dhlamini. As long as you don't kill anyone."

He smiled and gave me a peck on the lips. Once he was done cooking, I woke Tshiamo up to at least eat something, but she didn't want to join us which was understandable. She asked to eat in the bedroom instead, so I let her be. Nathi and I ate in the lounge and caught up on some soapies, before we headed to bed.

We took a nice, long shower together, making sweet love to each other. It felt so good and magical. Everytime one of us goes through a rough patch, we know just how to please the distressed other and release all the tension and pain in one's body. I love how gentle Nathi can be and how rough he can be at times. We had to be quiet, though as Tshiamo's bedroom was just opposite the bathroom.

We got in bed as I struggled sleeping. We prayed and he wrapped his arms around me as I tried sleeping. I had a million of thoughts going through my mind. Tshiamo is my baby sister and my parents just decided to push us all away like we're not even human. Those two need a cold, hard lesson. But for now, I'll leave all unto God.

I keep thinking of Matthew 7 v15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Julia is indeed a wolf in sheep's clothing.

The book of Isaiah speaks a lot about wrath and wicked people. Isaiah 48:22 says, "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked." And Isaiah 57:20 says, "But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud." Perhaps Nathi is right, I also can't shake the feeling that Mama won't rest until she makes my life a living hell now that I took Tshiamo away from her. I slowly dozed off to sleep.

Chapter 50

Chichi

I woke up early preparing for a normal school day as usual. I must have been so tired last night, that I didn't even wake up one bit during the night. It was Glen's birthday a few days ago and he turned 18. He's one of those who went to school at the age of 7, hence he's 18 in Grade 11.

Nathi surprised him with a nice car too, a Ford Fiesta ST. I don't like it when Nathi spends so much money on us, but Glen deserves it. He's been so loyal and good to the both of us. I love that I can count on him for anything. He's become my male bestie and even Nathi doesn't mind.

Since I don't have a license yet and he has, He's coming to fetch me so we can go to school together. Nathi will be taking Tshiamo to the doctor for a check up and he made an appointment with Dr. Stewart, who treated Menzi at Demar. I woke Tshiamo up and she was very reluctant, and refuses to go to the doctor.

I don't even know why, but something is up. I can just tell. When I asked her why she refuses to get checked, she bit my head off. Tshiamo is a quiet person, but when something bothers her, she closes up and bursts when she doesn't want to talk about it.

My only solution right now is Pulane. She's not working today, so I know she'll be able to assist and check up on her. She can even organize Dr. Stewart to come to the house and have a session with Tshiamo. Nathi said he would take care of all of that, since he doesn't want me to miss the first few days of school. Grade 11 is harder than Grade 10. We even got work and an assignment on the first day of school.

As I was about to get dressed, I heard a knock on the door.

Nathi: "I'll get it, baby."

I then heard Glen's voice.

Glen: "Sho, sho, bafo. Uphi uTshiamo (Where's Tshiamo)?"

Nathi: "She's in the spare bedroom, sleeping."

Glen: "How is she really? Eish, ngi worried ngaye (I'm worried about her)."

Mxm, he doesn't even bother asking about me. Glen mara.

Nathi: "She's honestly not okay, kodwa (but) she'll be fine, hopefully."

Nathi briefed him about Pulane and Dr. Stewart coming over, and I walked out of the bedroom. Glen didn't even greet me, all he kept going on about was Tshiamo.

Glen: "Maybe I should stay with her while you take Chichi to school."

Nathi and I looked briefly at each other and then at Glen. Okay, we all know Glen is a caring soul, but for him to be so worried about Tshiamo is something else. They hardly know each other unless there's something I don't know about.

Me: "Am I missing something?"

Glen: "Usho kanjani (What do you mean)?"

Me: "I mean, since when are you so worried about my sister?"

Glen: "Ah, man, Chichi. O rata di taba man (You like news). She's your little sister and I'm just concerned."

I gave him an inquisitive look. I didn't buy his story one bit.

Nathi: "Alright, hambani (go) before you run late."

Glen seemed so hesitant to leave and was trying all means not to.

Glen: "Sho sho, let me go check on her before we leave."

Nathi gave me that look again. I know that look.

Me: "Shap, but don't be too long."

Glen went into Tshiamo's bedroom, while I was left with Nathi.

Nathi: "I made you lunch, it's on the counter."

Nathi makes me lunch every night. He also waits up for me while I study in the bedroom and sometimes quizzes me when I prepare myself for tests and exams. He doesn't know much about accounting, but he knows about English and some physics. He learns along the way, though. Sweet, Right?

Me: "Is it just me or is Glen acting funny?"

Nathi: "I thought I was the only one, baby. I'm telling you, something is up with those two."

One silly thing couples do when they're together almost all the time is that they gossip. Pulane and Menzi do it too and so does Eve and Biggie. It's just something that happens automatically and once it does, it's hard to get rid of that bad habit.

Me: "Hai, baby. Now you're exaggerating. I think Glen has the hots for her, but that's about it. Tshiamo is 14, though."

Nathi: "I'm telling you, ba ya jola (They're dating). When the truth comes out, don't say I didn't tell you."

He got me thinking hard for a while. Tshiamo and Glen? Glen had a girlfriend the last time we spoke, but he doesn't talk much about her. He did however tell me that they were taking things slow because they wanted to see if they were right for each other or not.

Wait, could the mysterious girlfriend Glen has been hiding from us be my baby sister?!

I don't know how I would feel about that. I can't be a hypocrite about it either. I'm cohabiting with my boyfriend who's ten years older than me. Glen is only four years older than her and I believe he would never take advantage of her.

I guess I'll have to get the truth out of him. Glen came out of the bedroom looking even more worried than he did when he walked in here.

I kissed Nathi goodbye and left with Glen. We got into the car as he drove off in silence. I could see him tighten his jaw just like Nathi does when he's upset or angry and I could tell that this whole drama with Tshiamo is way bigger than I thought. I think Nathi was right. Glen has seriously deep feelings for my baby sister.

Me: "Glen, dintshang (what's happening)?"

Glen: (breathing heavily) "Eish, A se niks, Chichilicious (It's nothing)."

Me: "I know you, now talk."

Glen: (Deep sigh) "Before I tell you, do you promise not be mad?"

Eish, tough one.

Me: "I promise."

Glen: "Okay, remember when I told you about my girlfriend? The one I was involved with and I wasn't too sure about?"

Me: "Yes?"

Glen: "Well, I left her for your sister."

Okay, this is a whole new twist. Tshiamo o bethile motho wa Glen ka stena (Tshiamo took Glen from his chick)?"

Me: "I don't follow."

Glen: "Eish, nna le Azania (Azania and I) started dating briefly last year. It didn't even last two weeks. She just came on too strongly for me. I thought we could be serious about it and take things slowly, but we had sex the very first day she agreed to be my girlfriend. She's not even that good in bed, man. I just lost interest. That's when I started spending time with Tshiamo.

Ever since you left Thomas' transport, we became close. I looked out for her and she would get off at my house and we would study together. I couldn't understand why such a bright girl like her still got such poor marks when I've been helping her.

She would always get tense when it was time for her to go home and that's when I knew something was wrong. I asked her what was up and that's when she told me your dad is back from wherever he was and was now staying with them.

As the days went by, she looked really bad and frail, and I hardly saw her during the December holidays. I got her to lie to your parents and tell them she's visiting a friend for a week. They agreed and I took her away to a lodge for a week."

I looked at him as I widened my eyes thinking the worst.

Glen: "Relax, nothing happened. I just could tell that the happiness and fee-e-spirit in Tshiamo was fading away rapidly and I just wanted her to tell me what was going on. She told me that your mom and dad were abusing her.

Both mentally and physically. She was forced to study 8 hours a day during December holidays. I mean your mom even forces her to read the Bible for two hours everyday after school. She's not even allowed to go to the church anymore because you and the gang attend there.

She says Eve's preachings are evil and that she would get corrupted. It was bad, Chichi. When she gave them her report card, your father strangled her until she passed

out, while your mom just watched. Since he came back, Tshiamo has been sleeping on the floor, while they have sex right there in the same room as her.”

My skin cringed as he said that. By now we were parked inside the school yard. I could see the coldness on his face turn into sadness, as he shed tears. He didn't even bother wiping them off. I felt so pained at that moment. I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

Glen:”I would try and see her whenever I could. She was lucky because he would send her to come buy booze at my house, even Koko sends her everyday, so I could check up on her. I'd give her some money and sometimes send her some too.

Apparently your dad who lacks respect for his own kids, went through her phone and found that you've been sending her money. He also saw my messages and the money I'd been sending her too.

He asked her about who I was and she wouldn't tell him, so he beat her with a broom stick. When she finally confessed that it was me, hoping that he would stop, your mother took off all her clothes, as he shoved the broom stick up her vagina.”

He banged his steering wheel and wailed. I couldn't even help but to burst into tears as well. We sat in the car crying as if we had just lost someone close to us. We did lose someone, yes, not physically, but spiritually.

We were mourning the loss of my beautiful sister's soul. The forever bubbly and free-spirited Tshiamo was murdered, all at the hands of two people we called Mama and Papa.

My phone rang and it was Nathi. I quickly composed myself and so did Nathi as we both wiped our tears off of our faces and looked at each other with blood shot eyes.

Glen:”Answer it. It might be about Tshiamo.”

I took a deep breath and answered it.

Me:”Nkosinathi.”

Nathi:”It's Tshiamo, she won't do anything. She won't even co operate with Pulane. Uthi ufuna uGlen (She says she wants Glen).”

I let out a loud sigh as I gave Glen the phone. He spoke to Nathi, but I couldn't make much of what they were saying to each other. We didn't even pay attention to the bell ringing and he hung up.

Glen:”Tshiamo needs me.”

I understood. Nathi has become my crutch, my soul provider and I couldn't be there for my own sister. She has found a confidante in Glen, and I'd have to make peace with the fact that she won't tell me everything at times.

Me:”Let's go home.”

I wasn't even in the right space to be at school. I'll have to send Mrs. Naidoo who's our register Teacher now a message about Tshiamo and I's absence. Glen and I drove back home in silence, not even the radio was on. Silence can be very powerfully loud. It can scream out fear, distress or it can scream out anger and pain.



Anger crept its way up my throat from deep down my gut. I felt like my throat was closing in and I was being suffocated by all my thoughts and feelings. I thought of a thousand ways to punish Patrick during that car ride. I know I made a pact with Nathi when I joined the gang that I wouldn't kill anyone, but right now my soul is dead. I need to teach that useless motherfucker a lesson and for as long as he stays alive, my mother will always be a Ruthless, cold bitch.

When Glen spoke to me about my journey of emancipation last year, I had no idea I would grow into the person that I am today. I've blossomed into a beautiful, well watered flower, thanks to those around me, but on the other hand, the merciful Chichi is slowly dying and I blame my parents for that. They don't deserve my kindness. They say be weary of what happens behind closed doors. You'd be amazed what people get up to when no one is watching.

Matthew 6 v5-7 says: "What you do in front of people is nothing if you are not living the same life at home behind closed doors." Julia and Patrick are the true definition of that.

Chapter 51

Chichi

Glen and I finally arrived at our house. It felt like forever even though we only drove for about 15 minutes. That was the longest and most gut wrenching 15 minutes of my life. As soon as we got home, I rushed out of the car along with Glen.

I found Pulane in the lounge with Nathi. He quickly got up as he saw me walk through that door. I was about to go to Tshiamo's bedroom, but Nathi held me back.

Nathi: "Let Glen go."

Glen looked at me as if he was awaiting approval. I was so saddened by the fact that she wanted Glen instead of me, but I let her be. I nodded to Glen and he made his way to the bedroom and closed the door. My tears betrayed me once again as Nathi held me in his arms.

Pulane looked so sad like she had been crying. I can't even blame it on the hormones, this shit hurts. Pulane and I hugged while her already showing belly got in the way.

Me: "How is she?"

Pulane: (looking down) "Not good, hey. She refused to let me touch her. Dr. Stewart is already on his way and she refused to see anyone else, but Glen."

I had so many emotions running through my mind. I sat down on the couch and patiently waited for Glen to come out.

Glen

Tshiamo and I have formed a really good bond. At first I liked her as Chichi's sister and I grew very fond of her. Azania and I were never really going to make it as a couple. Azania is in Matric and a bit older than me. I never even considered her as my type, but she just came on to me. She's a new learner, as she started attending our school last year just before the finals.

Her interest became known to me via Imza, apparently she had told him how she's into me. I didn't really find her interesting at all, since she's taller than me, pretty skinny and a bit untidy for my liking. She smokes – a lot, even more than I do and spends most of her free time partying.

I'm not being a hypocrite or anything, but I take my studies very seriously. Nathi has always taught me that the girl you date should be a reflection of yourself.

You should be proud of who you date and never see the need to hide her from the world. Azania, however, was just the total opposite. She's just too much nje and worst part she is currently renting at Koko Mokgadi's house. I don't even know how a young girl like her stays alone, but apparently she's an orphan. She kept coming onto me so I decided to pass time with her.

As soon as I asked her out, she agreed. Next thing she showed up on my door step at 8pm wearing a gown and nothing else. She opened her gown and my dick went hard in an instant. I'm a guy

so if I see tits and pussy staring at me, my dick will go hard involuntarily.

But as soon as we fucked, I just didn't even enjoy it. I couldn't even finish the round. I hate breaking a girl's heart, but I had to be honest with her even though now she thinks ke mo shapile di 1-0 (I pulled a hit and run on her).

Ever since Tshiamo and I have been spending a lot of time together, I fell for her. I know she's only 14, but her innocence reminds me of Chichi. She's just so beautiful and amazing, but her parents broke her to the core. I felt like it was and still is my duty to help her come alive again.

She's got a whole life ahead of her and as soon as she told me what her father did to her, she begged me not to tell anyone. It was so hard keeping that secret from Chichi and Nathi, but I had to out of respect for her. That's the reason why I have been avoiding Chichi and Nathi.

After we came back in the morning from school, I went to her bedroom and found her lying on her side, with her back facing me. I could hear her sobbing and that just broke my heart into a million pieces.

Her beautiful, small, brown eyes are too beautiful to be filled with constant tears. I'd rather have her cry out of joy than pain. I clenched my jaw and fists as soon as I saw her bruised back.

Glen: "Tshiamo..."

She slowly turned to look at me and I could see her making facial expressions that proved she was in pain. She burst into tears as soon as she saw me and I went to hug her gently. I tried so much not to touch her back.

Glen: "It's okay. I'm here now."

Tshiamo: "I'm scared, Glen. I can't have anyone touch me. My... My parents... Patrick sent me a text last night. I'm really scared."

I got upset just by hearing his name.

Glen: "Show me."

She passed me her phone and I opened her messages as I came across Patrick's message.

"You'd better come back home if you know what's good for you, or else, I'll do more than just shove a wooden stick up that whoring pussy of yours."

I got so mad that I threw her phone against the wall and it broke into pieces. This man is a rapist abuser and his wife is the enabler! Tshiamo got frightened while I succumbed to my rage.

Glen:"I'm sorry. They just make me so angry. But don't you worry about them, I'll fix this. For now, you have to allow Pulane to check you, please."

She slowly nodded as a sign of approval. I walked out and went to call Pulane and tell her that she can proceed. I need to deal with that motherfucker as soon as possible.

Chapter 52

Chichi

As I sat waiting for Glen to appear from Tshiamo's room, I kept thinking of a million ways to torture my so called father. Had they been merciful and not practically raped her, I wouldn't be this mad. Now I'm absolutely livid and I've made up my mind – I'm most definitely going after him.

Proverbs 18 v 21 says:"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits." Most people, especially parents don't realize just how powerful the tongue is.

Whatever you speak unto your children, will determine their outcome. They have damaged us all, and look just how we've turned out. The four of us have become tainted by hate all because of their behaviour and treatment towards us.

Glen approached us as he walked out of the bedroom.

Glen:"Pulane, she says she can see you now."

Pulane nodded and proceeded to the bedroom.

Glen:"Bafo (Brother), I think it's time we go get that asshole. I want him to regret this for the rest of his life."

Nathi:"Okay, shap. Chichi, you stay here. I'll be back."

These two must be kidding me. There's no way I'm letting them go without me. This is my thing.

Chichi:"No. You're not leaving me here. I want to do this job. Patrick is mine. Le mo tlogelle nna (Leave him to me)."

They both looked at me shocked and thought I'd turn back on what I said, but I wasn't kidding. I returned a straight face.

Nathi:"Chichi, you promised. I told you I don't want you to be caught up in that. Joining the gang was enough."

Chichi:"I'm already in too deep. I need to do this, for closure."

Nathi didn't like it one bit, ans neither die Glen, but he agreed. We waited anxiously for Pulane to finish up with Tshiamo. She came out after about 30 minutes looking really pained.

Me: "How is she?"

Pulane: (teary eyed) "I had to clean her a bit down there, since there were wooden parts left. They nearly caused an infection since they caused her to have small open wounds.

I gave her something to sedate her. She's in quite a state, but she'll be alright. Dr. Stewart postponed the session to 2 o'clock."

I'm very grateful for Pulane being here. I have to do this otherwise I just won't be able to forgive myself. I need to do it for my sister whose innocence was taken away from her.

Me: "Pulane, May I please ask that you stay and watch her for a while? I have to go sort something out."

Pulane is good at reading people, that's one of the things I love about her.

Pulane: "You don't even have to ask. If you're thinking what I'm thinking, you have my full support. I hope you kill him."

Pulane is a very gentle soul, and means every word. I knew right there and then that I had her full support. The time Eve spoke a lot about forgiveness with Ntate Moruti and the whole Mma Moruti and Micah saga, she cried a whole lot non stop that day. That's when she told us what actually happened to her.

Her own sister would let her suck her pussy everyday from the tender age of five. She didn't even know it was wrong until she was caught red handed by their mother.

Her sister was only 13 by the time she had initiated Pulane into this abuse, so I can only imagine what she must have felt throughout all those years.

Her parents never got her arrested, instead they found her a job elsewhere and she has been far away since then. It took Pulane a long time to forgive all of them, but she eventually did.

Nathi, Glen and I left the house and got into my car. I asked Nathi to drive this time. I could feel the adrenaline rush, it's amazing how excited one gets when they're driven by rage.

All I kept thinking about was what I was about to do. After half an hour we arrived at Koko's house. I didn't even wait, I got out of the car fuming, but Nathi held me back.

Nathi: "No, baby. Sala mo (Stay here)."

I was very hesitant, but I didn't want to disrespect my man like that so I listened. He and Glen went into the house. At that particular moment I wish I smoked so I could ease my frustrations. After about five minutes I heard someone shouting and screaming.

I was leaning against the car at that time and after hearing those sounds, I turned and saw Glen and Nathi holding Patrick by his arms while he was kicking and screaming like a little bitch, with Julia running after him cursing and shouting.

Patrick: "Ntlogeleng magentsa ke lena (Leave me, you gangsters)! Le tlo itshola, ko le swarisa (You'll regret this, I'll get you arrested)."

I chuckled with a smirk on my face thinking if only he knew he isn't coming back tonight. This is the last time he'll ever see his precious wife.

Julia:"Le tlo itshola lena (You'll regret this)! Modimo o le shebile (God is watching you)! And wena (you) Tshegofatso, I curse the day I ever gave birth to you! Ke mang a ka thabela go belega sefefe sa go robalwa ke magenza le ba bolayi (Who'd be proud of birthing a whore who sleeps with gangsters and killers)?!"

People were staring and I really didn't give a shit at that present time. I saw Micah's car stop by as he looked at us but I didn't give a shit. I thought her words would pierce through my heart as always, but my heart had already turned to stone. Instead, it felt like they had bounced right back at her.

While Nathi and Glen shoved in in the back seat with Glen sitting next to him and Nathi coming to the driver's seat. I walked to the passenger seat next to Nathi and looked at Julia before I got in.

Me:"No, Julia. I curse the day you became my mother. You never deserved the womb you have inside of you. Once I'm done with your man, I'm coming for you! You'd better run before I find you!"

Julia was so scared as she kept quiet and widened her eyes. I got into the car and my eyes didn't even leave her sight. I wanted her to take a good look at the new Tshegofatso, the stone cold and heartless Tshegofatso. As far as I was concerned, I became an orphan that day.

Proverbs 15 v1 is often overlooked, yet the words are powerful: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." Perhaps had she decided to spit nicer words to me I'd have had a change of heart.

Chapter 53

Chichi

Luke 12 v2 says:"Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known." It's really interesting how people live with great secrets without shame. They think that secrets will be kept buried forever.

While Nathi drove us to Biggie's house, Patrick kept screaming and shouting in the car. I asked Glen to shut him up.

Patrick:"Nkabe ke tsebile gore o tlo ba sefefe so nkabe ke dumetse gore mmao a ntshe mpa (If only I had known you'd turn out like this, I was going to agree that your mother abort you.)"

I wasn't even going to listen to his bullshit, although I was a bit curious to see if he was telling the truth or what.

Me:"Glen, shut him up, please."

Glen:"Okay."

Glen gave him one firm punch that knocked him out. At least we had a further 15 minutes of peace as we drove to Savannah. We arrived and Glen and Nathi pulled the unconscious Patrick towards the house. They led him to the Torture Chamber as I found Eve in the kitchen.

Eve: (frantic) “Are you okay, babe?”

She hugged me and I hugged her back, with no tears in my eyes. Time for crying was over.

Me: “Yes, I’ve never been better.”

I proceeded to walk towards the study as Eve stopped me.

Eve: “Where are you going? Nathi and Glen should be handling that.”

Me: “This is my project, Eve. I’m handling this one today.”

Eve looked so scared as she switched off the pots and followed me. I walked hastily to the study and opened the Door to the Torture Chamber and found Biggie sitting down having a smoke of his Cigar. I saw Nathi and the bewildered Glen tying Patrick onto the famous chair.

Me: “Sho, Biggie.”

Biggie: “Sho sho, Sovereign. Are you sure you’re ready for this?”

I nodded.

Biggie: “Once you get sucked in there’s no turning back.”

Me: “I’m ready.”

Eve looked so displeased, her forehead was even sweating.

I felt like Nathi and Glen were really wasting my time, so I took control.

Me: “Wake him up.”

Nathi: “Sthandwa sami (My love), let’s talk for a second.”

Me: “Waitse keng (You know what)? You two are wasting my time. Sit, I’ll take care of it.”

Nathi was about to tell me something, but Biggie stopped him.

Biggie: “Leave her and do as she says.”

Nathi and Glen looked at me once more before they took their seats. Eve sat down next to Biggie.

I took one of the buckets we have in there and put a few ice cubes from the Bar Fridge and poured some water from one of the taps. Everyone was now quiet and all eyes were on me. I really hate attention naturally, but today I’m taking center stage. I poured the cold water on Patrick’s hanging face and he woke up gasping.

It took him a while to catch his breath and as soon as he calmed down he looked around.

Patrick: “Ke mo kae (Where am I)? Ke diang mo (What am I doing here)?!”

Me: “I told you that you’d regret what you did to all your children, including Menzi.”

Patrick was so pissed he tried wriggling out of the rope and chair, but after a few minutes of unsuccessful attempts, he decided to show his true colours.

Patrick: “Mpofolle mo wena sefebe (Untie me you bitch)!”

Me: (chuckling) “How, daddy, o bua so le ngwanago (You’re actually talking to your daughter like that)? It’s me, Tshogofatso, your golden egg.”

Patrick: “Mxm. Golden egg ya masepa! O nyoba ke magenza, o roga mmago e bile o mpolela ga mpe o tlo ipitsa Golden egg (You get fucked by gangsters, you disrespect

your mother and you even speak badly about me then you want to call yourself my golden egg)!”

Me:”Waitse (You know) Patrick, so many people out there want children. Let me rephrase that: So many DESERVING people want children out there, and people like you and Julia are the lucky ones.

So let’s start at the beginning before I kill you. You’d better show some form of remorse or else you’re dead before tonight.”

He chuckled out of spite and I just couldn’t care.

Me: “1. You decided to beat Lebo to a pulp and cause her to have uterine problems. Thanks to you she might never have children – Ever.

2. You told mama to get rid of Menzi; you basically told her to choose between you and him. Thanks to you he’ll always have self doubt and affection issues.

3. You had me and pretended that everything was pitch perfect when you had me. You were basically the perfect father, until you decided to run away. So we’ll get back to me just now.

4. You left us and went to live with another woman, another family. You decided to feed them instead of us, you left us to suffer at the hands of my grandmother. Now you came back out of nowhere and broke Tshiamo!

You basically raped her with a fucking broom stick! You shoved a broom stick up a 14 year old virgin’s vagina and you call yourself a father!”

I could feel so much rage come out of me, even my veins were popping out. I side eyed Glen and he was livid, while Nathi was so focused at what I was doing. It was almost as if he just couldn’t believe that it’s really me.

Patrick: (chuckling) “I left you, all of you because you just didn’t deserve me. I was so sick of having to pretend. Besides, Sylvia is a much more attractive woman than your mother. I’ve been with her for over ten years and we have two children together- both boys. So why would I stay with you and your useless mother when I have Sylvia?”

Men. He came back to the same woman he calls useless.

Me:”Yet you came back with absolutely nothing and went to live with her in her mother’s house.”

Patrick: “Sylvia kicked me out when I lost my job. She was my only option.”

I got so mad especially when he didn’t even show an ounce of remorse while saying that.

Me:”You’re such a time waster

Patrick. It’s time for me to punish your sins.”

I went to the wall and took a large knife from the shelf. He saw me wipe the knife clean with a cloth and he started panicking.

Patrick:”Wha... What are you going to do with that knife? You don’t have the balls, Tshegofatso. I raised you and I know you’re a weakling.”

He was bargaining. Well, too late.

Me: "Let's talk about the ten Commandments in the Bible since you and Julia claim to know it all too well. Firstly, you broke the third commandment, which states "You should honour the holy Sabbath day, which is Sunday."

You always went away on Sundays, while we went to church. Now, where were you all those Sundays?"

Patrick: "I.. I.. I was with Sylvia."

I wasted no time and chopped his left ear off in an instant. He cried out as blood was splashing out from the ear. The rest of the crowd was patiently watching in silence. The only sound we heard was Patrick's piercing cries.

Patrick: (screaming) "Yoh! Yoh mma weh! Nthusheng (Help me)! Tshego kao kgopela toe (I'm begging you) stop this!"

Me: "Up next, You broke the sixth commandment which clearly states "Thou shall not commit adultery". That one I'll have to punish you for lastly, but because you never listened to the Word of God, I'll have to cut your other ear off."

I chopped it off while he was crying out in pain.

Me: "You broke the fourth commandment which states "Honour your mother and father." When your parents told you to take care of your wife and children when you married her you agreed to do as they said, but then you went against their word."

I cut his left and right thumbs off. All these parts kept falling onto the ground while he cried out and I couldn't even hear his cries anymore. I was too focused and I enjoyed what I was doing to him.

Me: "Let's talk about a few things you taught me as a child. You taught me that the Bible says we shouldn't lie. Proverbs 19 v 9 says – "A false witness shall be punished, and a liar shall be caught".

You have lied pretty much all our lives, you lied to Julia and you lied to us. I chopped off both index fingers."

Patrick: "Tshegofatso! Kao kgopela (I'm begging you)! Stop, I'll do anything."

Me: "Psalm 11 v5 says: "The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence." You've been a violent husband and father, Patrick."

I chopped both middle fingers off and they fell off his fingers. He kept looking down at his fingers and cried out even louder as he looked at his new, deformed hands.

Me: "1 Timothy 5 v 8 says: "But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." I guess you're just as bad as a heathen, daddy."

I chopped off both his ring fingers.

Me: "1 Peter 2 v16 says: "Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves." You've been a hypocrite, daddy and now you shall live like a slave.

I cut off both his pinky fingers. He was crying out and kept falling out of breath every now and then, but I wasn't done.



Me: "Your tongue has been nothing, but a curse. It has said and done so many evils in this world, the world is better off without your poisonous words."

I took his tongue and held it with one of my hands and sliced it off. He cried out in pain and what was even better was that he couldn't even speak anymore.

I looked at him bleeding out and I was pleased with myself. It's always better to remove one evil person from this already cruel world before they do even more damage than they already have.

Nathi stood up and stood behind me, trying to remove the knife from me as I stood and watched him cry and bleed out.

Nathi: "That's enough, Chichi. Give me the knife."

Me: "No, I'm not done."

He stepped back slowly in defeat with his head down and sat back down.

Me: "You painted the perfect picture of a real, loving father to me, meanwhile you were nothing, but evil behind closed doors. I want you to take a good look at me, Patrick. This is what YOU made me.

Your hatred and evil deeds have made me who I am today. I stand here before you broken and hurt, while Tshiamo will forever be scarred by your fucked up actions. You raped your own child and for that I can never forgive you."

I walked up to him and unbuckled his pants as Nathi stood up briskly, while Patrick was starting to wiggle.

Nathi: "Chichi, don't. You'll kill him.. He's already bleeding out."

I didn't care at that moment. I gave him a cold look.

Me: "Let him."

I pulled his pants a bit lower and saw his stupid little dick. Even Nathi has a bigger dick than that. What is it with old ass men thinking they could have anything and everything they want in this world?

I don't know why Julia was begging and fighting for this man. I held it and sliced it off. By now blood was gushing out of his sliced penis and he was starting to lose consciousness.

Nathi got up and took the knife from me.

Nathi: "Let's go."

I had tears flowing down my face like a fast paced river. Everyone was looking at me while I stared at Patrick's lifeless body. I don't regret what I just did, absolutely not. I regret having to be the one to do what I did, though.

I hope and pray God can forgive me one day for what I had just done but it had to be done. Now the four of us as his children will be at peace and those he had with Sylvia will never feel the pain he's caused us.

One down and one more to go.

Chapter 54

Chichi

Nathi took me by my arm and walked me out of the chamber. He walked me to one of the bathrooms in Eve's house. I didn't even realize I had blood spats all over me. I was so focused on getting out all that rage, that I didn't even see any blood on me. Nathi was slowly taking off my clothes in complete silence as he kept trying to get me to look at him. He looked at me like I was a complete stranger, his face had absolutely no emotion.

He had a few spats on his shirt as well so he took off his clothes too and pulled me into the shower. We both got in and he ran the water while still looking at me without saying a word.

I didn't even have the energy to speak as I kept getting flashbacks of Patrick's lifeless body playing in my head like a slideshow. I just killed a person for the very first time. Not just a person, my own father. Only now it dawned on me that I committed murder and I might go to prison. What if Nathi leaves me?

I looked at him as uncontrollable tears began falling from my eyes. Those tears were followed by a loud wail as I collapsed into Nathi's chest. Those tears felt so hot, like they were burning themselves into my cheeks like hot lava.

The soothing warm water running down my face wasn't even helping with the pain I was feeling. My head felt so hot like it was about to explode.

Nathi held me without saying a word. He held me with so much affection and comfort. I felt so safe in his warm loving arms.

Me:"Nathi..."

Nathi:"Don't say a word, I understand."

Me:"Do you still love me?"

Nathi:"I could never hate you, Chichi. You accepted me as I am and loved me even after you saw me kill a man. I'm just saddened that you got wrapped up and sucked into all of this drama. I'm sorry you had to kill him. I just wish you had listened to me."

Me:"I know, but I had to do it."

Nathi:"I know, believe me I know."

He kissed me slowly and passionately. As the kiss progressed I wanted more, I needed more. I grinded myself onto his body and he stopped me.

Nathi:"Not now, Baby."

I nodded in disappointment as he kept washing my back. After we were done taking a shower we wiped ourselves dry and put on some lotion. There's everything in Eve and Biggie's spare bathrooms. We even have some spare clothes we change into in case shit like this happens.

Once we got dressed, we walked out hand in hand. We got to the kitchen and found Eve finishing up with the cooking. She approached me and hugged me.

Eve:"Are you okay?"

Me:"Yes. We have to go now. Pulane has been with Tshiamo from this morning."

Eve: (shaking her head) “Menzi is with them now. You have to go into the spare bedroom upstairs. Ntate Phiri is waiting for you. You have to get cleansed before you head home.”

I nodded and went upstairs, leaving Nathi with Eve. I got there and I had to take off my clothes and at least be left with underwear. He splashed some stuff on me that smelled really weird while chanting a few spells.

Nathi

As soon as Chichi went upstairs to be cleansed by Ntate Phiri, I just couldn't help but shed a few tears. A year ago when I asked her to be my woman, I never imagined that things would be like this. I honestly feel like I'm to blame for the way she is. I created this new Chichi and now there's no turning back. Eve is the only woman in our crew that kills, none of our women are supposed to do that. How will Chichi ever get through this?

Eve: “Nathi, ska stressa (don't stress). She'll be okay. I'm surprised that she actually went through with it, but she's got spunk that one. I don't condone murder, you know that, but let's face it Patrick had it coming.”

I buried my face in my hands and let out a loud sigh.

Nathi: “I can't deal with this, Eve. I hate myself right now.”

Eve: “That's because you love her. It's genuine love. If it doesn't scare you, it's not real. Relax, she'll get through this. Just don't push her away.”

Nathi: “Menzi will never forgive me for this.”

Eve: “Oho, Menzi is a big boy. He'll be fine. You get your big boy panties on and be there for your girl. I can't afford you to mess up. The launch is in two weeks.”

I had forgotten about that. Things were going so well and now I feel like everything is messed up. Biggie and Glen came back covered in dirt. I assumed they had gotten rid of the body.

Nathi: “Big, le e chunne daai ding (Is it done)?”

Biggie: “How do you know me? Of course it's done. They'll find him in a week or so. It will never be traced back to Chichi.”

Nathi: “Ta (Thanks).”

Glen went up to freshen up.

Biggie: “Don't look so stressed. Since when are you such a pussy?”

Nathi: “Mxm, tsek, Biggie. My wife can't go around killing people.”

Biggie: “Baby buka lo (Look at this one). He's so whipped nje. Besides after today, I have new found respect for our Sovereign. Baby, seems like you've got yourself some competition.”

Eve: “Mxm, ungazohlanya wena (Don't be crazy). Chichi is still a kid. Let's just make sure this is her first and last kill. We can't afford her to go rogue.”

She ain't gotta tell me twice. I just hope and pray she'll be able to get through this. After today, I'm so afraid of her now. If she could cut her dad's dick off like that, imagine what she could do to me if I made her angry.

Chichi

After the whole cleansing ritual, Ntate Phiri strictly instructed me not to have sex for seven days. He said that the herbs he used on me were to make sure that I don't go mad or go around killing people. He also said it was for protection against Patrick's evil spirit haunting me from the dead. I'm just glad it's over.

Nathi drove Glen and I back to his place. We found Pulane and Menzi watching tv in the lounge and Menzi was livid. He got up as soon as he saw us walking through the door.

Menzi: (fuming) "Chichi, what the fuck?!"

Okay, this is not the warm welcome I expected from my big brother. Pulane tried to calm him down, but he wasn't having it.

Pulane:"Menzi, calm down."

Menzi:"Thola (Quiet), Pulane! What the fuck were you thinking?! And you?! You two let her do that?!"

Glen:"Eh, mfo (bro), We tried to stop her, but she wouldn't budge."

Menzi:"That's not good enough, wena Glen! Chichi, you're a child."

Me:"You should've thought about that when you agreed to me joining the gang."

He was a bit surprised by my flippant response, but I wasn't having it.

Menzi:"Yey wena, Chichi. Ke tlaao trapa (I'll beat you)..."

Me:"Don't even try that. Look, Menzi, I have the utmost respect for you, and I love you as my big brother. But you need to accept that I'm in this as deep as you all are.

Pulane is as well. There's nothing you can do about it and don't you dare blame Nathi.

I chose to do what I did and I don't regret it. In fact, you should be thanking me."

He looked at me with a dull expression and I suppose I had rendered him speechless.

Me:"If you'll excuse me, I'd like to check on Tshiamo. Pulane, I owe you, sis.

Thanks so much."

Pulane:"Don't mention it."

Me:"I'd hug you, but I'm tainted right now and I can't afford my bad aura to rub off on your baby."

Pulane and I laughed out loud while these three idiots looked at us like we'd just lost our marbles. They must be kidding me. They kill people almost all the time and they want to act like I've committed the biggest crime. I saved the world from a toxic parent. They should be celebrating.

Chapter 55

The following day

Chichi

I managed to sleep last night although it took me a long while to doze off. Tshiamo was sedated, but Glen slept over because she wasn't comfortable having him gone. I still don't know what he did to gain her trust like that, but I like the fact that he isn't taking advantage of her at all.

She had her session with Dr. Stewart and he said that there's hope. They still have a few sessions to do, but there's hope.

Nathi on the other hand insists that I go for therapy. Men and their chauvanistic tendencies and double standards. Haven't they ever heard of Bonnie and Clyde? I'm not proud of what I did and I won't go around advertising what I did, but I'm not ashamed of it.

My peaceful night was interrupted by my so called mother calling me non stop and sending me threatening messages. I'm so over her, and I decided to switch off my phone.

Glen and I have to go to school today, as it's no use staying home. I informed Tshiamo's teacher that she's ill and she understood. Glen will be bringing her homework from now on.

Menzi is still angry at Nathi, Glen and I, but he'll get over it. He suggested that Tshiamo goes to live with him and Pulane, but she just won't budge. She says she doesn't want to be a burden to Pulane and put a damper on their mood as they're expecting.

I do understand where she's coming from, but a part of me sees how close she is to Glen.

Menzi is probably pissed as it seems like both brothers are just busy with his sisters. I guess pay back is a real bitch. Anyway, Glen and I are ready for school and Nathi made lunch for me only.

Glen:"Hawu, Bafo. Don't I get a lunchbox?"

Nathi:"Ungazo ngihlanyela (Don't be mad), make your own. These hands are for my wife only."

He calls me my wife a lot lately, especially since yesterday. I get the vibe that he's scared of me and even Eve said Nathi hinted that to her. It's kind of funny, but he'll get over it.

I kissed Nathi goodbye and Glen and I headed out. Pulane took a few days off work even though Menzi wants her to resign totally, but she just won't budge. We can't let these men dictate to us like that. What's going to happen to us should they die?

Glen and I arrived at school and he seemed a lot better than he was yesterday. He's in good spirits, even humming to the songs he was playing in the car.

We got out of the car and walked all the way to the school buildings from the student parking.

We found Imza, Mandi, Bree, Bongz and surprisingly Azania was standing with them. Bree and Bongz are still dating and she's still a virgin by the way. Good for her, she's got resilience for days. As we walked up to them, Glen became a bit uncomfortable.

I guess he and Azania have some unfinished business. I don't even know what possessed him to date the Head Girl and dump her after sex but that's Glen.

Me:"Hey guys."

They all greeted except Azania. She just gave me a funny look, just like Sam and Ntombi gave me the first time they met me, but the old wimp in me was gone. If you look at me like that now, you should be prepared for a very harsh response.

Azania: "Hey, Glen."

Glen didn't respond to her.

Me: "Guys, why would you chill with someone who's so rude? I mean I greeted you Azania, and you didn't greet me back. Instead you gave me a flithy look o mehlo a masepa (with your shitty eyes).

And now, you're standing with MY friends, acting like you're the hottest thing around here. Yet, you look like you haven't taken a bath in ages."

Mandi gasped while Bree burst out laughing. Bongz giggled while Imza did the same, but Azania gave him a death stare and he shut up immediately.

It's like she controlled him or something. Imza never keeps quiet, even after being told. Something doesn't look quite right between them.

Azania: "Excuse me?! Wena o jolang le magenza o tlo botsa nna masepa ao (You gangster girlfriend are going to speak to me like that?!"

Me: (rolling my eyes) "Ah, Azania, everyone knows I date gangsters, so come up with a proper insult, man."

Azania: (fuming) "Glen, are you going to allow this child to speak to me like that?!"

Glen: "Eh, Azania, ga ke lephodisa (I'm not a cop). I don't control what people say or do. You both have ID documents so that makes you old enough to practise freedom of speech."

Azania looked so annoyed. For a little, dirty brat, she had quite an attitude. She must come for tips on how to take a proper bath, man. I don't know why guys like Glen just fuck anything with a skirt on.

Azania: "Mxm, wena Chichi, I'll let everyone in on your family drama. I have Pabi to thank for that. She's been a great source of information ever since I've been staying in their yard. It's amazing how much she can cough up for a mere set of beers."

I got so angered by her statement. She's really trying to tick me off yet I don't even know much about her. She just arrived last year approaching the last term of the year. Next thing She's staying in Koko's yard which makes things even worse. I'll have to dig up information on this brat. Something is not right here and I most definitely smell a rat.

Chapter 56

Chichi

School has been okay, today. I managed to enjoy myself and have a good time. Not once did I think about Patrick, although my mom has been sending me harassing messages and has tried calling me a thousand times.

Had she been this persistent when she disowned me, I'd have new found respect for her. Right now I'm totally diagnosed by her, fighting me for a man like that. She even threatened to bring the police to school, let them come. Ke ready (I'm ready).

It's been months since the whole Mr. Legae thing and Nathi has stopped bringing guards to check up on me and watch my every move. Besides, we've had such a good time these past few months, I don't think we have reason to believe that Negra is anywhere near South Africa.

It's now break time and the squad is at our usual spot. Imza wasn't with us yet, so we decided to eat without him. Mandi and Bree know pretty much everything, but they tread carefully arounds Bongz. He can't know too much.

Mandi: "Bjanong Mogele (So, girl), am I invited to the launch?"

Me: "Yes, of course hao. But you can't make it obvious that you're there with me akere. Remember I don't need people knowing that I'm actually Nathi's girlfriend."

Bree: "I get you. The media might start digging and make Nathi look like a pedophile."

Of course I haven't told them all the logistics, but they think that Nathi and the crew are all genuine business men now and that Eve is the only owner of the upcoming salon.

I've managed to get Eve to push Mams FM for an interview, and they're going to interview her and Biggie on Saturday morning. She's pretty worried even though she always has a mouthful to say.

We obviously have to tread carefully and we can't introduce all of us at once. Sam and Ntombi didn't agree, as they think they're being sidelined. Ai, those two are just a headache.

As we were talking, we saw Imza and Azania approaching us. Lord, I don't need drama today.

Mandi: "Ai, ashuwe motho wao Glen (There's your girl, Glen)."

Glen: "Mxm, tsek (piss off), Mandisa."

Bongz: "That's what you get for go shapa Head Girl di 1-0 (for hit and runs on the Head Girl)."

Mandi: "Plus she had told the whole school about y'all, jiki jiki (next thing) you dump her. Wa phapha le wena (You're so forward)."

Imza and the shady Azania finally approached us.

Imza: "Sho sho, bafwethu."

Azania: "Glen, can I talk to you?"

This girl doesn't have manners at all and doesn't seem to learn.

Glen: "Ah, man, Azania. Ke busy ka lunch nou so (I'm busy having lunch right now)."

Azania: "But Glen, it won't even take a minute."

Glen: "You've already taken a minute from me by begging me. I said no. So vaya (Leave)."

Azania: "Mxm. You decided to leave me for that Grade 9 tramp?! You and I are not over and we'll never be over. I'll make her life a living hell, you'll see."

I got so upset and I attempted to get up, but Glen stopped me and got up instead.

Glen: "Bona (Look) Azania. Get the message I don't want you and I most definitely don't love you. Take that as the most subtle way of telling you to fuck off! Now if you dare go after Tshiamo, I'll make sure you don't live to see another day. Try me. Ask around about Glen Dhlamini, you don't know me, sfebe (bitch)."

Azania was so heartbroken at Glen's piercing words.

Azania: "Mxm! Fine! My brother will sort you out! Your brother hasn't seen anything yet and now he's coming for..."

She realized she had a slip of the tongue and stopped herself from going any further. I knew there was something offish about her.

Glen: (alarmed) "Yey wena Azania! Who's your brother?! What are you talking about?!"

Azania kept quiet and attempted to walk away, but Glen grabbed her forcefully by the arm. I could see Azania was about to cause a scene and one of the educators doing break duty was slowly approaching us.

Me: "Glen, mo tlogele (leave her). You'll cause a scene and Mrs. Ngwenya is watching us."

Glen: "This isn't over wena (you)."

He yanked his hand off her arm as she left.

Azania: "Yeh wena Emmanuel! Let's go!"

Imza followed her like a lost puppet. I don't get it.

Me: "Glen, what's with Imza and Azania?"

Glen looked very disinterested. Ag, when boys fall in love they become very ignorant and careless.

Glen: "Ah, angazi jo (I don't know)."

Me: "Didn't you say Imza was the one who pushed you to dat her?"

Glen: "Yes, so?"

I didn't want to talk about our dealings in front of the rest, so I let it slide for now.

Me: "Nothing. Just curious."

Bree: "Either way, she looks seriously dodgy. Keep an eye on her."

I always take Bree's warnings seriously. She has a serious sixth sense this one. We went back to our classes and the day went rather well. After school came and Glen and I said goodbye to our friends. As we walked towards the car, Azania came running. Yoh, Modimo!

Azania: "Glen, Glen, wait up!"

We kept walking and ignored her. She ran faster as we picked up our pace. We got to the car and opened the doors as she finally made it out of breath.

Azania: (breathing heavily) "Wow, Glen. If I didn't know better I'd say you're running away from me, baby."

She was smiling. Eh, this girl. Clearly she doesn't get the message.



Glen: "Azania, please o ska mpakela stress (Don't give me stress). I told you we're not dating. Get the fucking message."

Azania: "But Glen, I told you that you and I will never break up. You're my soul mate if you could just give me a chance."

Ja neh. Glen has finally met a psycho. He rubbed his head in frustration. All the girls he slept with had psychotic tendencies, but not this extreme.

Glen: "Azania, please, man. I've had a long ass day so do me a favour and just beat it."

Azania: "I was hoping to catch a ride with you."

Yoh, I wanted to laugh shame. Glen was so frustrated he didn't know what to do.

Glen: "Waitse keng (You know what)? You need help."

We got in the car and she walked to Glen's car window.

Azania: "I'll see you later then. I'll come by your house."

Glen started the car in annoyance and drove off. I couldn't help but laugh in his face.

Glen: "Mxm, wa tshega, Chichi (You're laughing)?"

Me: "Ke etse eng (What else can I do)? Wa phapha Glen (You're forward)."

Glen: "Mxm, this chick ke (is) psycho. You heard how she threatened Tshiamo during break."

Yes, I've been waiting for this topic.

Me: "Yes, I heard her. I don't trust her Glen. How well do you actually know her and how deep is her friendship with Imza?"

Glen: "I don't know anything about her except that she's an orphan and moved to Koko's yard in January."

Me: "But doesn't it seem weird that out of all the houses she could rent at she chose my grandmother's? And this new found obsession of hers with you, you need to check her."

Glen looked really worried all of a sudden. I don't get how guys just sleep with a girl without doing research. I have a bad feeling about this girl and they always say that a woman's intuition should never be ignored. I smell smoke and there's definitely a big fire coming.

## Chapter 57

Glen and I drove to our my house while I was laughing shame. This Azania chick is going to be the death of him. He asked me not to tell Nathi, though he promised to look into her. We got to the house and found a police van outside the yard.

As soon as we got out Glen and I were in panic mode, thinking the worst had happened. Upon arrival, I found Pulane sitting on the couch, while Nathi and the policeman were laughing together. Ai, maybe it's one of his friends.

Nathi: "Hey, baby. This is Khutso, but Sergeant Monareng to you."

Khutso laughed while Glen went to check on Tshiamo. He looks fairly young, about Nathi's age if not younger. Apparently they went to high school together and he chose the legal route.

Me: "Nice to meet you, Khutso. I thought you'd come to arrest someone for a second there."

Khutso: (laughing) "Hai, sester (sister), joo M ne a go tshwarisitse, wa bona (Your mother laid a charge against you). Wena le juba yao (You and your boyfriend)."

Julia got me arrested? For what? Khutso could see the confusion on my face and Nathi decided to fill me in.

Nathi: "Ah, baby. She filed a missing person's report and when they told her to wait 48 hours, she laid a charge of kidnapping against us. She even sang like a canary telling the cops how we're into crime and all that."

Ja, ne. What kind of love does Julia have for Patrick mara?

Me: "Oh, I see."

Khutso: "Ska bala (Don't worry). Ke tlo tshwara yena (I'm going to arrest her) instead for child abuse and child endangerment."

He went on to say that Tshiamo laid a charge against her. Serves her right and I'm glad Tshiamo did that. Perhaps she'll learn to be nicer to her children after spending a few nights in jail.

Khutso left and Nathi walked him out. I used this chance to catch up with Pulane.

Me: "How've you been, babe?"

Pulane: "Ah, nna wa tseba ke hantle (You know I'm fine). I need to ask you that. O shap (Are you okay)?"

Me: "I've never been better."

Pulane: "I think you know what I mean, Chichi."

Me: "I'm honestly great, Pulane. You know I'm a bad liar."

Pulane: (Deep sigh) "Menzi is not taking any of this well. He's still upset and I just want you to be okay. Don't think that now you can go around killing people. I need you to still follow your goals and dreams, akere."

I love Pulane. She's always been so sweet and honest. She's a very thoughtful and straightforward person.

Me: "I hear you, sis. I promise I'm still going to finish school and go to University."

Pulane: (smiling) "That's my girl."

Me: "How's the baby?"

Pulane: "Ah, this one makes me eat like food is running out, hey."

Me: "Eish, I don't want to see myself pregnant anytime soon."

Pulane: (laughing) "Keep it that way. At least until you get your matric. Nathi loves you

though. He respects you a lot, otherwise he would have made you pregnant long ago without considering your dreams. Hang onto him."

I love her advice and I always make sure I follow it. She and Menzi have been together for almost a year and I just love the way they treat each other.

She says they never go to bed angry at one another and make communication a priority. They make each other laugh on a daily basis. She says true love is never forced. I love that.

Nathi came back and started prepping for dinner, while I went to change and chilled with Pulane. After about an hour Menzi called Pulane saying he's outside instead of coming in. Ai, he should have been mad at us for dating instead of such a thing.

Pulane:"Don't worry. Hello come around. Give him time. I'll see you Friday afternoon at Eve's."

We hugged and said our goodbyes as she left. I didn't bother to go out and greet Menzi. Nathi finished making us some dinner and I took a plate to Tshiamo. She still can't face people and she ate with Glen in the bedroom.

Glen walked out of the bedroom with the plates and washed them as he proceeded to chill with us. He and Nathi were having a beer while I was having juice. I don't know how Glen still manages to pass while he drinks during week days, but ke we are all different.

I decided to tell Nathi about Glen's new stalker. I couldn't help it, hello have to forgive me this time.

Me:"Baby, did I tell you about Glen's new stalker at school?"

Glen changed his face.

Glen:"Mxm, ha ah, man Chichi. Ong seba for eng bjanong (Why are you gossiping about me now)?"

Me:"Ah, it's not gossiping if you're right here. Besides, Nathi can help."

Glen:"Hai man. I told you I'd fix it myself. Now Nathi will never let me hear the end of it."

Nathi:"I'm right here, nina (you two). You don't have to talk about me like I'm not. Anyway, bolela babe (Talk)."

I was laughing while telling Nathi the story and surprisingly, Nathi was having the time of his life listening to it. Glen on the other hand was very unimpressed.

Nathi:"Serves you right for sleeping with every Tom, Dick and Harry man. Bjanong (So), what's your plan?"

Glen: (sigh) "Eish, Bafo (Brother). Ive searched everywhere and there's just no trace of anything I can find on her. No family, nothing. Even her sim card was registered under the name she's using now."

Nathi:"Well, she does seem dodgy, moving into Koko's yard and threatening Tshiamo like that. Her obsession is something to question. So here's the plan: Lebo is coming this weekend to take Tshiamo to live with her. She'll start school there and maybe come back in a few months. The new scenery will do her good. Wena if this girl carries on with her dodgy behaviour, you'll need to step up to Plan B."

I don't like the fact that Tshiamo will be away from me, but I know for a fact that this new change will be good for her.

Me:"What's plan B?"

Nathi: "You'll have to pretend to like her until you get all your info. Pabi will never give you anything you need, so you'll have no choice. Observe this new bitch and we'll see how it goes."

Glen: "Sho sho, Bafo."

They always say where there's smoke, there's fire. We might have underestimated this Azania chick, but only time will tell.

The Bible warns us in Numbers 32 v 23: "You will be sinning against the Lord; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out".

Chapter 58

Chichi

It's Friday today and man I'm glad that school is over. I've been driving Glen all week since he wanted to spend Tshiamo's last week with her. She's been okay, but she understands that she needs to be away from Mama and this whole environment for a while.

Lebo was supposed to come fetch her tomorrow, but apparently she has some things to do so she came to fetch her this morning. I couldn't see her, since Glen and I had a test so we had to be early. I guess I'll see her during March holidays.

Glen will officially be going back to his house. He says apparently Mam'Regina has been having the time of her life and overcharging customers. Mam'Regina also called in a frantic state saying there's some dirty looking girl who's been at the house every day to ask about his whereabouts.

The girl didn't leave her name with Mam'Regina, but as she described the appearance of this girl, it was the perfect description of Azania.

This is getting really serious now. Apparently Mama was arrested the other day, but someone bailed her out. It wasn't one of us, we made sure of it and besides, she would never accept it if we bailed her out. She even got a restraining order against Nathi and I, not that we care, but it makes things a lot harder now.

We can't go to Koko's house otherwise she could get us arrested, but Glen can go. He can go fish for some information today, while Nathi and I join the others at Biggie and Eve's house.

Apparently they're waiting on me to brief them on tomorrow's interview. Eve is stressed out since I won't be part of it as I specifically asked that they don't mention my name as yet.

They might blow things out of proportion and call Nathi a molester or something for dating a girl who's still in high school.

Glen dropped me off and headed straight home, while I found Nathi already waiting. He looked so good and smelled so nice with his Dior cologne hypnotizing me. I got so wet immediately, but I remembered that I have to wait a whole week before we have sex.

Tomorrow is also our one year anniversary and we can't even have sex, ai. Time flies hey. To think last year this time I was contemplating dating a township gangster and today I'm living with him.

I changed into simple jeans and sneakers and a crop top. As I was about to leave, Nathi stopped me.

Nathi:"Hayi, Chichi. You can't go out like this. My friends will see what's mine." Eh banna. Is this guy serious?

Me:"Bathong (Goodness), Nathi. They've seen me in a bathing suit and even in a bikini, so why the sudden change of heart?"

Nathi:"Hayi, man, Chichi. Please go change. Uyabona manje (You see now) ever since your stunt in the Chamber, everyone wants a piece of you. I want to be comfortable around you with them."

Hao, so Nathi is becoming jealous all of a sudden now? So his friends have a fetish for killer women? Ja, neh.

Me: (laughing) "Relax, baby. No one will ever have me. You're my first and you'll remain my last."

He wanted to rant again, but I gave him a long, passionate kiss. I could feel his dick get hard against my abdomen.

Nathi: "Eish, fuck, Baby. O nketsang, mara (What are you doing to me)?"

I smiled as I held his hand and we were walking towards the door.

Nathi:"Eish, baby, bjanong one nyana (Can't we have a quick round)?"

Me:"Ska nhlolla (Don't be insane), Nkosinathi. We can't have sex. You know that."

Nathi:"E re ke e tsentse ga nyane fela (Let me put it in just a little bit)."

Me:"Not a fat chance."

Nathi:"Bloza nyana (A blow job then)."

Me:"A re ye before re ba late toe (Let's go before we run late)."

He was sulking but I wasn't having it. As we were approaching Biggie's house, I received a message from Julia. "Patrick's body was found a few hours ago and I know you had a hand in it.

You shall suffer a great deal and I curse the day I birthed you. May you never bear children for you refused to obey God's commandment of Obeying your parents! You're dead to me!"

Ag, this woman. I clicked my tongue as I tossed my phone into my bag.

Nathi:"Keng

babes (What is it)?"

Me:"Ke (It's) Julia. Patrick's body was found today and she went on and on and cursed me. I need to change my number."

Nath: (sigh) "Ska wara, baby (Don't worry). I got you."

I smiled as we approached the house. We parked and walked in. We found the whole gang in the lounge, Sam and Ntombi included. Nathi and I greeted everyone, and they

all greeted back, except for the sulking Menzi. I decided to let him be. And sat down as Nathi went to get me a drink.

Eve: "I'm so glad you came, girl. Now please tell me what to say? I'm panicking."

Me: "Eve, it's just an interview. A casual conversation where you get asked questions and you respond. The key is to speak about the business and not allow them to ask you too many personal questions."

Eve: "How do I do that?"

Me: "You make sure she asks you business related questions. You can answer questions about you and Biggie, but once she asks about whether or not he's a gangster and mentions some of the gang members, you remind her that hearsay isn't viable. You have to speak about the church, your preachings and what you do after church. Talk about our soup kitchen and the food parcels we give out and clothes every second Sunday."

Ever since Eve started preaching at times on certain Sundays, she's been a hit and so have we. People have grown to have a lot of interest in us as the whole gang and they even forgot about the stunt my mom pulled last year. We've become the talk of the town and this way more people will be able to vouch for the salon.

Eve: "I get you, although I'm pretty nervous. Can't you come along with me?"

Me: "I'll be outside the studio watching you, but I can't be part of it. Not yet. I don't want to risk people finding out that I'm actually still in school."

Eve: (sigh) "You have a point, hey. The interview has been a hit all over Facebook and Twitter. I can't wait actually."

Biggie: "You'll ace it, baby. I know it."

As we were talking and having some drinks Sam pulled out her phone.

Sam: "Guys, you're not going to believe this."

We all stopped what we were doing and looked at her. She showed us a post on the Mams Fm page. It was a live recording of Julia's phone call to them.

Dj: "So, we have Mme Julia on the line, she says she would like to speak her mind about our guest speaker and philanthropist for tomorrow, Mrs. Eve Mazibuko-Legae. Mme Julia you're on the line."

Julia: "Kea leboga (Thank you) Dj Lele. Ke le dumedisa ka leina le Jesu Kereste (I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ.)"

Yep, we all knew just then that it was about to go down. We sat in silence and listened attentively. Nathi could feel me tense up and squeezed my hand.

Julia: "Well, as most people know I'm a woman of God, I have a daughter who's in Grade 11 now and she fell in love with a gangster last year. She's been living with him ever since last year. I disowned her as she chose him over me and now she's part of their gang. She acts like she's grown, she's even a part of their little evil family. You see, this Eve woman is a wolf in sheep's clothing."

She preaches the word of God at our church, but she is the wife of their Gang leader. They all come to church every Sunday wearing expensive clothes. My daughter Tshogofatso even turned my last born against me and took her from me. My husband, Tshogofatso's father, disappeared the other day as they came and dragged him out of the house like an animal and now the police found him dead earlier today, with his fingers cut off and his private parts gone. Now tell me, Dj Lele, why would our community of Mamelodi want to be associated with such people?" DJ Lele:"Alright Mme, Julia, we thank you for your thoughts. It is only fair tha Eve and the people mentioned have the right to speak their side of the story. We'll take further calls right after the break."

We all sat in silence trying to process what had just happened. The interview is tomorrow morning at 9am! Matthew 5 v 38-39 says: ""You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."

This is most definitely an eye for an eye. I took Tshiamo and her precious Patrick from her and she wants to ruin me before I even make it. Ja ne, Julia is going out of her way to ruin me. Why the fuck would she do this? I should have killed her. Now my question is, who the fuck bailed her out?

Chapter 59

Chichi

After that devastating bomb shell Julia dropped on Mams Fm, everyone was literally talking about it. I was trending even more than Eve and Biggie. People on Twitter managed to dig up pictures of Julia and I along with Tshiamo and Papa.

That picture was posted by me few years ago on Facebook. Now they were seriously digging. I've never posted Nathi on my social media-ever, except for WhatsApp. Somehow they found the one picture I posted of him and I back in Cape Town. That was the only time I posted our picture.

I saw pictures of Sam and Ntombi with Zoro and Thomas, and the one group photo I dreaded taking that day at Robben Island. This could only mean one thing; we have a mole amongst us. Someone has been a stupid bitch and now the pictures have been leaked.

Tweeps were calling us the next Mafia wives and girlfriends, while some were hailing us. This is a catastrophe and I need to come up with a bombshell plan that will change people's perception of us.

My face is already out there and they all know I'm dating Nathi so it's no use hiding anymore. Even some of my school mates were making comments about me confirming the story.

What baffles me is that even Azania was posting non stop and adding Glen to the mix, calling him "a manwhore who uses both girls and boys for sex. This chick arrived two minutes ago and now she's fucking everything up.

What surprises me most about Azania is that she was busy posting about Julia's arrest and that she bailed her out. She "confirmed" that Nathi and I were the cause of Patrick's disappearance and murder. As if I don't have enough problems already. Ja neh, I knew there was more to this bitch.

Thomas:"Eh, Sam. How the fuck did those pictures leak?!"

Sam: "I... I really have no idea, Babe."

Thomas:"Ska ntlela ka masepa (Don't fuck with me), Sam. You were the only one who posted those pictures!"

Sam looked really panicky, but insisted it wasn't her. The look on her face made me believe her, though. Now we have to sift through all her contacts, even though I believe she's talking to someone she isn't supposed to.

Sam:"I swear, I didn't do anything."

Zoro:"Wena (You), Ntombi? Don't you know anything about this?"

Ntombi fiddled with her hands and started stuttering. She barely made eye contact and that told me she was guilty.

Ntombi: "I... I..."

Zoro:"Bolela (Talk), man!"

Ntombi flinched a bit as Zoro raised his voice to her.

Ntombi:"It was me. I sent those pictures to Pabi straight after the Cape Town trip."

Wow, I think we were all in so much shock, she rendered us speechless for a moment.

Zoro:"For eng bjanong (For what now)?!"

Ntombi:"I.. I was just a bit angry and jealous of Chichi. I was drunk and wasn't thinking straight. We were just gossiping. But I've had a change of heart. I swear, it was a long time ago. That was the old me."

Everyone was so quiet staring at her with piercing eyes. I think most of us were just angry at her. Now that Azania is busy writing shit about me and my family issues on Twitter, who knows what Ntombi is doing with her and Pabi.

While we were still processing what she just said, Zoro slapped her so hard she fell onto the floor. We were all shocked as Pulane and I stood up. Eve, Menzi

Nathi and Biggie were seated with the most unbothered look on their faces.

Me:"Zoro, leave her."

Zoro:"Ga utlwe o (She doesn't listen this one)! We're in this shit because of her!"

Ntombi got up holding her cheek with her wobbly body. Sam tried to help her up, but Thomas shot her a warning look and she sat back down immediately. The violence around here towards women is insane. It has to stop. I know Ntombi and Sam aren't my most favourite people, but this isn't right.

Ntombi: (teary) "I'm sorry."

Zoro smacked her again and she fell back onto the floor. I couldn't watch this anymore so I got up and went to stand in front of her, using myself as a shield, leaving Nathi dissatisfied.



Nathi: "Chichi, hlala phantsi (sit down)!"

Me: "No. What's done is already done, guys. You can't go around beating up your wife, Zoro! How will we put up a united front when you're always violent towards her? Haven't you ever thought that she does what she does because of the way you treat her?! You chose to marry her – YOU. So don't go around beating her up, it's not how we do things, please. Real men don't lay their hands on their women."

I was so surprised at myself for standing up to him, even Ntombi was shocked as well as Sam. I was a bit scared thinking he might smack me too for reprimanding him like that in front of his friends. Zoro looked at me and then at Ntombi while breathing heavily. My eyes didn't leave his for one bit, as he slowly lowered his breathing and calmed himself down.

Zoro: "I'm sorry."

Wow, this is the first time I've ever heard Zoro apologize. Biggie looked at me and smiled.

Biggie: "Now I see why you're the right one for this job. You're absolutely right, Chichi. I have never laid my hand on Eve and it's not right for us to sit here and condone such behaviour. Zoro, that's enough now."

Zoro sat down in defeat as Ntombi got back in her chair. We slowly discussed a way forward. We obviously cannot go fighting on social media, that would be inappropriate and unprofessional for the brand we're working on. Julia has tried to ruin us, but she has failed. Tomorrow morning during the interview, we'll show her who exactly we are.

Isaiah 61:4 says: "Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins,

They will raise up the former devastations;

And they will repair the ruined cities,

The desolations of many generations." It is about time The Lions rebuild themselves into well-respected members of this community. Julia, Pabi and this Azania bitch think we're down and out, but we'll rise even better as of tomorrow. We're about to make history and they don't even realize it yet.

Chapter 60

Glen

I was chilling in my room having a drink after a long, depressing week. I always get the easy girls, but never the ones I love. Chichi was taken by Nathi and now I'll never be able to get Tshiamo. Who knows when she will come back or if she'll ever recover? I decided to play some music until my phone blew up with notifications.

I decided to check my phone and I realized just how people don't value their time on earth. Azania posted shit about me on Twitter and now The Lions are famous as fuck for all the wrong reasons. Worst part this chick called me a bisexual man whore. I've been way too patient with this cunt and it's high time she got to know Glen Dhlamini. I got so mad, I got up and headed out. I need to teach this Azania bitch a lesson.

Glen: "Mam' Regina, ngiyabuya (I'll be back soon)."

Mam'Regina:"Okay, mfana wami (my boy)."

I walked out in a fast pace, barely even hearing people greet me. I was hyperventilating at a very fast pace, with my heart beating irregularly. I got to Koko Mokgadi's house and as I was about to approach, I saw Azania getting off a Black Mercedes SUV with very dark tinted windows. The car just drove past me in very slow motion. I couldn't see the driver, but I could tell the driver was looking at me. I waited for the car to pass before I walked in.

Luckily Koko was in the house and not outside as usual. I knocked on Azania's door.

Azania:"Ke mang (Who is it)?"

I kept quiet and knocked more vigorously.

Azania:"Ai, ai, man. Tlabe wang thubela monyako (You'll break down my door)."

As soon as she opened the door, she saw me outside and widened her eyes. I thought if I became angry and violent at the time, she would have freaked and probably called out the community. I need to know why she did what she did. Something just doesn't feel right about her. It's as if she was sent to do what she did, to disrupt my life, our lives. She's mainly targetting Chichi, but seems like Nathi and everything and everyone around him is her target. Whoever she's working for must be very pissed at Nathi.

Azania: (shocked) "Nathi, o nyaka eng mo (What are you doing here)?"

I knew this stupid bitch wouldn't sing and if I threatened her she would probably have told the person she's working for. So I swallowed my pride and did what I had to do.

Ever since I've grown some morals and values, I don't just fuck anyone.

But now, I have to throw all that out the window and do what I have to do. They say a way to a man's heart is through his stomach, but a way to a woman's heart is through an orgasm. If you can manage to make a woman cum multiple times, you'll win her heart – even if you're broke.

I stared at her deep in her eyes and tried to remove the anger from my face. I grabbed her face and kissed her roughly, but also passionately at the same time. She responded immediately without questioning. I got in and closed the door behind us.

When they say a man is a dog, they're absolutely correct. Men can fuck just about anything and everything that has a hole in it. It doesn't matter how ugly or dirty it is, they'll do it, for a specific reason of course. Azania pulled out as I was leading her to the bed.

Azania:"Glen... What..."

Glen:"Shhh..."

I put my finger on her lips and put my hand underneath her skirt. She wasn't wearing any underwear as expected and I rubbed her clit. She moaned so loudly, I got hard immediately. The first time we fucked she wasn't even amazing. I hope this time she can be better

or else I'll just have to stomach it. We took our clothes off and got on the bed.

Luckily she had condoms in her drawer as I never fuck chicks raw. I rolled it on my hard dick and rammed into her.

Azania: (moaning) “Aaah, Glen...”

I tried focusing on the end result and pictured her as Tshiamo. That made me feel a bit better. I know it’s a dick move but I did what I had to do. We kept going for about 15 minutes til I came and she did the same. I collapsed on the bed and tried to catch my breath. She put her ugly head on my chest and I had to stomach it and fake my way through it.

Azania:”Glen, baby. That was so amazing.”

Glen: (fake smile) “I’m glad you liked it.”

Azania:”For a second I thought you came to kill me after what I posted.”

I tightened my jaw, but remained clam so she wouldn’t suspect anything.

Azania:”I’m really sorry, Glen. I only did it to get your attention. Now that I know that you were just playing hard to get, I’m willing to do whatever it takes.”

I smiled at that remark. This bitch is easier than I thought.

Glen:”Whatever it takes?”

Azania:”Yes, whatever it takes.”

This will be much easier than I thought. I’ll put my plan in motion as soon as The gang is done with their interview.

Chichi

It’s Saturday morning, the day after the whole Social Media Saga. I’m still very pissed about what Ntombi did, but what’s done is done and we’re ready for damage control, hopefully. I just need composure and all the members to keep calm. I’ll deal with Pabi and Azania later.

Nathi and I hardly slept, and it’s rather a shame we can’t have sex. We overslept since we only managed to doze off after 3am, so we woke up at 7. We took a shower together, so that we could get a full breakfast and some energy drinks. We need to put our A-game on. Luckily Nathi and I don’t stay too far from the Mams Fm studios, so it won’t be that long of a drive. The first thing I asked of the gang was that they dress to impress.

You never know if they’ll take pictures or not, so you have to look your best. I’m even wearing make up today. Nathi and I were dressed in matching Versace outfits; I was dressed in a jumpsuit while he had Versace pants and shirt on, with his cute sneakers, while I chose my red Christian Louboutin Stilletos. I curled my hair and went all the way with matching fragrances.

We drove out and met with Eve and Biggie just outside the studio. They were also dressed in Versace which was quite funny. Sam, Thomas, Ntombi and Zoro arrived a while afterwards also dressed in Versace. The ladies were wearing Gucci shoes.

Ntombi had a bit of a bruised face, but you’d only notice if you knew her well.

I smiled to myself as I thought that we actually look like the South African Mafia. We joined hands as Eve said a prayer for us. I have a good feeling about today. DJ Lele let

us in as we prepared for our session. We had to share mics since we were ten in a group.

DJ Lele: "Welcome to Mams FM, Rea le amogela mo lenelelong la ka jeno (We welcome you to today's show). As promised for today's segment of the breakfast show, we've brought you our new and upcoming celebrity, Eve Legae. But to an amazing surprise of events, we have the whole crew here. We can't wait to be the first ones to bring you an all exclusive on this issue. Stay tuned as we'll also be screaming live on our Facebook page."

2 Peter 3 v 9 says: "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." If we don't redeem ourselves now before our empire is even built, then we might never get another chance.

Chapter 61

Chichi

As DJ Lele introduced us, I said a mini silent prayer to myself and focused. Menzi and Pulane came a bit late since he's still mad at Nathi and I, but Pulane promised he'd get over it.

Dj Lele: "So, Eve, do you mind telling us about your upbringing?"

Eve: (smiling) "Not a problem. I was born and bred in Mamelodi West, until I met my awesome husband Thabang 'Biggie' Legae. We fell in love at first sight, literally. He was my saviour, the one who loved me for me. Without him, I wouldn't be who I am today."

DJ Lele: "Please elaborate on that. What do you mean you wouldn't be who you are today without him?"

Eve: "Well, Biggie and I met when I was 15. I was young and probably vulnerable then, but he was and still is the one for me. I regret nothing about our encounter and I'd most definitely not have been this happy without my Biggy man. He gave me two beautiful children and although I had my first child at 15, I'm truly blessed and my parents couldn't be happier today."

All this while Biggy had his hand locked in Eve's.

DJ Lele: "Very beautiful story, Mrs. Legae. Now tell me a bit about the kind of business you do, Mr. Legae?"

Biggie (Smiling) "Well, Dj Lele, I'm a small business man. I have a few salons and chesa nyamas, and I own a few taxis, same as most young boys in Mamelodi. I started as a taxi driver and worked my way to the top. There were days when we'd sleep eating Sphatlo (bunny chows) and nothing else, but I made it. I managed to save and Marry Eve and look where I am now, successful and happily married."

A photographer was busy taking our pictures while we sat there. So it was important to smile at all times.

DJ Lele: "I love that and I bet our listeners love it too. Beautiful story indeed. Now let's move on to you Chichi. Word on the street is you're 17 and dating Nathi, who's ten years older than you, correct?"

I put on a brave face and remembered my rehearsal.

Me: "Yes, That's absolutely correct."

I thought she would gasp or be in shock, but then I remembered as an interviewer, she needs to remain objective.

DJ Lele: "As you know, people have been tweeting about your relationship and even Mam' Julia, your mother, called Nathi a Pedophile. Please explain a little bit to our readers what your relationship is like and how it started."

Nathi squeezed my hand as he stared at me.

Me: "Well, I met Nkosinathi a year ago. He was and still is my brother, Menzi's best friend. I obviously was very much afraid of my parent's and people's opinion had I pursued the relationship at the time. But I just couldn't refuse his love for me. I fell for him the same way he fell for me. He's very sweet and kind

and most people don't know that side of him. I thought my life was perfect, until Nathi came along. So many secrets and painful truths were revealed and I had to make a choice."

DJ Lele: "Care to elaborate on those painful truths and secrets?"

Me: (sigh) "My mom and my sister had just moved back to my grandmother's house just after my late father, Patrick, deserted us. He left us for another woman and stopped supporting us. We had no choice but to come back to Mamelodi all the way from Seshego. As soon as I started dating Nathi, my own mother called him a heathen and the devil's work because she had heard he was an apparent gangster. You see I've always known my mother for being a very Godfearing and honest woman, who knows the bible in and out, until she rejected my big brother Menzi.

We all knew Menzi as my Aunt Aidah's son, but she confessed that Menzi was his and was conceived that he was born out of her being raped by a gangster. It was a really painful day because Menzi had always known and tried to seek validation and acceptance from her for years, but she wouldn't budge. She said that Menzi and Nathi were doing the devil's work and that she couldn't accept a child like that."

It was painful for Menzi to relive that day, but he tried to be strong. All those therapy seasons worked for him. She proceeded to ask Nathi a few things about his businesses, as well as Thomas and Zoro. Then she went to ask Sam and Ntombi what it is that they do for a living. I just hope and pray they don't burst and tell the truth.

Sam: "I'm currently taking a gap year from school trying to find myself. I'm trying by all means to apply and get into beauty school next year."

DJ Lele: "Ntombi?"

Ntombi: "I'm a graduate from Chef school and a qualified Chef, although I'm currently seeking employment."

Yes, Ntombi has a very good hidden talent of baking, cooking and everything to do with food. I never knew because she never bothered, but from now on her skills are going to be of good use.”

She then proceeded to interview Menzi and Pulane and ask about their beautiful love story. They talked about everything, from the molestation Pulane experienced from her sister to Menzi’s painful rejection from Julia.

DJ Lele:”Now, Ntombi, word is that you used to be with Nathi and now you’re married to his friend.”

I crossed my fingers and hoped and prayed that she didn’t talk rubbish.

Ntombi:”Yes, that was back in the day when we were teenagers. We didn’t know anything about love, hence we broke up. We weren’t meant for each other and I’m so glad I met my Zoro.”

DJ Lele:”This is awesome ladies. Now, Eve, please tell us more about your new Salon.”

Eve:”Well, my salon is opening next week Saturday and I’m so excited. I’d like to cater for everyone around Mamelodi as well as people coming from far. I love dealing with people’s beauty and I love making people feel and look Beautiful. We’ll have a mani and pedi section, a hair section as well as a massage parlour upstairs. We don’t have any beauty salons in our community so I felt that it’s my job to do this and change the face of Mamelodi.”

I could see DJ Lele was very impressed. She shed a few tears when I spoke about Patrick and his abuse towards Tshiamo, but overall I had a great time and I was very positive. Callers called in and asked a few questions, some were annoyingly stupid, while some were really awesome. Most people liked the fact that we go to church together and didn’t even touch the topic of me being a school kid.

No one even bothered to ask if we’re gangsters or what, and none even asked about me and Nathi’s strange relationship. Instead, we were being commended for sticking by each other. One of the callers talked about Julia and the way she was mean to her for being a lesbian, calling her an abomination.

I can honestly say that the interview was a huge success. It’s no use hiding myself anymore, as we’re about to be famous.

Chapter 62

Chichi

The interview went great and soon after, everyone in studip asked for a few pictures with us. I love the positive responses we got, even though there will always be someone negative, I’m happy we achieved our objective.

Everyone around Mamelodi was invited to the Big launch of our salon next week and we had so much work to do. We headed there soon after the interview. We were all hungry and thirsty, but work comes first.

We got there and checked everything; the salon was built the way we wanted to. All we were left with was the final touches. We headed to The Grove Mall to get some food at Bugatti's.

Everyone seemed to be in high spirits, even Zoro and Ntombi were affectionate towards each other. He kept kissing her hand of which I was so happy to see. I'm glad he's actually trying to love her the way she needs to be loved.

We got in and the ten of us sat down. Drinks were ordered and Eve took out her note book to note down the final touches.

Biggie:"I'm so glad that interview went well."

Eve:"Yoh, phela I was so nervous!"

We all laughed, Menzi was still a bit sour, but like Pulane said, hello get over it.

Sam:"I'm such a natural at public speaking, so I'm glad I aced it."

That's Sam for you, overconfident even when it's not needed.

Zoro:"Eish, nna I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you, Chichi."

I got surprised and stared at him with a brief smile.

Me:"For what?"

Zoro:"You've changed our lives, we weren't able to think beyond what we had and thanks to you, we can now build an empire for our kids."

I smiled, at least Zoro is coming along just fine.

Zoro:"Speaking of kids, Ntombi is pregnant. We're having a baby."

I did not expect that, although it's good news. We all congratulated them and made a nice toast.

Biggie:"To new beginnings."

We toasted and our food came. I took this opportunity to check up on the books. I've been slacking these past few days and killing my own father didn't exactly make anything better. As we were eating, I went through the books and something just didn't seem right. I double checked, even triple checked

but I still got the same answer. I frowned as I involuntarily shook my head.

Nathi:"What's wrong, baby wa ka (My baby)?"

Me:"Something isn't right. The books juat aren't balancing."

Pulane:"What do you mean? You always check the books and they always balance."

Me:"I know, but this time they aren't. We're running at a loss instead of a gain."

Thomas:"Eish, please explain in simple English, Chichi."

Me: (sigh) "The drug business is down by a masdive 40%. How could you guys miss that?"

I could see the guys getting frustrated, and some rubbing their foreheads.

Me:"Okay, clearly we have a problem here. I assume you guys weren't counting the money anymore. Who was receiving the money and counting it?"

They all looked at Zoro.

Zoro:"It was me. I counted all the money from the drugs. Everything was in order until I gave Emmanuel to settle payments and deposit the rest."

Something isn't right here. Could Emmanuel be ripping us off?

Me: "How much did you receive from shipment before you gave to Emmanuel?"

Zoro: "I gave him R50 000."

I jotted it down.

Me: "That's R10 000 more than what we made last week."

Zoro: "Yes, so he had to take R15 000 and split it amongst himself and the other merchandizers, meaning we were supposed to be left with R35 000."

Me: (shaking my head) "It shows here that R20 000 was deposited into the account, meaning we're R15 000 short."

I could see Biggie getting even more frustrated.

Menzi: "What about the Chesa Nyama's? He's also in charge of those?"

I checked the books again.

Me: "The one you and Nathi own is also running at a loss. For the past month, you haven't been making as much money as you should be making. I calculated your profit and you made R20 000."

Menzi: (shocked) "That's impossible. We make R50 000 a month."

Nathi: "Something is fishy here. Emmanuel settles our accounts. I checked last month and we made R50 000. Yesses this is frustrating! What about the taxis, Chichi?"

Me: "Eish, my calculations states you made R25 000 less last month."

Nathi banged the table in frustration, while Thomas and Zoro cursed. This is bad, here I was thinking Emmanuel is to be trusted. I get the feeling Azania is up to something. I guess this is the time to voice out my thoughts and suspicions.

Me: "Baby, do you remember that girl who's stalking Glen? The one I told you about?"

Nathi: "Yes, Azania or something?"

Me: "Well, she has been spending a lot of time with Imza. He's literally always with her and apparently he's the one who told Glen to go for her. I suspect something isn't right with her. Don't you have any other enemies besides Negra?"

Menzi: (shaking his head) "Negra is our only enemy. Nathi dated his sister and she cheated on him. When he left her because she also fell pregnant by another man, she killed herself. Negra has always been jealous of us, especially Nathi. So when his sister committed suicide because of Nathi leaving her, he used it as an opportunity to be our worst enemy."

Me: "Doesn't he have another sister, though?"

Nathi: "Not that I know of. I never bothered to check."

We need to seriously check this girl out. Emmanuel needs to be dealt with because we can't handle people stealing from us. How the fuck are we going to get the launch up and running without all this money?!

Chapter 63

Glen



I was in bed with Azania just after having so much sex that I even lost count of the rounds since I slept over. I had no other choice as much as I detest the thought of having sex with her. I tried getting some information from her, but she just won't budge.

It's almost as if she is too smart and was trained for this or something. I even tried to get hold of her phone while she went to the toilet, but she has a password. I'll need to get hold of it somehow and only then will I be able to hack it.

Chichi sent me a message briefly explaining to me that something isn't right with her and that it seems as if Imza has been stealing from the businesses. That doesn't make any sense. It's really unlike Imza, but as Brenda Fassie once said "umuntu ngeke umconfirme (You can never trust a person fully)."

Azania: "Baby, I was thinking we could go out today."

Perhaps this would be a perfect way to sort her out once and for all, even perhaps get her to talk. But I can't so it today, she won't budge. I'll have to wait until tomorrow after church.

Glen: "Yes, I'd like that. Get dressed, I'll take you to Nathi and Menzi's Chesa Nyama."

She suddenly became edgy and uncomfortable.

Azania: "But.. Why can't we go elsewhere? Like the mall or something? I mean you have a car, don't you?"

Glen: "Yes, but I'm in the mood for braai meat, we'll go to the mall some other time."

She looked really disinterested, so I decided to play my own little card.

Glen: "Or maybe you don't like the idea of being seen around ekasi (in the township) with me. I thought we were good, mos? Maybe it's best if I go back to my place."

She quickly got up and had a change of heart as she saw me putting my pants back on.

Azania: "No, baby. I'm sorry I overreacted. It's fine, we can go to your brother's chesa nyama. I just want to spend time with you."

I faked a smile and pecked her lips. Now we can put our first phase of our plan in place. She won't know what hit her.

We got dressed and went back to my house to get my car. We got in and headed to the Chesa Nyama, which isn't too far from my house. It's about 15 minutes away. We could walk, but I guess she wants to be seen in my car. The whole time she had her feet on my dashboard with the window open, greeting everyone who looked familiar. She's annoying me so badly, but I'm just trying not to show it.

We got to the Chesa Nyama and found Imza, since he also works around here. He's more of the manager, as Nathi and Menzi trust him and treat him like a brother.

Imza: "Sho sho, G. Azania."

Azania: "Hi, Emmanuel."

Glen: "Eita, mfo (Hi, bro)."

Imza: "Le batla eng today (What would you like today)?"

I was about to order, but she decided to order for the both of us. Now I see why no one wants her, she's condescending, rude and way too forward. Plus she's too clingy and doesn't have ears that work nje.

Azania: "We'll have your famous salad

some burgers and chips and a six pack of your Hunter's Dry."

Imza: "Eh, banna. Glen, setse ba go ordela mfanaka (You have her taking your orders for you now)? O nyele mos (You're in shit, mos)."

Azania: "Don't you start, Emmanuel. If you do know what's good for you, o tla tswalla molomo oo wagao wa go nkgga (You'll keep that smelly mouth of yours shut)."

Imza kept quiet and apologized. What is up with these two? Chichi has always mentioned that something seems off with this whole Azania and Imza set up. And now with the whole money that's gone missing thing, I really do believe her now.

Glen: "I'll have the usual, my guy. No burgers for me."

Imza nodded and left to place our orders.

Azania: (annoyed) "Ag, Glen. We're a couple now, you don't want people to think that you're not on my level. We're supposed to eat healthy foods! Besides, what if someone from school walks up here and sees the head girl of our school eating braai meat at some shady Chesa Nyama?"

Yoh, this girl is going to be the death of me. I wish Chichi and the gang can just get here already.

Glen: "So, Azania, you've been a Mams resident for a while now and I actually realized that I don't know much about you, babe. Please tell me more about yourself."

Azania: "There's not much to know, really."

Glen: "I still want to know."

Azania: "Ag, well, I come from Thembisa. I was living there with my parents until they died last year, so I had to move back here."

At least I'll have to look into Thembisa. It's a start and I just hope she's not lying.

Glen: "I'm so sorry about your parents."

Azania: "It's okay. At least they left me loads of money."

Glen: "And your siblings?"

Azania: "I'm an only child."

There it is. Her first lie right there.

Glen: "But you told me you had a brother the other day."

She nearly chokee on her cider and I knew she was up to no good.

Azania: "Well... I... Yes.. No.."

Glen: "Hao, baby. Yes or no? Which one is it?"

Azania: "Well I don't have a brother. I just have a neighbour who took me in. I call him my brother."

She was so uneasy with her eyes wandering all over. Something is seriously up with this girl.

Glen: "That's nice. I need to thank him personally for taking care of such a beautiful gem like you. When can I meet him?"

Azania: "Uh.. He's a very busy man, babe."

Glen: "I'm sure he won't mind. Is he the one who was driving that black car that dropped you off yesterday?"

She dropped her cider to the floor as she was about to drink it. I looked at her fussing and moving around trying to clean up her mess. I asked one of the waiters to come and clean up.

Glen: "Are you alright, baby?"

Azania: (flustered) “Ye.. Yes, I’m okay.”

Glen:”Good. So what’s his name?”

Azania: (Shouting) “What’s with the thirs degree questions, Glen?! I thought you and I came here to have some fun together!”

Glen:”I’m sorry, Aza. I just thought that you’d like to tell me about your family. I’d love to meet your brother since I’m very serious about you. I’d also like you to meet mine.”

Azania: (deep sigh) “I’m sorry for overreacting. It’s just that, talking about family brings back old and unwanted memories.”

I could see that that little story wasn’t genuine at all, but I played along. She didn’t even know that I know about her little social media rant of yesterday. I’m about to drop a huge bomb on her.

Azania:”I’d love to meet your family, babe. Nothing would make me happier.”

I faked a smile as I could see Chichi and the gang right behind her since she had her back to the entrance.

Glen:”I was hoping you’d say that, because they’re right behind you.”

As soon as Chichi and the rest appeared, Azania looked like she was about to die right there. Her forehead started ro sweat and I saw her hands starting to shake. It’s about time we got to know who she really is.

## Chapter 64

### Chichi

After our huge and dissatisfying discovery about the money, I tried to link Imza and Azania to it. My hunch told me that Azania is definitely up to something and is using Imza to do it. We all know that Imza comes from a very disadvantaged family hence he works for Nathi and Menzi.

He does some work for the gang and he’s pretty much the most trusted merchandiser. He gets paid the most because he drives around with one of the taxis and is in charge of paying the other workers. What I don’t get is why Azania would force him to steal from us.

I tipped Glen off and to my surprise he was already in bed with the bitch. This just made everything easier as we could just try and get information today. We’re literally stuck financially as we have to figure out how we’re going to pay for the launch itself. We’ve already forked out 500k and it’s too risky to use the rest of our savings. We’ll basically need about R250 000 minimum to throw the party of our dreams and get the rest of the furniture we need.

I told the gang about Azania, and we were headed to the Chesa Nyama. We got there and found Azania so shocked to see us, she would probably fake a dizzy spell. The always rude Azania was gone, instead she looked seriously flustered and panicked.

Me:”Hey, Glen. Hey, Aza.”

I put on the biggest smile on my face. I’m going to enjoy this.

Glen:”Sho sho, Chichilicious. Gents and girls.”

The rest of the gang greeted him back and sat down.

Azania:”H.. Hi, Chichi.”

Me:”Wow, Aza. It’s the first time I hear you say my name so politely. I love it. You don’t mind us sitting down, do you?”

Azania: "Well, you're all seated anyway, so you might as well."

Ntombi looked seriously uncomfortable and anxious. She was very much against this whole plan, of which I still don't even know why. Where there's smoke, there most definitely is fire. She kept looking at Azania, trying to give her a signal, but Azania seemed just too stressed to give a fuck.

We ordered a few drinks and drank away. The Gang was seriously focused on Azania and for someone who always likes all the attention on her, she was pretty frustrated.

Me: "So, Aza. You enjoying your stay in Mamelodi?"

Azania: "Yes... Yes, I am."

She started fiddling with her phone and I could see she was trying to communicate with someone really quickly.

Me: "Tell me more about yourself. Since you'll be joining our family, I'd really love to get to know my future sister in law."

She let go of her phone in a heartbeat as soon as she heard my last statement.

Azania: "Future Sister in law?"

Me: "Yes. Didn't Glen tell you?"

Azania: "No... Tell me what?"

Me: "Ag, don't let me ruin a good kept surprise. Ah, look at my manners. I forgot to introduce my family. This is my boyfriend Nathi, right there is Menzi and his wife Pulane, there is Biggie and his wife Eve, Zoro and his wife, Ntombi and Thomas with wife Sam. But I'm sure you know us since you call us the Mob Wives of Mamelodi." She felt embarrassed and looked down immediately, but I wasn't going to let it slide that easily.

Me: "Kana what else did she write on Twitter, Pulane?"

Pulane: (chuckling) "Oh, she wrote many things

but if I remember correctly we're gangster's wives and you're the only one who acts like a wife without a ring on her finger."

Sam: "Oh, how can we forget the part where she told the whole world you murdered your own father?"

Ntombi: "Oh, I remember the statement about Glen being a bisexual manwhore."

Eve: "Lest we forget, she spilled Your family's dirty laundry talking about Menzi being a rape child."

I could see Azania getting really flushed and confused as to why we were laughing while we were dishing out everything she wrote on social media about us.

Azania: "I.. I'm really sorry, Chichi. To all of you. I never meant any of that."

Me: "Oh, we know, hun, we know. I'm pretty sure Pabi put you up to this, didn't she?" I scanned her carefully as I could see that she really thought I was dumb enough to think that.

Azania: "Ye.. Yes, she did. She absolutely did. I tried to tell her not to do it, but she forced me to."

Me: "Oh, you poor thing. Pabi can really bully a person, hey."

She smiled briefly as I could see that she was really falling for the trap. Stupid bitch. Nathi: "What are we waiting for? Let's order a few drinks. Eh, Imza!"

Nathi called out to Imza and asked him to join us. Imza looked stressed as fuck and I'd also be given the circumstances. Imza came to sit with us soon after bringing our drink orders. Glen was very quiet as he observed everything and kept looking at Azania's phone.

Luckily he had moved right next to her and must have probably scanned her phone's pattern. He signaled to me that he was ready and I had to find a way to distract Azania from her phone of which was pretty much joined to her hip. She always has it on her – always. Ntombi was nervous as hell and her being unable to drink didn't make anything easier at all.

Thankfully I remembered that Glen once told me Azania loves booze and partying. So what better way to welcome her to the party than keeping the alcohol coming?

Everytime she had finished her six pack, we ordered more for her. I'm so shocked a girl as young as she is drinks so much. I feel sorry for her poor liver.

The more she drank the more she spoke nonsense. I asked her twice what her "brother's" name is and at first she said Sipho, then later on she said Sfiso. We don't know which is which now. Nathi on the other hand was so displeased with her presence, but we couldn't just drag her out of here.

After she had about 18 drinks, she was pretty tipsy and chatty. While she was at it, Glen managed to find a way to get her to give him her phone.

Glen: "Baby, please lend me your phone. Mine is dead and I'd like to make a phone call."

Azania: "Sure, baby. Go ahead."

Glen kissed her gently on the lips and walked away with the phone. Azania just kept going on and on being a loose cannon. I could see Imza was very uncomfortable and barely even drank a bit. Usually he drinks more than all of us. He has a high tolerance for alcohol and I guess it must be because he's tall.

Nathi: "So, Azania, Glen tells me you and Imza are pretty close, hey?"

Azania: "Ah, Emmanuel is my new buddy. Ever since Ntombi used him to get..."

She didn't get to finish her sentence until Ntombi literally spilled her juice on her. I knew that was a way to get the attention off Azania and what she had just said, but she should know better. These men are very observant and very good listeners.

Azania: "Ntombi, what the fuck?!"

Ntombi: "I'm so sorry, I'm just clumsy lately."

She thought she was off the hook, but Zoro was staring at her sharply.

Zoro: "Yey wena Ntombi! What is she talking about? And you'd better think hard before you answer!"

Zoro was spitting fire. Ai, Ntombi doesn't learn, man. Just yesterday we had this conversation at Bugatti and seems like she and the truth are very big enemies.

This girl couldn't tell the truth even if her son's life was on the line. Ntombi reminds me exactly of the snake that gave Eve the apple in the book of Genesis. This girl just won't change – ever. I suddenly regret stopping Zoro from moering her even further yesterday.

Chapter 65

Glen

I took Azania's phone and went far away next to where I was parked so she wouldn't see me. That girl and alcohol are just best friends. I can't understand why she feels so dependant on alcohol, but I guess we all have our demons.

I scrolled through her phone and found numbers of six people only: Mine, Imza's, Pabi's, Someone named Dad and someone named Big Bro, and strangely Ntombi's. A whole 18 year old girl only has six people's numbers stored on her phone? That's very unusual for the head girl and someone so popular on social media. I'm more concerned about Ntombi's number being stored on Azania's phone.

I decided to start checking her sms's. There was a whole conversation of messages exchanged between her and Ntombi. I didn't have time to go through her whole phone, so I decided to read the most recent ones.

“Azania, you weren't supposed to go so far with the whole thing! Now I had to briefly confess and Zoro nearly killed me! You'd better think of another plan fast before the whole plan blows up in front of you. I won't lose everything I've worked hard for because of a stupid girl like you! I'll be damned if I lose my marriage especially now when we're about to taste millions!”

Azania then responded: “Relax, wena, wanna be Chichi. We both know you're just jealous of Chichi and Nathi and that the only reason you married Zoro was to get closer to him. Your greed will be your own downfall. I don't appreciate all these threats. You'd better calm your tits before I tell your precious husband that you're faking your pregnancy.”

That whole convo was yesterday. Wow, Ntombi is a real piece of work. Lying about her pregnancy and scheming with Azania, that's just low even for her. I scrolled down and saw a message from Ntombi earlier on.

“What are you doing here?!”

“I came with my man, Glen. Don't spoil my mood.”

“Think of a plan to get out of here! I can't risk you running your mouth!”

And just like that, Azania never responded.

I saw a few missed calls, 7 to be exact. All dating today and the latest one from an hour ago. All these calls from “Big Bro”. I saw nothing else in her messages, so I know that I'll have to check WhatsApp. I daw the first conversation on top from “Big Bro.” I decided I'd check that later, since he doesn't sound very interesting. I went through her conversation with Imza, all from last night until this morning.

Imza: “Azania, please tell Ntombi to stop this. I really can't betray Abuti Nathi and Abuti Menzi like that. They practically raised me.”

Azania: "Relax, wena man, small boy. We both know you were stealing from them long before I came around. Besides, you've got enough to pay for your mother's chemotherapy treatments. If anything, you should be thanking both Ntombi and I. Once all this is over and Nathi and that Chichi are dead, you'll have enough to go and study."

Imza: "I only stole a thousand rand, Azania, and I'm most definitely not proud of it. I told you that in secret and I trusted you."

Azania: "Stealing is stealing, baby. Don't you worry, your little secret is safe with me."

Heh banna! These two have been blackmailing Imza? And why didn't he come to me, his best friend about his mother being ill? What the fuck is happening?! I went through her WhatsApp conversation with "Daddy"

also from last night until today.

Daddy: "Angel, I hope you've been behaving."

Azania: "Of course, daddy. How well do you know me?"

Daddy: "Good. We'll talk tomorrow. Night night mwa."

This morning.

Daddy: "Azania?! What is this I hear of you and Ntando plotting against my son and his best friend?! You'd better stop that, I have people watching your every move. One mistake and I won't hesitate to kill you if I have to!"

Azania: "But daddy, you always choose him instead of us! Ntando and I are your real blood, baba! You want to choose a rape child over us! Menzi wasn't even planned! You raped his mom and he was born!"

What the fuck is happening?! Azania and Menzi are sisters?! Who is this Daddy of theirs? Last I checked Gorilla raped Mam'Julia. No... It can't be. Gorilla is Menzi's dad!

Daddy: "You don't get to talk to me like that, Azania! Menzi is my son and until I'm ready, I'll let him know. If you and your stupid brother even think of going ahead with your stupid plan, I'll kill you both and everyone else working for you. I'm the Mighty Gorilla, always remember that!"

And just like that, my suspicions were confirmed. Shit! This is really bad. I decided to go through her conversation with "Big Bro" or "Ntando" as Gorilla calls him. I dreaded clicking on it, but I didn't really have a choice.

Big Bro: "Azania, how's the plan coming along? I don't have all day and you promised me that Ntombi is on board with everything."

Azania: "Yes, bro. We sorted it out. I put the first plan in motion on social media as you'll see they're all trending. Their interview is tomorrow morning, so I'm sure they'll flop."

Big Bro: "That's my girl. I'll send you some money for your hard work. See you tomorrow."

Earlier today.

Big Bro: "Azania, what the fuck?! You told me that your whole plan worked! Even Ntombi was a guest at this stupid interview and now everyone likes them! You fucked up real badly! I hope you're not sucking that Dhlamini idiot's dick as we speak! You'd better answer me real soon before I get there!"

Azania: "Sorry, buthi, I was sleeping."

Big Bro: "Don't fucking lie to me wena! My source told me that boy was in there and he's still in there from last night! You'd better not be falling for him. The plan was clear: Get him to fall for you so you could be closer to Chichi and Nathi so I could kill them, but wena you decide to be a whore like your mother instead! She's better off dead otherwise she'd be witnessing her jezebel daughter using nothing but her pussy!"

Azania: "That's not fair, buthi and you know it. It was your plan for me to sleep with him, not mine."

Big Bro: "I'm sorry, pumkin, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. Please forgive me."

Azania: "Sharp."

Big Bro: "Okay, get shit done so we can get moving. Baba is coming out of prison tomorrow so we need to act fast. I can't wait any longer."

Azania: "I won't disappoint you, buthi. I know you've been waiting for this day ever since Precious killed herself because of Nathi."

No ways! Precious is Negra's sister! Does this mean that Azania is Negra's sister too and that Gorilla is their dad! How the fuck did we miss this?! We're in serious shit! Negra ordered a hit on Nathi and Chichi! I'd better go warn them. As I prepared myself to walk back inside, Big Bro called. I answered without saying a word.

Big Bro: "Yey wena Azania! Why haven't you been answering your fucking phone?! You know what? Never mind, I'm on my way there as we speak! It's high time Nathi and his dumb crew got to know the real Negra!"

He hung up and I started feeling a sudden urge of panic. I ran back to the crew in the speed of light. As soon as I ran back I saw Zoro strangling Ntombi on top of the table with drinks all over the floor. Azania could barely stand as Imza held her to keep her balance.

Glen: "Bafo, we have to go now!"

Nathi: "Kwenzenjani (What's happening)?"

Glen: "I'll explain later, but you and Chichi are in great danger. We all are."

Nathi: "Usho kanjani (What do you mean)?!"

Glen: "Negra is back and is coming to get you as we speak!"

Nathi quickly grabbed Chichi and told Biggie we have Code Red. Zoro was so pissed he was trying to strangle the life out of Ntombi with the crowd watching. Before we knew it, we heard gunshots and had to get down.

## Chapter 66

### Chichi

Glen came back from outside and spoke briefly with Nathi. I was too focused on Zoro trying to kill Ntombi in front of everyone at the Chesa Nyama. Before zi knew it, I



heard gunshots and we had to duck. Nathi pushed me under the table and I was so scared.

All the ladies including the pregnant and scared Pulane, and Glen got under the bench, while All the guys started shooting back. Eve was also shooting back and I was so shocked as I kept looking at her holding a gun with no fear.

How the fuck does she even carry a gun daily in her hand bag? People were underneath tables, fearing for their lives. I was so intrigued, despite the loud sounds of bullets that kept piercing my ears.

Nathi looked so sexy with a gun in his hands. I was scared shitless, but I was even more impressed and interested and I wanted a part of this life. Call me crazy, dickmatized, but I craved all that at the time. Within about 5 minutes of shooting, it was all over. Nathi lowered his face underneath the bench.

Nathi:"It's okay, you're safe now."

Nathi hugged me and Menzi hugged his Pulane. Thomas also hugged the shaken Sam, while Zoro never even bothered to hug Ntombi for obvious reasons. Imza had the drunk and frantic Azania in his arms while Glen just seemed very anxious.

The men took us to the cars as soon as they can and all we saw was a few dead bodies on the scene, about five of them. I knew none of these guys. So really someone sent these guys to kill us all?

We arrived at Biggie's car after about 20 minutes and the first thing I did was take out some drinks for us to drink. Nathi and Glen wasted no time in getting Azania to the Torture Chamber.

I knew then something wasn't right. I felt I needed to bear witness to all this, but I couldn't leave Pulane alone.

Eve:"It's fine, babes. You go. I'll take care of her out here. "

I nodded and left Eve with Pulane while Ntombi was sobbing like a widow. I went to the Torture Chamber and found Glen, Zoro, Thomas, a frightened Imza and Menzi seated. Nathi was standing while Biggie was tying the drunk Azania to the famous chair.

Nathi was furious and I got a bit worried that he might unleash his inner beast on Azania. If she was part of this shit, then I really feel for her, although I'm not sure she should die like this.

Nathi:"Yah, Azania Dladla, daughter of the famous Funani Gorilla Dladla. All along you acted like a silly girl with a jealous streak, but in actual fact you've been hired by your brother, Ntando

a.k.a Negra to be a fucking spy!"

I knew she had a motive, but this is just too deep. All along we had our guard down thinking Negra is a thing of the past. I'm flaggergasted that all this time she was busy with her own plan right under our noses. I assume Glen briefed him on what he found on Azania's phone. Azania on the other hand was still drunk, but I could see the fear in her eyes.

Nathi:"You had it all figured out, didn't you? You'd worm your filthy self into our lives and get your stupid brother to kill Chichi and I."

I was so shocked that I had chills running down my spine. He went on to explain everything from Ntombi threatening Imza and making him steal from the businesses. He even had to use some of it to pay for his mother's chemotherapy. It's so painful that he didn't have the heart to go to Nathi or Menzi to speak about his problem. Azania seemed to be dozing off until Nathi poured ice cold water on her until she gasped and came back to earth.

Nathi:"No, Azania! It's been fun, but I think the world would be better off without you!"

Azania got scared as she thought she was about to die this instant. Nathi grabbed the famous sword, his favourite weapon from the shelf and stared at her.

Nathi:"I'm going to ask you one last time. Where is Negra?"

Azania:"I.. I really don't know. Please, don't hurt me. It wasn't my idea."

Nathi:"Spare me your little crocodile tears."

So Menzi and Negra are brothers, while Azania is their sister. Wow, small world indeed. I looked over at him and he had a dull expression on his face.

Azania:"I'm serious. It was all Negra's idea. My father had nothing to do with it, in fact he tried to stop him and myself, but I just couldn't stop. Baba has always been so obsessed with Menzi and Julia, he hardly even cared about Ntando and I. How can he be obsessed with a rape child?"

Nathi got so mad at her statement that he slapped her with the back of his hand and she squealed in pain.

Azania: (teary eyed) "Please, call him if you don't believe me. Just please don't kill me."

Nathi took the phone from his pocket and video called Negra.

Negra:"Ja, Nathi nice, Sdumane sa se kasi (Famous boy from the township). We meet again, nja (dog)."

Nathi: (chuckling) "I should've killed you today."

Negra:"But you didn't, right? To what do I owe this courtesy call?"

Nathi:"I'd like to show you your darling sister. Say your goodbyes before I kill her."

Negra:"Ah, Azania. You can go ahead and kill her. She's useless to me anyway."

That was such a huge blow especially even for Azania who went through so much just do get her stupid brother his revenge.

Nathi:"If you come here and take her home, I'll let her live."

Negra laughed so hard I was in disbelief.

Nera:"Like I said, Nathi, kill the bitch. You're wasting my time, no if you'll excuse me."

Negra hung up and now the room was filled with a deafening silence with Azania's painful sobs piercing through our ears. I guess Negra doesn't care about her at all. They say young women make a lot of mistakes when younger, but Negra took

advantage of his own sister for his own selfish dealings. Azania likes playing with fire, much like Pabi.

Chapter 67

Chichi

I looked at Nathi and then at the defeated Azania. She let out a loud wail after Negra told Nathi he's more than welcome to kill her. I don't know, but I don't think he should kill her at all. Nathi was angry and sliced Azania's thigh open just a little bit, leaving Azania crying frantically.

Nathi:"Now, since your dumb ass brother doesn't want you to live anymore, are you ready to talk?"

Azania nodded.

Nathi:"Good. Now tell me exactly why you got Imza to steal from us and how Ntombi fits into this whole mess."

While he said that I saw Eve, Sam and Ntombi walk in. Ntombi was very frightened, while Sam was too shocked to even speak. Eve let them sit down without an ounce of emotion on her face. It's pretty good that they're here. It's time for them to see just how hectic shit gets if you mess with us. Ntombi should be the one in that chair, really.

Azania: (crying) "Ntombi found out that I was fishing for information from Pabi. She came to me few weeks ago and told me that she also shares the same dislike for Chichi and wants her out of the picture. She told me that the truth is she still loves Nathi and that Chichi gets in the way of everything she wants, living her life with her man – "

Ntombi interrupted her.

Ntombi:"Liar!"

Zoro gave her a blank stare full of hate.

Ntombi:"Baby, she's lying. I swear!"

Azania:"If you really have doubts about Ntombi, go to my recordings. My phone records every phone call. Zoro, you're sleeping with the enemy here. Imza was just a pawn in our game. He'd never betray Nathi and Menzi like that voluntarily."

Nathi scrolled through the phone, leaving Ntombi in serious panic. He started playing the first recording between Ntombi and Azania.

Azania:"Ai, Ntombi, ufunani manje (What do you want)?"

Ntombi:"Yey wena, ungazong'tshela amasimba (Don't tell me shit). You said they'd be dead by now, instead I have to pretend and smile all fucking day. I should be Nathi's wife by now. If you don't fix it, I'll do it myself."

Hao, Ntombi can finally speak some Zulu. This coconut is really pretentious.

Azania:"You know very well my brother is not to be messed with, Ntombi. Hlukana nami (Leave me alone) and do your part! Or else, I'll tell Zoro about your little fake pregnancy."

Ntombi:"Fine. I'm giving you one more week. Get it done!"

I could see Ntombi shaking while Zoro just gave her a death stare. It's about to go down after this. He then played the second recording, between Azania and Imza.

Azania: "Emmanuel, ai se ufunani (what do you want)? Ngi (I'm) busy."

Imza: "Azania, you told me that I wouldn't have to do this anymore. Please, it doesn't feel right stealing from my brothers."

Azania: (laughing) "Don't be insane wena. They're not even your real brothers.

You're doing this for your mother, remember. You do want her to live, don't you?"

That statement broke me to the core. This bitch actually blackmailed Imza using his ill mother nje. How cruel can a person be? I get it wasn't easy for Imza to disclose that but he should have spoken to Glen about it at least. The whole time Imza had tears flowing down his face. Imza hung up before we could hear a response. Nathi then played the third recording, between Azania and Gorilla.

Azania: "Daddy."

Gorilla: "Unjani (how are you) pumkin?"

Azania: "I'm good, baba wena unjani (how are you)?"

Gorilla: "I'm okay. I can't wait to get out of here tomorrow and be with all my children."

Gorilla sounded very pleased and delighted with himself, until Azania got really mad at that last statement.

Azania: "Baba, when will you ever just let us be? Menzi isn't our brother, man. You raped his mother!"

Gorilla: "No, you know that's not true. I need to tell him the truth, the whole truth. All my children need to be united, Aza. I need that before I leave this earth."

Azania: "You never loved us! I wish you were dead!"

Gorilla: "All in due time"

Azania. You can be mad all you want, but Menzi is still my son. The sooner you and Ntando accept it the better."

Azania: "I'll never accept it."

Gorilla: "Then you and Ntando leave me no choice. If you dare go ahead with your stupid plan, I won't hesitate to kill you – both of you."

Azania hung up and left us all in awe. I can't believe the level of secrets that is going around here. I mean Julia told us Menzi was a rape child. I've never been so confused in my whole entire life.

Nathi: "Well, then. I guess everything is sorted now. That just made things a lot easier for me. No one wants you, so I can officially kill you."

Nathi took his sword and stabbed her other thigh as Azania screamed out in pain.

Me: "Nathi, don't!"

He didn't even hear me. He ripped the sword out of her thigh, until Menzi stopped him.

Menzi: "Nathi, wait. Let's think about this for a second."

As Nathi was about to respond, Azania's phone rang. I guess her ancestors must be giving her a second chance. Ntombi was shaking like a leaf. Nathi answered it and I suppose the person told him to put it on loud speaker.

Gorilla: "I assume you've got my daughter, Nathi. You have every right to be angry, but please, hear me out before you do what you want to do. I know you're probably torturing her right now. I'd like to make a deal with you: I'll give you my son on a silver platter in exchange for Azania. I'd also like you, Menzi to give me a chance to explain myself. I promise you that after you hear what I have to say, you'll have a change of heart. Please that's all I ask. What do you say?"

The room was quiet for a while filled with Azania's sobs. Menzi's face was very hard, while Nathi was still angry.

Menzi: "Okay, fine. I'll do it."

Gorilla: "I'm glad. I'll meet you guys tomorrow after my release."

Menzi: "I'll send you the address."

Gorilla: "No need. I know where you are."

He hung up and left us all stunned. So Gorilla is willing to trade a life for a life? So he's willing to sacrifice his son Negra, for Menzi's forgiveness? What is happening here? Nathi decided to leave Azania in the chair and we all left her there crying and screaming.

Ntombi was so scared while Zoro remained quiet. She really looked like she wanted to get his attention. This girl never knows when to stop.

Ntombi: "Zoro, baby can we talk?"

Before we even knew it Zoro slapped her so hard, she fell onto the floor. He crouched on top of her and stared her in the eyes.

Zoro: "As of now, you're dead to me, Ntombi. You'll go to your mother's house and Saturday, we'll go to the launch together for show. Afterwards, you're dead to me. If I as so much see you breathe my way, I'll fucking kill you!"

Ntombi: (crying and begging) "Please... Please Zoro."

Zoro: (teary) "I was falling for you, Ntombi. I'd even grown fond of your son. I was so excited that you were carrying my son, but you decided otherwise. I hate you so much, you disgust me. If you could plot to kill Nathi and his woman, you're most definitely capable of killing me. I don't even want to look at you."

He spit in her face, grabbed his keys and walked out. Sam was crying and Thomas decided to confront her too.

Thomas: "And then wena? O llela eng (Why are you crying)?! Were you also part of this?!"

Sam: "No. I swear, baby. She approached me about this plan weeks ago, but I refused. I swear, I had nothing to do with it."

Thomas just looked at her while we all stared at Ntombi. She ruined everything and now we'll have to come up with another plan to face the media in case they ask about

her. But I'm glad Zoro chose him because it's no use being with someone whom you can't trust.

Jeremiah 17 v 9 says: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" Indeed Zoro's heart deceived him and now the truth came out. Ntombi never loved him hence I understand why he treated her like rubbish all along. This is so painful, but she did get what she deserves. I ask myself though, had we not known about this, does it mean Nathi and I would be dead?

## Chapter 68

### Chichi

We all decided to go home last night after the long day we had. It was too emotional for words, more especially for Zoro. Nathi got hold of Zoro after we searched for him high and low. He could really use a friend right now. Nathi and I found him at one of the Chesa Nyama's. Zoro is very predictable, so it wasn't that hard to find him.

We brought him home with us so he could spit everything out. He didn't want to go with us at first, as he felt pretty ashamed for what Ntombi did. He could barely even face us. I've honestly never seen Zoro that broken, but everyone has their breaking point. I still recall the heartbreaking conversation we had with him bawling in tears. Zoro: "I'm so sorry, Nathi. I honestly thought that she had changed. Now look how things are. If we hadn't known about Negra and Azania, you two would have been dead by now."

Nathi: "It's not your fault, mfo. It really isn't. You took a leap of faith, that's what happens when you fall in love."

Zoro: "Truth is, I didn't love her. I just went for her because of her looks, but after Cape Town she had started to change. She even took care of me and cooked for me. I never knew how domesticated she was and she just became submissive all of a sudden. She would bring me a bowl of water and a cloth to wash my hands and wipe them before I ate, even knelt down in front of me as she did that.

My heart started melting and the brick wall around it slowly began to break down. You know I don't fall for women easily, but she just made it feel so genuine, so natural. I don't have children of my own, so when she told me she was pregnant, I was over the moon. I had even started forming a bond with her white kid. I really saw that kids are just innocent beings and they bring out the best in people. I knew that with this child Ntombi and I would be together and in love with each other."

Nathi: "Don't blame yourself, Zoro, mfana (boy). You only did what was right. What's the point of living if you don't try loving someone genuinely?"

My heart broke for Zoro, truly. He was super drunk and he just kept going. Alcohol can bring out your worst pain and worst emotions, making you cry even harder.

Zoro: (sobbing) "Tell me, Chichi, am I that ugly that a woman could fail to love me? Not even wholeheartedly, but love me with even just a portion of her love?"

That really broke me. I couldn't help

but to shed a few tears. Zoro isn't ugly at all. He's dark, tall and handsome. He's got a nice body, one of those chocolate men. His handsomeness doesn't really show because he's forever dressed in kasi boy attire. Yes, the dickies and Fila attire with the spotty (hat) on his head and expensive takkies and sneakers.

If he could change that about himself, girls would definitely notice him more. Speaking of attire, we really need to talk about what we're going to be wearing at the launch. I made a mental note last night that we'd discuss that today after church. I mean we don't even have the budget for it. Azania fucked us up, badly.

Zoro kept asking why he couldn't find someone like me? Someone who loves unconditionally like me. He said that he can clearly see that should Nathi go broke, I'd still be with him. All he craves is his own ride or die.

I left him with Nathi last night while they were talking about life, love and pussy. I left immediately after I started hearing the pussy part. Hai, it's bad enough I still have two days left of my "cleansing period". I don't need to hear about sex.

I heard Nathi get into bed at 3am and I know he's probably hungover like crazy. Today is my turn to show my gratitude over a nice breakfast. I made a nice, fatty English breakfast for the three of us. I didn't want them eating in bed, otherwise they'd never make it to church.

I woke the both of them up and gave them their food.

Nathi:"Yoh, baby wa ka (My baby)! Inhloko yami (My head)! Why did you wake me up so early?"

Me:"Nkosinathi, it's 7am. Get up, eat and take your pills. Le wena (you too), Zoro. We have church at 9am."

They were so not looking forward to it.

Nathi:"Aowa, baby. Can't I sleep today? You can go without me."

Me:"No ways. We have to put up a united front. And wena Zoro, Ntombi will be there. You won't talk to her. She can sit next to me."

Zoro:"Ah, mxm. O rata batho ba go bora Chichi (You like boring people)."

I decided not to respond. He knows very well we all have to be there no matter what. We got ready and wore our best outfits. We had to pass Zoro's house and get him his best outfit. Ai, I was so tired of seeing him in dickies and All stars. I went through his closet and found a suit at least.

He could wear it with a decent shirt and a pair of sneakers. He looked so nice, so different. I even had to hype him. He managed to at least smile through his broken, sad face. A broken heart takes a long while to mend. I can only hope that he finds his true love as time goes.

NB: It's a bit long, but I think someone needs to read this. We all need to forgive and heal at some point in our lives. Enjoy! □

Chapter 69

Chichi

Zoro, Nathi and I arrived at church. We waited for the rest of the gang. I was a bit worried about Pulane, but I called her last night and Menzi answered saying she's okay. Yep, Menzi decided to swallow his pride and forgive me. Eve and Biggie arrived, followed by Menzi and Pulane.

Sam and Thomas came with Ntombi, who had huge Gucci shades on. I could tell by side-eyeing her that she was a mess. She looked like she had been crying all night. I must say we all were dressed to impress. Gucci and Versace was the order of the day. I really love the way we look. Everyone has taken a huge notice of us every since the interview. Some will whisper, but people will always be people. When you have money and you give people a cut thereof, they'll never say bad things about you. That's the power of money. Today is Eve's turn to preach, and man she looks the part. She always has weaves on and her nails are always on point, not to mention her make-up. She's very curvacious, so it's not hard for one to spot her gorgeous booty. I just love how Biggie hypes her everytime before and after her sermon. He's turned into a real Bible lover and always makes sure we pray before we eat, much like Nathi. Zoro looked a bit pissed as Ntombi walked towards us and decided to enter the church without her.

Ntombi: "Hi, Chichi. Hi, Nathi "

Nathi ignored her and kissed my cheek as he followed Zoro.

Ntombi: "You must really hate me, Chichi."

Me: (sigh) "Ntombi, I don't hate you, I despise what you did but I really don't have space for hate in my heart right now. I'm just saddened that you'd go as far as trying to kill me when I've done absolutely nothing to you. I hate what you did to Zoro, when he really was trying to love you. He married you even and even then you couldn't bring yourself to at least try to love him."

She wanted to start crying and I stopped her in her tracks.

Me: "Please don't even think of crying today. It's not about you."

She was rather shocked at my statement but I didn't care. We've wasted enough time on Ntombi. It's time for us to focus. All us ladies walked in while people stared at us. The men sat behind us, while we sat in the front. Mandi was now officially the lead of the choir and never misses church, no matter how drunk he might get the previous day.

I gave him a slight wave as he returned a warm smile to me. The choir started singing and the church was immediately blessed with Mandi's warm, golden voice. I looked around and spotted Mama and immediately felt a bit worried. She gave me a long stare and I was very confused as to why she would look at me like that. She never even came back to church ever since The Lions were part of it and since Mma Moruti left.

Ntate Moruti appeared from his room, while Micah followed after him. I haven't seen him in so long and he looked so handsome, so cute. He looks really great, much better



than the last time. Healing does wonders for a person and I hope Zoro will take a few tips today.

Ntate Moruti: "Hallelujah, Bagaeso (my people)! I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

Congregation: "Amen."

Ntate Moruti: "Today's a very special day for me and our very own Mrs. Legae, has prepared a special sermon and it fits very well into what you'll about to witness. As you all know, bazalwane, we are a congregation of peace, love and prayer. We strive in forgiveness and healing. As The Bible calls our Lord in Genesis 22:14, our Jehovah-Jireh is a providing God.

In Exodus 16:26 He's Jehovah-rophe, which means the Lord heals, Bazalwane! He is also our Jehovah Makadesh, our Sanctifier, and I can tell you that He has changed my life. I have managed to forgive my ex wife through serving Him, and also through my son, Micah.

You see, I named him Micah, because he reminded me of God. His name means He who is like God. I wanted him to know as he grew up that he would be exactly like God – easy to love and loves easily. He would make a difference in people's lives. Micah is the name of a biblical prophet who denounced oppression by the ruling classes, and was used fairly frequently by the seventeenth century pilgrims.

Like my own Micah, he fought against the oppression of his mother and he will change and build nations. He has healed from his troubles in the name of Jesus. He has forgiven and I'd also like us to listen carefully today. Forgiveness and Healing go hand in hand. If you do not forgive, you do not denounce oppression of your soul, your thoughts and feelings and most importantly your mental health. If you can try to be like Micah, your world would be at peace."

The choir sang for a while and Eve walked up to the stage. Today's sermon feels like it's so fitting to what happened to Menzi

myself, Chichi, even my mother. Even Zoro has to listen wholeheartedly today.

Eve: "Hallelujah, bazalwane. I greet you all in the name of our Loving and forgiving God."

Congregation; "Amen."

Eve: "I'd like to start off with talking about forgiveness. What does the Bible say about forgiveness?"

The first thing someone calls out is usually "70 times seven," a reference to Jesus' instruction to his disciples that they must forgive without bound. The Lord's Prayer, citing the verse, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, also tells us about the importance of forgiveness. Often in life there is a lull at some point when people do you wrong, and then someone remembers Jesus' words from the cross, "Father, forgive them." The Old Testament has very little to offer on interpersonal forgiveness. The most salient example is Joseph's forgiveness of his

brothers who had sold him into slavery (Genesis 45:1-15), although this is arguably more a story about reconciliation than it is about genuine repentance and forgiveness. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, the focus is on petitionary prayers to God for the forgiveness of wayward individuals or groups, especially through the sacrificial system established with the covenant.

The New Testament continues this concern for the forgiveness of an entire people, but shifts the focus to Jesus as the “perfect sacrifice” who replaces the old sacrificial system (Hebrews 10:8-10). At the Last Supper, Jesus declares, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28).

Now let’s talk about healing. Forgiveness gives birth to healing. Healing has to be everlasting, permanent, otherwise there would be no point in forgiving. Forgiveness has to be wholehearted before you can actually move on. Forgiveness is the first step to healing gracefully. You have to forgive yourself before you can forgive someone else. I’d like to give you the seven steps of healing and forgiveness, derived from Dr. Steven’s book.

1. Admit that offenses have occurred in your life. Forgiveness is only appropriate when an offense has been committed and the offense has caused damage. When an offense has been committed against you, it is critical to recognize and admit the reality of the offense. Overcoming denial may be difficult, but it is essential. Forgiveness does not ignore the reality of an offense but, in fact, validates that the offense did indeed occur. Matthew 18:7; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-9.

2. Determine the damage caused by an offense. When an offense occurs it creates a spiritual debt. There is a spiritual value placed on the consequences resulting from the offense. God chose to use this financial idea to communicate His spiritual truth. The forgiveness parable of Matthew 18 shows that the value of indebtedness is determined by reconciling the account. There are offenses that have caused less injury. Greater offenses that create a greater debt need greater forgiveness. After the indebtedness has been determined the offense can be forgiven. Without understanding the damage caused by the offense it is not possible to forgive.

3. Choosing to forgive. “Forgive” is a financial term that simply means to cancel the debt. The person recognizes the debt as such and makes the internal personal decision to release the offender from his indebtedness. Forgiveness is often misunderstood. It is significantly different and often confused with such things as ignoring the offense, trying to forget it and reconciliation of the relationship. Choosing to forgive is a personal, conscious and powerful choice of the will. Choosing to release the offender from his or her indebtedness is to be like the Lord Himself. Matthew 6:12; Matthew 18:21-35.

4. Develop and live life with boundaries. A safe environment must be established to protect from future offenses. Some who have been violated in the past may lack the understanding of the importance of good boundaries. The holy life learns the

difference between righteousness and unrighteousness. Perceiving healthy boundaries as well as having the will, strength and commitment to live them is essential. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 6:20.

5. Confronting the offense. The internal decision to forgive needs to be followed by the appropriate activity. The Scriptures direct us to confront the offense. Spiritual wellness is connected to our obedience to Scripture. The degree of spiritual wellness you experience is in direct proportion to the degree of confrontation. As the seasons progress, healing occurs, strength grows and courage appears. The ability and desire to confront the offense arrives. Matthew 5:24 and Matthew 18:25.

6. Live the holy life. Establish and maintain a growing committed life. As you walk in Christ you will experience the healing and sanctifying work of God. By sowing righteous seeds of obedience you will reap the desired harvest. Walking by faith rather than by sight and trusting in the Lord for His blessing produces the abundant life you desire. Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16.

7. Clear our own offenses. It has been said that hurt people hurt people. This ongoing season should keep us looking at our own life. We need to recognize when we hurt others and be ready to seek forgiveness from them. As we grow in Christ, we will be able to seek forgiveness for our offenses from those who offend us even before we confront them for their offenses against us. Matthew 5:24.

I've basically said a mouthful, but all God requires is that your heart remains pure and even if you're not very good at doing good deeds. If your heart is pure, you'll be able to forgive. Rid yourself of anger, hatred and dwelling on the past. Love yourself enough to walk away from situations that make you someone you're not. If you forgive, you'll most definitely heal.

With that said, I'd like to bring someone forth, who was once a member of this community, a member who was condemned by the church and its people. A man who went to prison, despite feeding communities and has now paid for all his sins. He is here to tell you his story from the horse's mouth. Ladies and gentleman, I'd like to bring you Funani Gorilla Dlala.

The crowd gasped in shock while some were whispering. I looked over at Julia and she looked like she has just received the worst news ever. I saw a middle aged man, walking to the front in a very expensive, black suit with really nice Italian shoes. He was dark, handsome and looked very much like Menzi. He was the older version of Menzi. I concluded then that this was the mighty Gorilla we heard over the phone last night. It's about to go down.

Chapter 70

Chichi

While Ntombi was crying because Eve's sermon probably got to her and felt a bit personal, I looked behind me and Nathi gave me his beautiful, colgate smile. Zoro was in tears while Thomas was comforting him. Menzi was in shock, just frozen in his chair with his eyes zoned into Gorilla.

I hope and pray shit doesn't go down because the sermon was just too beautiful. Julia wanted to leave, but someone next to her pulled her back. I guess it's too heated for her in here.

When your sins come haunting you, you can't handle the heat. Sam was in tears, actual real tears. Numbers 23 v 23 says: "Be certain that if you do not do this, your sins will definitely catch up with you." I've always felt like there was more to Julia's story. How could she hate a child who didn't ask to be conceived of rape?

Her behaviour ever since was questionable, especially her severe hatred of gangsters. I guess today we'll find out. As Gorilla passed us, we could all smell his expensive cologne. One can definitely tell that he had a good life in prison. Gorilla walked up to the podium and people stopped whispering. I don't know much about him, I've only heard how dangerous and feared he was back then from Glen.

Gorilla: "I greet you all in the name of Jesus."

The congregation gave a very weak Amen.

Congregation: "Amen."

Gorilla: "Some of you are very shocked to see me. As most of you know I was in prison for a very long time. Some of you have heard lies about me, hence you fear me. I've come here to tell my story and by the grace of God, I'm glad to be standing here in front of you. Everyone has been crucified like Jesus at some point, and I was crucified in front of people who didn't personally know me, but knew of me. And most of what they knew of me was pure lies and heresy."

My name is Funani "Gorilla" Dladla, and all of you know my mother, Futhi Dladla, who's also a member of this church. She had to be moved away because people were threatening her safety and wellbeing all because of my actions. Truth is, I was a gangster, a real, hardcore gangster. I stole for a living after my father ran out on us. We had to fend for ourselves and my mother being a single mother with barely any education, I had to do what most kasi men did.

A lot of you sitting here never judged me because I did a lot for the community, but as soon as I got arrested, all of you took someone's side and began stoning my mother's house. I met a woman of this church once, and she was and still is the love of my life. I loved her dearly, even though she was married. My mother kept telling me that she was bad news, but me being the Gorilla I am, I went after her.

I loved that woman so dearly. Her beautiful smile, gorgeous caramel skin and curvy body drove me to her. I used to attend church every Sunday with Mama especially just to see this woman. Her name was Julia Mogashoa, who later married Patrick Mashabela."

The crowd gasped in caution as I turned to look at Julia who has tears in her eyes. Secrets come out eventually, but this one might just break her. I don't even think he's doing it to spite her at all, I think it's a way of redeeming himself in front of everyone, especially her.

Gorilla:”Julia was the love of my life and she also felt the same. Born into an abusive family, she was bound to marry an abusive man herself. I couldn’t stand seeing her do that to herself. She had one child at the time who was severely abused as she just watched. I had to do something. We fell in love

genuinely in love. We saw each other in secret every night while Patrick went drinking. She had to lie and say she was going to church, since he refused to let her work.

Julia was broken by her mother and sister Aidah, they never loved her. How can a woman who came from an abusive household possibly love another human being, when all she knows as love is being abusive? I tried showing her love through the eyes of the Lord. I was prepared to leave my gangster life for her. I had even asked her to leave that sorry excuse of a man and that I would take care of Lebogang and her if she would just let me.

She agreed to be my woman, and was prepared to leave her husband. She had told me she was pregnant with my child and of course I was delighted. This was the woman who made everything make sense to me. On the night she was supposed to leave that man of hers, I got arrested. Apparently someone tipped off the police about me being a gangster and that’s how I got arrested.

I learnt later on that it was Patrick who got me arrested so I let it be. He threatened Julia and told her to tell the world that I was a rapist and that I had raped her, or else he’d never support her. She agreed to it, even after I had promised to look after her and the children.

I decided to serve my sentence as is, even though Julia had lied about the rape. My heart bled each day, but one thing that gave me comfort was that my mother had begged me to forgive and heal. I got out of prison after a few years and met a woman whom I thought I loved.

Julia once again rejected my efforts to get her back, so I fell for this new woman, who was the mother of my other two children. She turned out to be a snake and turned her back against me as she did a crime and pinned it on me. Once again, I went to jail for something I never did. She died of aids a few years later and I stand here a reformed man because of what happened to me.

I’m not proud of what I did because as a result, my own son grew up unloved and uncared for, and without a proper father to guide him. Instead of loving my son, Julia became cold hearted, and used the Bible as an escape to make herself feel good. The truth is, Julia is a damaged woman.

She would write to me while I was in prison, until her useless husband told her to stop that. She submitted herself to that man, even though he was abusing her. He even left her for another family of his and Julia lost it completely. I tried to look after her and show her love, but she wouldn’t budge.

I ask of you, the people of our church and beloved community to accept me into your hearts and to be there for Julia. We are all children of God. John 8 v 7 says: "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

I ask you now, that if you have never sinned against the Lord and the word of God, stand up now. If you're perfect beyond us all, stand up now."

Everyone sat down while some looked down. Julia was beside herself with tears streaming down her face. For the first time since everything happened, I felt bad for her. I felt her pain, her frustration and I really understood why she did what she did. Abuse comes in many forms and she has been more of a receiver than a giver.

Gorilla: "God loves us all, and I do hope that after today's lesson, you've learnt a lot. Thank you."

Mandi and his choir sang the song "Modimo ga le teng gayo Mathata". This song always brings out tears in people, it just makes people think of everyone they've wronged, while it makes some think of everyone who's wronged them and what they've gone through to get where they are today. I shed a few tears thinking perhaps I was too harsh on my mother.

Perhaps I should never have killed my own father a few days ago and perhaps I should've forced her to come clean. Menzi would have been a better man way before he met Pulane and Julia wouldn't have put Tshiamo's life at risk the way she did. As Gorilla stepped down he glanced at Menzi with a genuine smile. Menzi on the other had had tears falling uncontrollably down his face. Julia always said that it's not often you see a man cry and when you do experience that sight, you need to show him how proud you are of him baring all his emotions in front of you.

The rest of the service was very inspiring and great. As we walked out the gang including Ntombi proceeded to our stall as we dished out food for everyone at church, even some people who don't attend church at all. Julia came out amongst the people looking really frail and flushed. Her face looked rather pale and before we all knew it, she collapsed on the ground amongst the people. Gorilla was the first one to get to her.

Chapter 71

Chichi

After seeing my mother collapse like that, I felt really terrified. We haven't even buried my father and yet she might be dead too. I wanted to go and help, but then I remembered everything she did to me. Yes, what she went through was painful as fuck, but that still doesn't justify her not being able to give me a mother's love.

I'm torn, but I won't show it. Instead, I continued serving the people. The ambulance came as Gorilla went with the paramedics and Julia. Nathi came to me as he and the guys usually serve the elders who are too frail to stand in queues. He saw my hand shaking.

Nathi: "Take a break, come with me."

I just nodded as Zoro took over, since all the ladies were occupied.

Nathi took my hand and we walked behind the church. I don't know how this man always gets me, but he just hugged me as I cried deeply in his arms. He didn't say anything, instead he just comforted me and held me close to his chest. After about five minutes, my make up was ruined, and some was on his shirt. He didn't even care, all he did was wipe my tears off my face.

Nathi: (cupping my face) "Uright baby (are you okay)?"

Me: "yes, I'm okay."

He kissed me passionately, as that was his way of letting me know he's got me. My Nathi, my ride or die. I have no doubt in my mind that he's the one for me. I calmed down and went back to serve the people, with half swollen eyes.

The day went well and people stopped talking about Julia fainting, and we finally went back to Biggie's house. All of us except for Ntombi. Zoro ordered us with sternness that she must be dropped off at her mother's house – no negotiations. I was pretty emotional about today, but Julia can wait. We need to deal with how we're going to get money for Saturday's launch. This is our biggest project yet and if it fails, then we all fail. Azania was still kept in the Torture Chamber, so we left her there while we discussed our further plans for Saturday. Eve got us some well deserved drinks, while we started discussing. Catering ourselves is out of the way since Ntombi is out of the picture.

Me: "Okay

I went through our budget and we only have about R30 000 left. We need at least R220 000 to pull off the launch we want "

I could see how frustrated everyone was at that point. We've come way too long to give up now. We can't even sell the other businesses and the drugs won't make enough to cover what we need within days. We need to hire boucners, security and catering and pay for drinks.

Zoro: "There's only one option."

We all stared at him in suspense.

Zoro: "We pull off a heist."

I don't like the sound of that, I mean the only reason why we chose to start this salong business, was to start our business on a clean slate. I thought the guys would be against it, but to my surprise they all agreed to it, even Nathi.

Menzi: "I'm game."

Thomas: "Sho sho."

Biggie: "It's been a while, but I'm all for it."

Nathi: "I thought you'd never agree. I'm all systems go."

What the fuck? These guys actually want to go back to serious crime while everything has been going so well?! I don't like this, I don't like this one bit. As we were discussing their decision, Gorilla walked in. I guess Eve must have let him in long ago because people don't just randomly walk in here. I could see Menzi's face harden immediately.

Gorilla: "Sorry, to interrupt, guys."

We all greeted him politely, but Menzi gave him a blank stare.

Gorilla: "I came to fetch Azania."

Nathi: "Not so fast, Gman. You promised us the location of your son."

Gorilla: "I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but my som has gone into hiding. By the time my guys went to check his surveillance, he was already gone."

I could see Nathi fuming already as he stood up.

Nathi: "Don't fuck with me, G. Don't do it. You promised."

Gorilla was so calm, it was quite shocking.

Gorilla: "I promise you, I have no reason to lie. I have my IT guy who'll be working with you – free of charge. Take it as my gift to you."

Nathi has a hard time trusting people, but he chose to trust Gorilla for some reason. I suppose they have some sort of history.

Gorilla: "May I ask what you're discussing?"

Menzi: "It's none of your business."

Gorilla: (calmly) "I'd love to help. I mean it's no bother, really."

Thomas: "Hai, man Gman. It's really not your business. We've got this."

Gorilla: (chuckling) "Word on the streets is that you have no money for your launch."

Obviously he must've been told my Azania or Negra.

Gorilla: "Don't look at me like that. I found out that Negra stole money from you, nearly crippling your cartel and business. So, what's your plan?"

I think everyone looked at him with the utmost respect somehow.

Menzi: "We're planning a heist. We don't have any other choice."

Gorilla: "I figured you'd say that. I have the perfect place for you to rob. Just say the word and the plan will be yours by tonight."

And just like that Gorilla gave us all a tempting offer. It's amazing how the person you suspect the least is the one to bring you out of your mess at times.

## Chapter 72

### Chichi

We sat there staring at Gorilla. The ladies were all horrified, while the men really looked like they were considering it. I don't even know how they can consider this from a man they just met few hours ago. This is insane and I don't like it one bit.

Gorilla: "So? Are you guys ready or what?"

Menzi: "How do we know this isn't a trap?"

Gorilla: "I have no intentions of trapping you guys, especially not you, Menzi. I want us to have a real talk when you're ready."

Biggie: "Okay. We'll do it."

Thomas: "Before we can actually agree, give us one good reason why you're helping us."

Gorilla: "Because I've been there. I know what it's like to hustle hard and still feel like you haven't reached your goals. I admire your plan and the fact that you always remain a team. I saw your interview when I was in prison. I've never been more proud, Menzi."

Menzi really looked like he was about to shed a tear, but quickly composed himself.

Menzi: "Just a question; are you the one who bailed Julia out?"

Gorilla: "Yes. I sent Azania the money to bail her out."

I should have known. I guess Gorilla must have really loved Julia. Speaking of my mother, I didn't even ask how she is.



Me: "How is my mother?"

Gorilla: (sigh) "She suffered a heart attack."

I felt a pang to my chest. My mother has always been one of the healthiest people around. Could the stress have really added to her frail well being?

Gorilla: "Don't look so worried. She'll pull through."

I sat down to take a minute to gather my thoughts. Gorilla prepped the guys as we just listened patiently.

Gorilla: "Alright, gents. You're in luck. There's an SBV truck coming to drop off some cash at Mams Mall, far east side. There'll be about R1 million in there. The drop off is happening within an hour. Are you putting on you're a-game or not?"

Menzi: "Before we do this, I need some answers."

Gorilla: "Shoot."

I thought Menzi would ask for Gorilla to go somewhere private with him. But nope. He decided to shoot questions right there and then.

Menzi: (teary) "Why didn't you come for me when you came back from prison?"

Gorilla: "I couldn't. Would you have come with me if I just appeared and said I'm your father?"

Menzi kept quiet and looked down. I saw Pulane shed a tear while looking at him. It's very heartbreaking seeing your man broken like that.

Gorilla: "Look, Menzi. I love you, even though you didn't know about me but I knew about you. My son Ntando and Azania have always been jealous of my affection for you. I've had people watching you and looking out for you ever since I was in prison.

Not once did a day go by that I didn't yearn to have a relationship with you. Those two are just as stupid as their mothers. Yes, I was a gangster, but I didn't go around killing people especially innocent people. I warned them not to even come close to you or Nathi, or else I'd kill them. You have my word and blessing to kill Ntando. As for Azania

leave her to me."

Menzi nodded trying very hard to fight back the tears threatening his eyes. I saw something in his eyes I haven't seen in a long time – I saw peace. He probably felt so good being accepted, even if Gorilla might not be truthful.

Something about Gorilla says he's genuine and means what he says. What could he possibly gain from lying to Menzi right now? I don't know this Negra guy and I have never even seen him, but I can bet that Gorilla is fed up as a parent to him.

Ezekiel 18 v 2 says: "What do you mean by this proverb of yours about the land of Israel: "When parents eat unripe grapes, the children's teeth suffer?" It just makes me feel so much pain. My parents have done a lot of shit and look at us now. Julia and Gorilla fell in love while she was married and look at how she treated Menzi. Life can be so unfair at times all at the hands of the parents.

Gorilla sat down at the table and got the guys ready for the job. He explained to them that one of the guys in the van will be on their side. For someone who just said he was

born again a few hours ago, He still has a lot of friends in the criminal world. But who am I to judge? I'm just as much of a criminal as he is.

Once he was done briefing them, he specifically said no killing anyone, but if the guys start shooting, they have to protect themselves. I feel very uneasy at that. What if my Nathi doesn't come back? What if Menzi doesn't make it back to meet his baby?

I've never been in such a situation, but seems like Eve is so used to this. She was helping Biggie put on his crime suit, which all of them went to get from the study. They all had black jeans, black sneakers, black long sleeve shirts with black gloves on. They had their balaclavas in their hands. All of us held hands together and prayed for their safe return.

Deep down I knew what we were doing is wrong. We were praying right before they were going to commit a crime. All of our men came to hug and kiss us, except for Zoro who was very excited and hyped up since Ntombi wasn't here. Nathi used to tell me that Zoro is a hothead when it comes to heists. He loves taking action and he's the one who gets hold of the hostages usually.

Nathi: (hugging me) "I love you, baby."

Me: "I love you too. Whatever you do, please come back."

Nathi: "I will, baby wa ka (my baby). I will."

And just like that they took off, Leaving Gorilla behind. Eve took him to the chamber room where he'd find Azania. I felt so uneasy. What have I become?

Chapter 73

Chichi

The boys left and I felt my heart ache in an instant. I don't know what to call it, but I have a seriously bad feeling about this. I just hope they all come back to us.

Sam has been on her phone the whole time and I hope and pray she's not doing anything dodgy. She even became edgy when Eve asked her who she was talking to. We can't risk any disaster right now especially since her sister turned out to be a mole.

At least Imza wasn't fired, but he was removed from all the heavy duties like taking control of the money. The guys will have to do that themselves. If they want to get rich, they'll have to stop slaving other people around and get shit done themselves.

Gorilla has been in the torture chamber for about 20 minutes and asked that we do not disturb him if that's okay with Eve since it's her house, but she was perfectly fine with it.

I tried to have a few drinks, but this feeling wouldn't go away. Pulane looked at me as I frowned.

Pulane: "Please tell me you feel it too."

Oh, no. Does Pulane also have a bad feeling about this job? I genuinely thought that it would be because we're amateurs.

Me: "Do you feel anxious like something bad is about to happen?"

Pulane: "Yes, I'm so scared, Chichi."

Eve was in the kitchen and walked to us.

Eve: "I think we should pray ladies. I'm not feeling too good about this."

My heart started racing at a very fast pace. If Eve is feeling it too, then it means Nature is about to tell us something. As we gathered our hands, the three of us noticed that Sam was still busy on her phone, hectically texting someone. Eve got pissed and snatched the phone from Sam.

Sam: "Hey, wena, Eve! Give me back my phone!"

While Pulane and I were standing together about to join hands, we stared at Eve as she pushed Sam to the floor while Sam was trying to grab her phone out of Eve's hands. Sam had severe panic written all over her face.

Perhaps we let our guard down way too quickly. Eve was scrolling through the phone and her face changed from curiosity to pure rage. Her eyes were bewildered and Pulane and I became shocked as to what was happening. Eve crouched on top of Sam as she was still on the floor.

Eve: "Yey wena

Sfebe (Hey, you bitch)! Why the fuck were you talking to Ntombi and giving her all our information regarding the heist?!"

Ai, I should've known. Sam is a sellout just like Ntombi. What the fuck did these two bitches do?

Sam: (scared) "I... I wasn't part of the plan, I promise. I was just angry."

Sam wasn't making sense and time was running out. The more she tried to explain her bullshit, the angrier Eve became. Eve grabbed Sam by the throat and looked her right in the eye. She pulled Sam up with her hand gripping Sam's throat. We all know Eve can get really violent when angry, especially if she doesn't like you. I don't get why Sam would pull such a stunt especially in a dore situation like this one.

Eve: "Khuluma (Talk)!"

Sam: "I.. She asked me to keep her posted. She said she and Negra had a plan. They're on their way to the mall as we speak."

My heart dropped to the pit of my stomach. I got so enraged that my face hardened immediately. These two bitcjes were nothing, but trouble the moment they arrived! Eve got so angry and punched Sam to the ground. Gorilla came running so fast out of the study, you'd swear he was being chased.

Gorilla: "Call the boys! My son is going after them!"

Just then our worst fears were confirmed. The gut feeling wasn't going away. This is going to end badly and blood is going to be spilled. Sam and Ntombi have gone way too far now. Eve tried dialing Biggie, but his phone was off. Pulane tried Menzi but he also wasn't answering. I quickly dialed Nathi and he answered, thank goodness.

Nathi: "Baby, I can't talk now, I'm in the middle of a heist."

Me: "Nkosinathi, get out of there, now! Negra is after you!"

Nathi: "I can't hear you."

The line was getting congested and I couldn't hear him.

Me: "Nathi! Nathi!"

As I tried getting a Connection I heard gunshots and the line went dead. I had tears flowing down my face. I was enraged and I couldn't think straight.

Pulane: "Chichi! Chichi! Keng (What is it)?!"

I just charged at Sam and gave her one fat punch as she screamed out in pain.

Me: "You'd better hope and pray they all come back alive or else I'll bury you, bitch!"

Chapter 74

Nathi

The five of us went out and headed to our rented Viano. We use it when we have close by vacations or when we have a serious job to do. Luckily we had Gorilla on our side now, and his IT guru Ndumiso, hacked all the cameras along the way. He even hacked the mall's cameras before we got there.

Thomas was our driver, as always as he's really good at driving. People see him as the Transport guy, but in actual fact, He's the best driver out of all of us.

Zoro usually gets us the the hostages along with Menzi and Biggie and I do the job. We go in and get the job done. At times Thomas has to leave the car idling while we go do our business.

Sometimes things don't go according to plan, but our pact is that we don't leave anyone behind- ever. We've all been shot once or twice during a heist and thankfully we've never been caught or been arrested.

As Thomas was driving with Zoro next to him, they spotted a car that looked really unfamiliar.

Zoro: "Eh, Tman. Daai kar o kare e re shapa ka follow bjana (Seems like that car has been following us)."

Thomas: "E re ke tseye tsela engwe re bone (Let me change my route and see)."

As Thomas turned, so did the car. What's weird is that there wasn't even a number plate and we could barely see the driver. He was wearing a cap with shades, while the woman next to him wore a big hat and a scarf with big shades. If I didn't know better, I'd say these two were in disguise and they were most definitely following us.

Biggie called Ndumiso and asked him to check the car. It was not much of a use as the car was a black Mercedes SUV with dark tinted windows. All he could do was get someone to tail him for us. The SBV van that was in front of us was about to stop in the Mall, but we had to act before they got in. I said a littler prayer and just before action Chichi called me. I could barely even hear her.

Nathi: "Baby, I can't talk now. I'm in the middle of a heist."

All I heard was her calling my name and then the line became congested.

Biggie: "Eh, Nathi. We need to go, man. Hang up the phone."

I left the phone on my seat and didn't even check if I hung up or not. One of Gorilla's guys who was following the Mercedes managed to distract him by blocking his view and stopping right in front of them, causing the Mercedes to bump him from behind.

We went ahead and stopped right in front of the van and got out in high speed with our balaclavas on and guns ready in motion.

We didn't give the guys a chance to take out their guns as Thomas and Zoro got the two in the front to lie flat on their stomachs. They immediately strapped them with cable ties. We always use those that way no hostage can ever disturb us.

We headed to the back and could see the Mercedes guy and one of Gorilla's men having an argument. We paid attention to the back. We put a mild bomb on the door of the van and it blew up, causing the guard at the back to be a little disoriented. We got him down while Menzi strapped his arms behind his back.

Biggie

and I proceeded to grab the money and speedily loaded the bags in the Viano, while Menzi and Zoro were guarding outside. As Thomas got into the driver's seat, we saw the Mercedes SUV pull up in front of us and Negra coming out with a gun pointed at us. We all took out AK's and Thomas also quickly got out of the car with his pointed at Negra. This dumb fuck actually thinks he can outwin us. It's five against one and the bitch he's with.

Negra:"Well, well, well. If it isn't the magnificent five. Well, done boys. I'm going to need the money now. Thanks for pulling such an awesome heist."

Nathi: (chuckling) "You're still the little bitch you've always been, Ntando. No wonder your daddy told us we're more than welcome to kill you."

He got a bit angry as he tightened his jaw.

Negra:"You think you made it wena, Nathi, neh? It's not enough that you killed my sister-"

Nathi:"Spare us the fucking drama, Ntando. We have things do to."

We all cocked our guns as the woman came out of the car and removed her shades and scarf. She pointed an AK towards us. What the fuck?!

Zoro:"Ntombi..."

Ntombi:"I'm really sorry, Zoro. It's nothing personal."

Negra:"You heard her gents, it's just business."

I could see Zoro getting pissed and we could hear police sirens get nearer. I looks at Biggie as he signaled for us to shoot and within an instant, we started shooting. Negra managed to shoot me in the shoulder, even though we were wearing bullet proofs, while Menzi was shot in the leg. Both Negra and Ntombi lay dead on the ground in a pool of blood, while My shoulder felt numb and Menzi was losing blood.

Thomas:"Shit, that bitch sold us out! We have to go!"

Biggi helped me into the car, while Zoro helped Menzi. Thomas got into the driver's seat and we sped off. I could see Menzi losing consciousness while Zoro kept slapping him so that he doesn't fall asleep. Zoro tied a cable tie around Menzi's leg so that he doesn't bleed out.

Menzi:"Pulane..."

Zoro tried slapping him back to consciousness.

Zoro:"Menzi... Menzi..."

Menzi Didn't respond afterwards as he lost consciousness.

Chapter 75

Chichi

Eve, Pulane, Gorilla and I prayed a very long prayer while holding hands. We were enraged With Sam and I kept praying and asking God to save our men. I don't know how these two bitches keep doing us like this, but I just hope and pray the men are okay.

I couldn't care less about Ntombi right now, all I want is my Nathi back in my arms. I want Menzi safely back home and Thomas, Biggie and Zoro back safely and unharmed. As we were praying, we heard the door swinging wide open.

The horror that was in front of me shook me to the core. Thomas and Zoro were carrying Menzi in their arms, while Biggie had Nathi around his arm. Nathi had his one hand pressed on his bleeding shoulder, while Menzi was unconscious.

I don't know where I got the courage, but I got up immediately and went to Nathi. Pulane was very calm too, as she instructed Eve to go and get the medical kit. There's no way we could go to the hospital as they'd be arrested immediately. Sam sat on one of the couches in fear, while Gorilla helped Pulane with Menzi.

Me:"What do I do with Nathi, Pulane?"

Pulane:"Take the other kit from Eve and cut his shirt open. You'll have to remove the bullet."

I've never seen so much blood before and I zoned out for a second as I looked at the unconscious Menzi.

Eve:"Chichi?! If you can't do it, let me."

I quickly composed myself and decided that I needed to save my man.

Me:"I'll do it. Just tell me what to do."

Nathi could barely speak as he became weaker. Internally I was scared shitless, but I managed not to let it show. He just stared at me quietly and I proceeded to do what Eve told me. I put on my set of gloves and took the necessary equipment to sterilize the wound, and then I took out the bullet.

I managed to remove the bullet and stitch Nathi up, while Gorilla was praying for Menzi to come back o him. He looked really pale and Pulane said he needed some blood. Eve quickly ran to the study and came back with drip equipment and a bag of O negative blood. Yes, once people are punished and killed in the chamber room, we extract some blood into blood bags.

Thanks to Pulane's presence in the family, she manages to test the blood and tag the blood bags. The blood samples are stored in one of the freezers at cool temperature. This is done in case of such situations. I never thought I'd actually witness people running in here with bullet wounds, but hey, there's a first time for everything indeed. While I was busy stitching Nathi up, Thomas gave Nathi a bottle of whiskey to drink for the pain. Eve and Biggie's white couches were full of blood, but we didn't even pay attention. The objective was to save lives. I have no idea how Pulane stomachs the smell and sight of blood, but I guess Nurses were specially trained for that.

Everyone had forgotten about Sam, while Thomas was having a drink and a smoks, forgetting that we're even in the house. No smoking is allowed in the house, but at

this point, everyone can pretty much do everything. I got up as I prepared to dispose of the blood stained gloves and Nathi held my hand weakly.

Nathi: "Thank you."

I smiled and nodded. I got up to go and dispose of the gloves and wash my hands. I went back to the lounge and Pulane was removing the bullet from Menzi's leg. Apparently it was quite a deep wound. Eve hooked Menzi up on an IV and gave him a blood transfusion at the same time. His pulse was a bit weak and his colour was pretty pale due to blood loss. He seemed like he'd come out of this okay. Pulane got up to get herself cleaned, while Eve did the same. As Eve walked away, I put a pillow below Nathi's head to balance it and make sure he doesn't break his neck. Zoro helped me lay him down gently on the couch as he passed out from all the pain killers mixed with alcohol. I looked at him and got so pissed. Gorilla was kneeling in front of the unconscious Menzi who was laid face up with pillow support on the couch. Pulane is a really good asset to us and it must have been pretty stressful stitching up the father of your unborn child, but she did it. I wasn't even thinking straight. I looked at Sam who was sniffing and crying non stop and her fake crocodile tears were seriously pissing me off. I saw Gorilla's gun tucked into his pants just above his bums, and I didn't hesitate. I quickly took the gun from his pants and pointed it at Sam. She opened her eyes widely and could barely even speak. Everyone got up except for the sleeping two, and tried to talk some sense into me.

Zoro: "Whoa! Ema nyana (Wait a minute), Chichi. Ska e chuna daai ding (Don't do it)."

Thomas: "Chichi, give me the gun, please."

Biggie: "Baby, talk to her."

Eve did the exact opposite of what Biggie had asked her to do and Pulane stood right there staring at me without saying anything. She just had a blank stare on her face. I could tell both of them were vouching for me to go ahead and pull the trigger.

Thomas: "Aowa, Chichi, man. O tla mpolaela mosadi (You'll kill my wife)."

Me: "Samantha, tell your husband what you did."

Sam started sobbing even harder and wasn't speaking. I got so mad, I cocked the gun. It's Funny how rage and fear instill a great amount of courage within you. I've never even used a gun before in my whole entire life, but tonight, I'm about to blow a bitch's brains out.

Thomas: "Hey, wena, Sam. What's Chichi talking about?"

Sam was just wailing and not saying anything.

Pulane: "She's the one who was feeding Ntombi information about the heist. She told her everything and even gave her your location as well as the car you'd be driving. She was working with Ntombi and Negra."

The guys weren't really surprised, instead they were angry as fuck.

Thomas: "Mxm, mara Sam why o sena tebe bjana (why don't you ever listen)?! O no tshwana le sfebe sela ba reng ke Ntombi (You're just like that whore Ntombi)."

Zoro: "If you must know, your precious sister is dead."

Sam just wailed even harder.

Me: "Why, Sam? Why did you do it?"

Sam: "I... I just wanted to get revenge for my sister. Y'all are unfair. If Eve, Pulane or you ever did something like that, you'd never get punished or exiled like Ntombi. She didn't deserve that."

I didn't feel like listening to any more of her bullshit. I aimed the gun at her thighs and shot her once in both thighs. She screamed out in pain and expected them to get closer to her and help her, but I got closer to her and crouched in front of her. I took a steak knife that was left on the table in front of the couches and I looked at her.

Me: "I want you to remember this the next time you ever think of double crossing anyone ever again. They say snitches get stitches, right?"

Sam looked at me with half opened eyes due to the pain she was feeling. I took the knife and cut off both her breasts, leaving her there screaming out in pain.

I nearly lost my brother and my man due to this bitch's stupidity. Clearly her and Ntombi don't give a shit about other people's well being. With Ntombi gone, Sam is just a pure waste of space. I could see that I was changing into someone I don't even recognize anymore, and for some reason I was loving it. The Tshegofatso Mashabela everyone knew was gone. I'm now Chichi, the gangster bitch.

Chapter 76

Chichi

Judas Iscariot was a disciple and one of the original Twelve Disciples of Jesus Christ. According to all four canonical gospels, Judas betrayed Jesus to the Sanhedrin in the Garden of Gethsemane by kissing him and addressing him as "rabbi" to reveal his identity to the crowd who had come to arrest him.

That whole story reminds me of Sam and Ntombi. Those two blind sighted us just when we had accepted them into the family. Thomas and Zoro were growing very fond of them and they decided to throw us under the bus.

It's only been 24 hours, and we cheated death twice. I knew this heist was a bad idea. I don't know if I'll cope with such a thing ever happening again.

Seeing someone bleed out in front of you isn't okay and it messes you up really badly. We couldn't afford to have Sam in the hospital yet, so Eve gave her some sedatives and dressed her wounds with the help of Pulane.

Gorilla took Azania away who was in an obvious state of shock. He apparently gave her the beating of her life and showed her pictures of her dead brother, really graphic pictures.

He said since she behaved like a lunatic, he'll have her kept in an asylum. That way she'll perhaps gain her sanity back and behave like a proper child. Nathi was a bit out of it and Menzi was still unconscious.



We moved them to two separate bedrooms in the house, as Eve prepared dinner for us. Pulane, Biggie, Thomas, Zoro, and I were seated on the couches with a few drinks. Sam was also in one of the spare bedrooms, even though I felt she didn't deserve such luxury.

As we were seated and watching tv, the news bulletin came through with the headlines: "Breaking news: Ntombizodwa

Mabaso, recent wife of Katlego "Zoro" Mabaso, shot dead during heist."

Biggie:"Turn the volume up."

I did as I had the remote in my hands.

Reporter:"Ntombizodwa Mabaso was found shot dead with the infamous gangster Ntando Dladla, son of the notorious reformed gangster Gorilla, whp was released from prison today after serving 15 years for murder and armed robbery. It is alleged that a group of undisclosed number of men robbed the SBV van of R2 million in cash. It is not clear, however, how Mrs. Mabaso fit into this as she was found with a used gun in her hand. There have been rumours that Mrs. Mabaso was part of a gang, however the claims remain speculation as such. Further details will emerge at a later stage.

Thomas:"Mxm, di bhari tse di ka se kereye selo (those fools won't find anything)."

Zoro:"I'm just glad that bitch is dead."

Biggie:"You ain't gotta tell me twice."

This thing might blow up in our faces. Perhaps the guys don't realize it now, but it might. They brought the money in that they got from the heist. At least for now nothing traces back to them thanks to Gorilla and Ndumiso for doing such a good job. While we were about to eat supper, Gorilla walked in and Nathi walked down slowly from the stairs. I could see he was in pain, but tried so hard not to show it. I quickly got up and helped him down.

Nathi:"Ke shap, Lepyatla laka (I'm good, gorgeous)."

He tried to fake a smile, but I saw a lot of fear and worry in his eyes. I know that look. He's probably worried sick thinking I might leave him. It's such a pity we had to celebrate our one year anniversary with a bombshell from Gorilla

dodging bullets and a heist gone wrong. Either way I wouldn't choose anything else other than being here for him. I helped him into his chair, while Gorilla greeted everyone. Zoro looked at me attentively while I gently put Nathi into his chair. He kept staring at me until I sat back down. A person can always see or sense when being stared at. It made me a bit uncomfortable, but I didn't let him see.

Zoro: (smiling) "Don't we all wish we could have a woman like Chichi on our side? How I wish I was the one that got shot."

They all laughed except Nathi.

Nathi:"Voetsek (Piss off) Zoro."

Zoro:"I'm just saying fela, wishful thinking."

That statement made me cringe a bit. We said our prayer after Eve got Gorilla his own plate. Gorilla said grace and we started eating.

Gorilla: (sigh) "I'd firstly like to apologize for my son's useless stunt. I really had Ndumiso tailing him, but I guess he outsmarted us all."

Eve:"It's not your fault, Gorilla, really it isn't."

Gorilla looked quite sad and worn out. I would also look the same way if my two children tried to kill my other son.

Gorilla: (looking down) "Now, I might never get the chance to repair my nonexistent relationship with my son."

I saw his eyes glistening with tears. Mama always said Gangsters are all liars and cheats and they don't have feelings, yet she dated this soft teddy bear. I've noticed from the gang as well, all these man portray a hard exterior outside of their houses and away from their women, but once we're in their presence, they become soft like jellytots.

I just don't understand what kind of love could make Julia such a horrible person towards her own kids. Had she waited a little bit longer and trusted him, she'd have turned out a better person. All I know is that it's never too late, even God says so.

Pulane:"He'll pull through, don't you worry about Menzi. He's strong."

Gorilla: (smiling) "Now, have you invited guests to your launch?"

Everyone looked at me and I guess that was my queue to speak.

Me:"Yes, we invited everyone while we did the interview yesterday."

Gorilla:"I mean did you actually send out proper invitations? You can't have the whole of Mamelodi crowding your launch. You'll need a VIP section for really important guests."

He's absolutely right. How could I have missed that? Who do we even know? We're just a small time gang in the township with barely enough contacts.

All we did was invite the whole of ekasi (township) and asked Njabulo to spread the word about our launch. It was even in the papers, but what if we don't attract the market we need? Gorilla could see the panic written on my face.

Gorilla:"It's alright. We all have to start somewhere. Which is why you ladies will have to come up with a brilliant invitation pack that will attract your guests."

Eve:"Like a gift box or something with nice goodies inside."

Gorilla:"Exactly. I'll give you a list of people to invite. High class people from the government and a few celebrities. You'll have to make the invitation a really good one because this is last minute. Make your guests feel important."

Gorilla knew a lot about events for a gangster nje.

Pulane:"With all due respect, Ntate, how do you know so much about events and all? I mean I was under the impression you were just a gangster, no offence."

Gorilla: (laughing) "I've been around, my dear. It's always good to make contacts while you can. I used to have commissioners, Mayors the works on my payroll."

Pulane:"So how come you spent all those years in prison?"

Gorilla: "Because there comes a time in life where your sins catch up with you and you'll be forced to surrender and repent. That's what I did. I faced my demons and served my sentence. I came out a better person indeed. A part of me did it for Julia and Menzi, I wanted to show them that I'm still trustworthy and I love them."

I guess he has a point. We all have to do that at some point. Everything comes to an end and sometimes you will be forced to change. Acts 3 v 19 says: "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

Indeed Gorilla tried his utmost best to turn to the Lord and from what it seems it has worked. We spent the rest of the night getting to know Gorilla and came up with ideas on how we could get invitations out to his people. I have a good feeling about this.

Chapter 77

Chichi

The weekend was pretty hectic. I asked Glen to pick me up from Eve's house, since my Nathi was in a bad state. We got to my house with Nathi, because he says he can't be staying at someone else's house when he has his own, ai.

Nathi was sulking and didn't want me to leave, but I wasn't about that life. I hardly did any homework this weekend, so I have to go to school. Glen and I drove without saying much really, I'm pretty exhausted.

As Glen and I were about to drive into the school, we saw a whole group of reporters with cameras and microphones. What the hell?! Glen tried driving through but as soon as they saw me in the car cameras started flashing my way making me a bit dizzy. Glen nearly ran one of them over, as he finally managed to drive into the school yard. I was so overwhelmed and scared as those reporters tried to enter the school. The Principal even had to block them from entering. Such harassment shouldn't even be justified. I thought of calling Nathi, but I didn't want to stress him out. He's recovering as it is.

Glen: "Ugrand, jo (Are you okay)?"

Me: "I don't know."

Glen: "Don't call Nathi, call Zoro or Thomas or Biggie."

I didn't want to call Zoro for obvious reasons, he just makes me uncomfortable at times. And besides, Nathi wouldn't like it if I leaned on another man without involving him. So I decided to call my sis, Eve.

Eve: "Hey, baby girl. Dintshang (What's up)?"

I wanted to cry, but forced the tears back. I took out a bullet from my man's arm last night, so I'm not about that life anymore.

Me: "Hey, there are reporters outside the school. Lots of them. They took a few pictures of Glen and I in the car and he nearly ran one of them over. What's happening?"

Eve: "What?! There were a few reporters outside our gate as well, but I didn't think they'd stoop that low by following you to your school. Hold on, let me see if there's anything on the news."

Eve took a while as she scrolled through the channels and increased the volume as she stopped at one of them.

"We've received information from a valid source informing us that Funani 'Gorilla' Dlala has formed a new alliance with Mrs. Eve Legae and her team. The members of this apparent gang are known as Biggie Legae, the husband of Mrs. Legae and also the lead member of the gang.

They are also the group that is launching an up scale Salon in Mamelodi West this coming Saturday

as mentioned during their radio interview. There are also reports that named Nkosinathi Dhlamini, who is indeed dating Tshegofatso 'Chichi' Mashabela, is also a dangerous member of this gang. It is reported that Ms. Mashabela and Mr. Dhlamini are allegedly responsible for Patrick Mashabela's death, who also happens to be her father. Further details will follow at a later stage."

I became enraged all of a sudden. These people are disrespectful, honestly.

Eve: "Listen, don't worry about it. I'm coming to get you, Glen will be safe. You just stay put inside the school. I'm on my way."

She hung up and I breathed a sigh of relief. As I was gathering my breath someone knocked on my window causing me to be startled.

Principal: "I didn't meant to startle you, but could you two please come to the office right now, please?"

I looked at Glen thinking he might have a clue of what's happening, but he shook his shoulders. We walked out and followed our principal to the office.

Principal: "Please, take a seat."

Glen and I both sat down. I started feeling a bit nervous. I hope I'm not getting expelled today.

Principal: "I'm sure you're both aware of what's happening today."

Both Glen and I remained quiet.

Principal: "I understand that it's the media and people do their own thing, but for your safety and the safety of us as the educators and other learners, you two need to remain home until all this dies down."

I can't believe this. What about our school work and tasks?!

Principal: "We'll continue to give you and Glen virtual lessons. You two are two of the best students we currently have. We have no intention of expelling you for something you didn't do, but this media sensation is a bad image for our school. If you remain home for a week at least, this will be able to be sorted."

This made me even angrier. These people are now invading our lives and now we can't live normal lives. Perhaps this salon launch was a horrible idea. What if this doesn't die down after a week? How will we handle the launch when all this shit is

happening to us? I need to know who the fuck did this to us since we can't ever catch a bloody break!

Glen and I sat in the foyer waiting on Eve to come fetch me. She came after 15 minutes, talk about fast driving. She hugged us both.

Eve: "Are you okay?"

I nodded.

Glen: "Sho, sho. Do you know who did this?"

Eve: "Don't worry about that. Gorilla has the people responsible on their way to the torture chamber as we speak."

Ai, as if I don't have enough drama to deal with already. Eve and I got in her car while Glen got in his. The reporters were still there and flashed a few cameras at us, but Eve didn't even stop. She pressed her accelerator as she bumped one of them. She didn't even stop to check if she was fine, she just kept driving ahead.

We arrived after 15 minutes at Eve's house, while Glen went to fetch Nathi from our house. I found the whole gang there and Menzi was awake and looking much better than last night. I gave him a hug as Pulane was feeding him soup.

Me: "Who are those people who did this to us?"

Eve: "Go see for yourself."

She pointed at the study so I made my way to the chamber and found Aidah and Joseph tied to the chairs. I've killed enough people already, but it's time to traumatize these two leeches. They always say we experience a calm before the storm, but in this case it's the other way round.

## Chapter 78

### Chichi

I'm having such a bad day and now these two want to make it worse. I really can't handle this drama, hey, really. But in all honesty, I need to know exactly why Mamogolo Aidah hates me so much.

I walked up to them and found Gorilla standing in front of them. They both looked so drunk and Aidah looked fearful. I don't understand why she would always look scared shitless but then ends up doing such nonsense. Pabi really is her mother's daughter.

Me: "Aidah, what on earth did I ever do to you for you to hate me so much?"

Aidah: (chuckling) "Just by being born nje you became my worst enemy. Your mother has always been daddy's favourite, but what about me? I've always been in the shadow.

Even with my mother, deep down she's always known that Julia was the bright and beautiful one, while I was always the fat one. Even in school she'd get all the boys, even The Mighty Gorilla. Everyone wanted Gorilla, but he chose to chase after that whore."

Gorilla's face immediately changed as he heard that and smacked Aidah with the back of his hand. All the rings on his fingers must have hurt because she bled a bit.

Aidah: "Even if you slap me or kick me a thousand times, I'll still hate you."

Me: "Do you honestly think that after everything I have achieved without you for that matter, I'd give a shit about you loving me or not?"

She looked a bit puzzled as I said that.

Me: "Mr. Dladla, deal with them. I no longer want to taint my hands with evil people's blood.

She widened her eyes.

Aidah: "Ke wena (It's you)! You killed Patrick! Your own father! Sies, Tshegofatso! Ga o swabe (You have no shame)."

She spit in my face, but I wiped it off without showing an ounce of emotion. I got closer to her face.

Me: "That should tell you that I can do that to you too. Right here, right now."

She looked fearful as she swallowed hard.

Joseph: "Eh, nna ntlogeleng (Please leave me out of this). I didn't do anything. Deal with her, not me."

Gorilla: "We'll deal with both of you accordingly. So much for being loyal to a man who dumps you at the first sign of danger, Aidah. Ga le itse go kgetha waitse (You sure know how to pick them, you know). Wena Joseph, you've been raping girls while this whore of yours did nothing about it. So, I want both of you to suffer while living. For as long as you still hold evil in your hearts, you'll suffer on this earth."

Gorilla took one of the sharp knives from the shelf, undressed Joseph as he begged and screamed, while Aidah was watching in painful silence. Gorilla cut his penis off and got Zoro to take him out and dump him at the nearest hospital. Aidah on the other hand looked shocked and speechless.

Gorilla: "Wena Aidah, akere o clever (You act clever) wena. Pabi's baby will be taken care of by the Legae family back in Kzn. She might have abnormalities, but she deserves some love. And we all know that pure love she'll never get from you. I bet you never told Julia that your father left her that house before he died and that the title deed is actually in her name."

This family and secrets. I'm utterly disgusted. All along they made our lives a living hell, while my mother was the sole heir of the house. Wow. Aidah looked really scared and had panic written all over her face. Apparently Pabi has been feeding her mother information about us all along and Joseph, the community rapist, convinced her to sell it to the media for a mere R10 000. People can sell their souls for such small money.

Aidah: "It's not like that, Funani."

Gorilla: "Shut up and spare me your bullshit. You will never live in that house again. Koko can live there because she's pretty much old and useless now, but you, if I ever see you near that house again without Menzi's consent, I'll personally burn you alive."

Him saying that gave me cold chills down my spine. He seemed like he's done that before.

Gorilla: "You know I am capable of that. I've worked very hard to change and be a better man, so don't make me go back to being Gorilla. Uyezwa (do you understand)?"

Aidah nodded with tears in her eyes.

Gorilla: "I have to leave you with a painful reminder of what happens when you fuck with Gorilla. Because you're my woman's sister, I can't kill you, obviously, but I can rearrange your looks here and there."

He gave Aidah a deep cut on her face and cut off both her thumbs. She screamed out in pain and Thomas took her to the nearest hospital as well. I doubt they'd even talk nje.

Me: "Thank you, Bab'Dladla."

Gorilla: "Please, call me Funani or just Baba."

I smiled and nodded.

Gorilla: "I know I'm not your biological father, but I aim to get your mother the necessary help she deserves. She's been a bad mother, Chichi, but she's a good person deep down. The Julia you know is not the Julia I know."

I just looked down and kept quiet.

Gorilla: "You'll get to know the real woman I met in due time. And don't you worry yourself about those reporters, I sorted them out and by tonight, the story will be retracted."

I smiled briefly as he hugged me. He gave me such a warm hug, a fatherly hug. How I wish Patrick was a good father, but I guess shit happens. As we walked out we Found Biggie, Menzi, Pulane, Eve, Nathi and Glen in the lounge. Nathi stood up so quickly you'd swear he wasn't an injured man and he gave me a long hug, and gave me a long, passionate kiss. I even forgot we were in the middle of the people.

Menzi: "Mxm, ah, Nathi man, get a room."

The rest laughed, while Nathi cursed at him as usual.

Nathi: "Mxm, ah Tsek (voetsek), Menzi. O dronka ke go fola (Healing makes you forward). Baby wa ka (my baby), ugrand (are you okay)?"

Me: "I'm fine, Nathi."

He looked at me with genuine concern.

Nathi: "Let's take a walk outside and talk for a minute."

I nodded as we proceeded outside, leaving the rest in the lounge. Nathi was wearing an arm sling but he managed to hold me from behind with his working arm. I smiled as I inhaled his lovely scent, which left me instantly horny. I really miss sex, and we have until tomorrow then we can do the deed as much as we please.

Nathi: "Baby, are you really okay?"

Me: "I'm okay, baby. I just wish that I could just be happy for once in my life. I want our enemies to see us succeed. I want Aidah, Koko and Pabi to live long enough to see me get married and have my own children."

Nathi: (sigh) “I’m so sorry, Chichi. I shouldn’t have let you into this life. It’s only been a year and already you’ve been exposed to so much shit. You’re not even 18 yet. Please forgive me, Sthandwa sami (My love).”

Nathi tends to get really insecure when shit happens. For some reason he thinks I’m going to leave him.

Me:”Nathi, I’ll never leave you, I love you. And as for all I’ve witnessed, it’s a choice I made and I’ll still make that choice even today, tomorrow and forever. We’re meant to be

Nkosinathi, and if I have to accept you with this dark side, then so be it.”

Nathi: (smiling) “I love you, baby wa ka (my baby).”

Me:”I love you too.”

He leaned in to kiss me, but I put my finger on his lips.

Me:”You can kiss me on one condition.”

Nathi:”Name it.”

Me:”Teach me how to shoot.”

Nathi: (laughing) “But, you already shot Sam – twice.”

Me:”Ag, man I was trying out what I saw on tv.”

Nathi:”I don’t like this, Chichi, but you have to protect yourself. As my future wife, it is my duty to protect you but I can’t do that at all times. I’ll do it.”

I smiled and kissed him. Love isn’t perfect, but once you experience it, you won’t want to leave your partner’s side. That’s exactly how Nathi makes me feel at all times. Romans 1 v 8 says:“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.”

Chapter 79

Julia Mashabela

My name is Julia Ivy Mashabela and it’s time to tell my story. I haven’t been the best mother, but I do love my children – all of them. A lot of people judge me now without knowing my true story.

Life wasn’t too great growing up, but with my father being around it was blissful. I never did anything right in my mother’s eyes and my sister Aidah and I havr never had a close relationship, ever since we were young. She’s basically been jealous of me all my life and after my father died, she never kept it a secret.

I met Patrick before I met Funani. By the time I met my Gorilla, I had already had Lebo. Patrick has never treated me well to be honest. I fell for him since he was my first boyfriend and the first one I had sex with – ever.

I thought I was in love and when I fell pregnant he married me. Luckily he allowed me to finish school, but never allowed me to further my studies. I’ve always wanted to be a Chartered Accountant.

My father saw how good I was with numbers and made sure I pursue my dream. That didn’t last long as he died of cancer when I was young. Aidah on the other hand was never good with school, just like her daughter, Pabi.



I tried by all means to be a good wife, but Patrick has always loved Sylvia. As much as it pained me, I fell for Gorilla. I was even prepared to leave Patrick for him since I had fallen pregnant with Muzi, but my happiness was short lived when Gorilla got arrested.

He promised me he'd give me a good life, but I wasn't prepared to risk it. He treated me so well, and I only got to experience real love when I met him. I was young and immature back then and I made the hasty decision of telling my mother about my troubles.

She and Aidah didn't hesitate to tell Patrick that I had fallen pregnant by a gangster and he gave me the beating of my life, right in front of my mother and sister. I still ask myself even today how a parent could sit and watch their own child get beaten like a damn dog.

I became so damaged, that I followed right into my mother's footsteps. Patrick made me choose between him and Menzi. It was the most painful decision I ever had to make, but I chose Patrick as he was the only one who could feed and clothe me. Gorilla was heartbroken to the core when I made my choice. Even when he came out, he tried by all means to prove to me he could be the man I needed and went on a heist the very same night and never came back.

I know I lied about him raping me, but Patrick forced me to do it. He said if I didn't do it, he'd rip my bastard child out of me and I just couldn't risk it. I grew a lot of resentment for Gorilla after he got caught while doing his heist. I felt pain in my heart each and every day of my life ever since he went back to prison. From that day onwards, I resented everything that had gangsters written on them.

I truly wish I had made a different choice. I took comfort in the church and the bible, even though I was a resentful woman. I stood by as Patrick abused me and Lebo, and I still stayed when he gave me HIV. I stayed when he'd leave me for days even weeks on end and stayed with Sylvia. I stayed when he had two children with her and while he'd let her insult me in front of our neighbours.

I'm a failure of a woman, and most importantly I'm a failure of a mother. Lebo rejected me and I rejected Chichi for loving a man who worships the ground she walks on. I rejected my only son for being the product of pure love. I'm an evil woman and I deserve to die. I allowed Patrick to go as far as raping my baby girl with a broom stick. I didn't even protect her from her own father.

As I lay in my hospital bed, I prayed hard for God to take me. They always say death comes when you least expect it, not when you need it to. Just then Gorilla walked in, holding a bunch of flowers and a fruit basket. He's been bringing me flowers and food all week, and I don't know why he's doing all this. Who can love a woman with such an evil heart like mine? A damaged and tainted woman?

Gorilla: (smiling) "Good morning, Ma Dladla."

I looked at him and he was still handsome as ever, and whenever I look at myself in the mirror, I've aged really fast and my beauty doesn't even show anymore.

Julia: "Funani, I told you that you need to stop coming here."

Gorilla: "Still stubborn as always. That's why I fell in love with you, Juju."

He still calls me that.

Julia: (deep sigh) "I get what you're trying to do, Funani and it won't work. I'm not the same person I was back then. I'm too damaged to be with you. I'm ill, I have HIV now, I..."

He interrupted her hastily.

Gorilla: "Do I look like I care about that, Julia? You're all I could ever think about when I was in prison. When I heard you had two more children I was truly broken, because I still cared for you. Love is not an easy choice to make, Julia. What I know is that love is patient and unconditional. People might call me stupid for falling for a woman who sent me to prison, but that's my mistake to make.

I know you, Julia, the real you. I know that you've buried her deep inside that golden heart of yours. Yes you've changed, but you can always be the sweet Juju I've always known. I'm willing to help you get yourself back on track if you just allow me in." I felt myself crying as he held my hand. His touch has always been so warm and affectionate and real.

Julia: "What about my children?"

Gorilla: "You focus on yourself right now. Your health is what matters."

Julia: "Okay, but Patrick's funeral is this Saturday."

I saw his face change as I mentioned his name.

Gorilla: "Let me handle that. You just focus on yourself, okay?"

I nodded as he held me in his arms. I can only hope and pray for my children to forgive me and grant me a second chance. Pulane is going to give birth in a few months and I'd like to be a part of my grandchild's life.

Gorilla: "Do you remember the woman who entered the room when Simon was hosting a dinner for Jesus and a few men? She kissed Jesus' feet and rubbed oil on them. Remember how Simon disapproved saying the woman is a sinner and perhaps lives as a prostitute? With disapproval, he was saying to himself: "If this man were really a prophet, he would know who and what kind of woman it is who is touching him, that she is a sinner."—Luke 7:39.

Then Jesus candidly answered Simon saying: "Two men were debtors to a certain lender; the one was in debt for 500 denarii, but the other for 50. When they did not have anything to pay him back with, he freely forgave them both. Therefore, which one of them will love him more?" Perhaps with an air of indifference, Simon answers: "I suppose it is the one whom he forgave more."—Luke 7:40-43.

Jesus explained how he loves what the woman did. She kissed her feet and Simon didn't. He responded and said: "I tell you, her sins, many though they are, are forgiven, because she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little."—Luke 7:44-47."

I smiled as I heard him reciting the versus and the Bible story so effortlessly. Gorilla was raised by a church woman, but he hardly went to church back in the day.

Julia: "What made you such a Bible lover?"

Gorilla: (chuckling) "I learnt to turn to the Lord in good times and bad times, but mostly it made me think of you. You were always so good in reciting Bible versus, that I took comfort in it because it was the only thing binding me to you, apart from our son."

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Chapter 80

Chichi

It's Friday, also the day before our launch and the day before Patrick's funeral. I love how smoothly this week has gone. Glen and I have been getting virtual classes from our teachers and we've been submitting our assignments online.

I love this so much, I might consider doing it on a full time basis. I miss my squad at school, but I promised to meet up with them as soon as all this blows over. Apparently Azania has been taken off the school register and won't be coming back so they appointed someone else as the Head Girl. I'm not really bothered about all this, I have way too much on my plate.

We've managed to prepare everything for the launch and I must say, everything has worked out smoothly all thanks to Gorilla's help. We've managed to invite people in government, with celebrities like Lira, Amanda Black and AKA who'll be performing for us – for free! I have no idea how he pulled it off, but I'm really glad he came into our lives at this particular time. God always has the right timing – always.

John 1 1v9 says: "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". Until that happens, I can't bear to forgive my mother, Pabi, Aidah, Koko or even my dead father.

Gorilla has been more of a father figure to all of us, while Menzi has been getting better by the day. I just hope and pray no one asks any questions tomorrow on why he's walking with a crutch, while Nathi has an arm sling on. I heard Patrick has been a serious mess, while Aunt Aidah is on the brink of depression nje.

I hope she does go mad so her daughter can learn from her mistakes. Pabi's baby was sent to Kzn to stay with Biggie's parents. They were quite saddened to see how bad her condition was, but took comfort in the fact that Kg left an offspring behind.

I'm a bit saddened that Nathi and I couldn't even celebrate our anniversary, but he keeps on saying he wants to make it up to me. He's been begging me for sex, but I just can't risk his wound getting re-infected.

He managed to book me for a shooting range and I've been going everyday ever since Monday. I'm loving this new, fearless me. I love handling a gun and after a lot of convincing, Nathi is going to purchase me my own gun once I turn 18.

Sounds like he wants to do a lot of stuff once I turn 18, but I'm not complaining. I asked Eve to drop me off after we went to finalize the final logistics for the launch. Once I got home, I was stunned as soon as I approached the gate.

I found a trail of roses from the gate going all the way to the door. There was a note on the door "Follow the roses." I smiled to myself as I thought and asked myself who on earth put this idea into Nathi's head, because Nathi isn't this romantic. Maybe he got inspired by the romcom's we've been watching together.

As I walked in I was met by the first note of many that was on top of the train of roses. "Baby wa ka (my baby), Lepyatla la ka (My gorgeous babe), you loved me even before you knew I had money. You made me fall for you without even saying anything."

I smiled to myself as I walked towards the roses and I picked up the next note "I love your infectious smile, your beautiful, curvy body, your caramel skin makes the moon jealous, your eyes hypnotize a person and makes them fall for you, your beautiful, selfless heart has kept me captive and I'm loving every minute of it."

I started getting really teary as I proceeded to pick up the next note “Your kind nature makes me want to wife you immediately and keep you all to myself. Your love for me makes me dream about our future babies. Your beautiful self and my cute dimples will make dynamite babies.”

I laughed to myself as I picked up the last note which was right in front of the bathroom door. “I love you so much, Chichi Mashabela, Lepyatla la ka, Ma Dhlamini, Lusibalukhulu, Malandela ngokulandela izinkomo zamadoda (clan praises), As your name Tshogofatso means Blessing, I firmly believe that God blesses us all despite the kind of people we are. Ngiyakuthanda Sthandwa se nhliziyo yami (I love you, love of my life).”

Yep, that’s my Nathi. He can go rural on you when you least expect it. He reminds me of Sjava

so romantic especially when he speaks his own language. As I entered the bathroom, Kwesta’s Khetile Khetile started playing. I cried as I saw him sitting on the toilet seat, with a small cd player playing the song behind him. A whole lot tiny, scented candles were perfectly placed around the bath tub, with rose petals floating on top of the bubbles.

Nathi has done a lot of things for me, but nothing like this. He smiled as me saw me, and gave me a passionate kiss. He had removed his sling, and was left with a bandage on top of his arm. He was wearing an apron and jeans and nothing else underneath.

Nathi:”Sawubona, Ma Dhlamini (Hello, Mrs. Dlamini).”

I love his Zulu accent and I love how it makes me crave for him even more.

Me:”Dumela, Ntate Dhlamini (Hello, Mr. Dhlamini).”

Yes, I won’t attempt to speak Zulu any time soon. I suck at it. He pulled my arms onto his neck, while he placed his on my lower back as we slow danced to the song.

Intimacy is really something else, just being in each other’s arms without saying anything.

Our foreheads were touching each other, while our eyes were stealing glances from one another every now and then. Once the song ended, Sjava’s Uthando was playing. He slowly removed my clothes without me protesting as he carefully placed me into the bath tub. He kissed my forehead.

Nathi:”Take as long as you need, you deserve this. There’s a nice surprise waiting for you in the bedroom. I’ll meet you outside once you’re done.”

He smiled at me and left. The bubbles were really soothing my body and I could smell the tea tree oil he poured into the water. The scented candles and music were making me drift away into a state of peace and I wished it was eternal. After about half an hour, the water was starting to get a bit cold and my fingers and toes were getting wrinkled, so I got out. I wiped myself dry and made my way to the bedroom.

I was met by the most beautiful sight I’ve ever seen. A beautiful, Black, backless evening dress with a long slit at the back, with gorgeous Versace stilettos and a

gorgeous diamond necklace on top of it. Yet another note on the bed “Wear this and meet me outside. I know you’ll look beautiful in it.”

I smiled to myself as I thought just how lucky I am. I guess we’re playing dress up tonight so I lotioned myself and got dressed. The dress and stilettos fitted me so perfectly, with the diamond necklace as a bonus. I’ve never had diamonds before and this must have cost Nathi a fortune. I headed out and the roses were cleaned up, yes, that’s OCD people for you.

I walked out and saw Nathi dressed in a really gorgeous black Tuxedo and a white shirt. He looked so formal, so elegant. I was seriously loving the look. Behind him was a perfectly prepared round table, with a black cloth and red table sets, an ice bucket with champagne in it and everything needed for a perfect dinner for two underneath the night sky.

Nathi: (smiling) “My lady, please be seated.”

I smiled as he was playing Amanda Black’s Power album music from his car. He’s a kasi man and I love him just like that. He deserves all the sex positions in the world after today. I sat down as he pulled a chair for me and poured champagne for me.

Me: (smiling) “What’s all this for, baby?”

Nathi:”For giving me the most amazing year of my life. Thanks to you, I know how to love unconditionally. Thanks to you I found my true self and fought my demons.”

I smiled with tears glistening my eyes. I’m about to cry, I know it.

Nathi:”Let’s make a toast.”

We both held up our glasses.

Nathi:”To many more years to come and a beautiful love story we have yet to finish writing.”

I smiled as the tears finally fell from my eyes. We drank some champagne as he stood up and bent on one knee with a ring box he took out of his pocket. He looked so nervous, ai, My Nathi. He always says I’m the only person apart from his late mother who can ever make him nervous. He opened the box and I saw a beautiful sapphire diamond ring staring at me.

Nathi:”Baby wa ka (My baby), Lepyatla la ka (My gorgeous babe), Sthandwa sami (My love), You’re the definition of true love and I can’t imagine my life without you. I give you this ring as a symbol of my promise. I promise I’ll marry you straight after school. Please make me the happiest man and accept my proposal, Ma Dhlamini (Mrs. Dhlamini).”

I smiled with a wet face and I nodded as words failed me. He was so happy he twirled me around and kissed me. He put the ring on my finger.

Nathi:”Ngiyakuthanda (I love you), Ma Dhlamini.”

Me:”Le nna ka go rata, Ntate Dhlamini (I love you too).”

Mark 10 v 9 says:”Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” I can only pray to God that no one comes in the way of our perfect love.

Chapter 81



Chichi

My beautiful night with Nathi was just amazing. I wish we could relive it over and over again. He made us a really nice starter consisting of prawns dipped in creamy garlic sauce, a main course of oven-baked risotto and crème brulee as dessert. My man may be a kasi gangster, but he sure knows his way around the pots, hence he's the one cooking 98% of the time.

I'm good at making more traditional dishes like mogodu (tripe), dihlakwana (cow heels) and hardbody (traditional chicken). I've learnt a lot from Eve and Pulane in the past year, so hopefully one of these days I'll be the one making these fancy dishes. After our meal last night, Nathi and I proceeded to the bedroom and he gave me a nice, sensual massage with the right oils and all. After that, he made sweet love to me all night. I'm Glad I've got the IUD inserted otherwise I'd be pregnant by now. We even forgot he was an injured soldier, the way he was flipping me over and stroking in me, wow.

Anyway, it's 6am and we're both so tired, but time waits for no man. We all promised to go to Patrick's funeral, even though we really don't want to. Lebo is coming alone with her husband, since Tshiamo has been doing so well. She was worried this would cause a major setback for her.

Gorilla said Julia might be coming with him, but in all honesty, I still feel so much hatred for her. On that note, Gorilla and Menzi have been getting along like a house on fire. He's even having a welcome ceremony or imbeleko as they call it in Zulu, for him next weekend.

Apparently Menzi was named after Gorilla's father, who passed on on the very same day he was born. Menzi means maker of all and he wanted him to be exactly like his father, full of goodwill and be able to make things happen.

I love seeing Gorilla so proud of Menzi, man. We all have grown so fond of him as he treats us all like his children. I guess we all needed that father figure amongst us to keep us in check every now and then. Anyway, we all decided we have to look our best today. Gucci and Versace is once again the order of the day.

We all went shopping the other day and even though a few people were staring, at least there wasn't any cameras around. We all agreed to look a bit similar for the funeral. All the men chose Versace Le Pop Classique Print Blazers, with GV trousers, and each chose a different type of Medusa Hybrid Lace up Shoes.

We ladies are tired of seeing them in sneakers and jeans. They each chose a different type of sunglasses, with cologne and watches. All of them will be draped in Versace today and it's high time they dressed the part.

We ladies had to settle for black dresses, since black is the colour for funerals. I settled for a Safety pin Nappa leather dress, while Eve got a Sculptural Shoulder Long Crepe dress, and the pregnant Pulane got a Sculptural Shoulder Cut out dress.

It suited her perfectly since she's small and curvy naturally. She hasn't really gained much weight and her bump is cute and small. We each got different types of blingy Gucci shoes and Gucci shades and bags. We were so ready

I bet all eyes would be on us.

We used our Viano today, since it would be tiring using different cars. We got to Koko's house and at least there was a marquee outside. I asked myself who was planning the funeral since Mama was in hospital all week and none of us children had the time for this funeral. As we all walked into the yard we heard commotion. A woman with a very familiar voice was screaming at Koko and she was screaming right back. As we approached the scene, we saw Sylvia, my dad's side chick. She was wearing an apron with a mildly expensive looking dress and a cheap weave with really high stilettos, and an awful lot of make up.

Sylvia: "Aowa! Ga ke kwishishi ne (I don't get it)! Ke rile o lokishe dilo ge ke sa tshwile, gona bjale dilo kamoka ke hlakahlakano (I said fix things while I'm gone and now everything is a real mess)!"

Oh, you're probably wondering why Patrick is getting buried here instead of back home in Seshego. Truth is, Patrick didn't have a dime and all he had left was his pension that is still to be paid out. Imagine a man who was sleeping with two different women, died without funeral cover. So much for priorities.

Koko: "Oh, Modimo (God)! Nthole Morwalo ga ke sa kgona mo (Please lessen this burned from me because I'm failing to keep it together)!"

As Koko was being dramatic, she saw the gang and I and she couldn't be happier. I haven't seen that broad, fake smile in a really long time. She came towards me and hugged me while I didn't hug her back. And yes, she still smelled of alcohol as always.

Koko: "Oh, Setlogo sa Mokgadi (Mokgadi's grandchild)! Ke leboga ge o fihilile (Thank you for coming)! Molotsana o wa nkgafisa (This witch is driving me crazy)!" As she was about to carry on talking, Sylvia tried to attack me, but I gave her a piece of the new me.

Sylvia: "Yoh! Modimo ka lekwa (God, I'm being tested)! Mmolayi yoh o nyaka eng lesong ya Monnaka (What does this witch want at my husband's funeral)?"

She was shouting and making a scene, but I firmly grabbed her arm and she winced out in pain.

Sylvia: "Echuu (ouch)! Wa nkgobatja moloi towé (You're hurting me, you witch)!"

Me: "Theeletja wena and o Ntheleetje gabotse, sfebe towé (Listen to me and you'd better listen to me carefully). Ge o sa tlogele masepa a o a diyang mo ke tlo botja batho ba ka moka gore o sepela o robala le banna ba batho e be o ba diela bana (If you don't stop the bullshit you're doing right now, I'll tell everyone around here that you're a whore who sleeps around with other people's men and has kids with them)!"

I'll make sure you regret ever setting foot in here and I'll rip off that cheap wig from your ugly head by setting fire on it! Ska ntena, Sylvia (Don't irritate me). Re boloka

serathane sa gao ka dignity wena o tla ka masepa (We're burying your useless man with dignity and you come here with shit)."

All this while I was staring deep in her eyes with nothing but anger in my eyes. She got scared and yanked her arm out of mine without saying a word. Just then Gorilla walked in with Mama. I could see she was still weak, but she was so well-dressed and frail.

I could even see those lines behind that make up. Nathi felt me tense up and he squeezed my hand. Sylvia tried to act up again, but this time Gorilla wasn't having it.

Sylvia:"Yoh! O nyaka eng o mo (What is she doing here)?"

Gorilla:"Khaume, mfazi ndini (Wait a minute, woman)! Don't forget I'm the one paying for this funeral and as far as I'm concerned, you were not married to Patrick. You're just a side chick and gold digging whore.

Don't even let me tell you that he didn't leave a dime for you and those fatherless kids! Patrick Mashabela left all his pension money to his wife and three daughters. I guess he was dumb enough to fuck you, but smart enough not to leave you a cent!"

I saw Sylvia's heart sink immediately. I guess money really is the root of all evil.

Gorilla:"If you behave throughout this stupid funeral, I'll be able to convince Julia to give you his useless cents. If not, you won't get a dime."

Sylvia:"I.. I didn't mean to.."

Gorilla:"Fuck off and go make sure everything is sorted before we leave for the graveyard!"

He said that in such a scary manner leaving Sylvia frightened. She hopped along in fear as we headed to the tent. I still don't know how Gorilla knows everything, but I love it.

Chapter 82

Chichi

I'm not entirely surprised by Gorilla paying for the whole funeral, though, but I'm more surprised as to why he chose to give Patrick such a nice and respectful funeral. Even his coffin is of proper standards. I think he did it just to be polite, nothing more to it.

Lebo did manage to make it with her husband, and I could see a difference in her. She's been going for therapy and there's a really good vibe from her. I no longer see sadness and anger in her eyes, in fact she's glowing and has put on some weight. She sat in the third throw and I waved at her as she smiled and waved back.

I feel so good having her at peace now. I'm able to talk to her whenever I want to and it's almost as if she was never mean to me – ever. Julia greeted us all and we just greeted back out of politeness, but we all can see how uncomfortable she is.

We don't plan on being here for long, but seems like the pastor wants to take his damn time. Ntate Moruti was the pastor for today and everyone enjoys his sermons, but today he'll have to excuse and forgive me. I really don't intend on pretending – especially for the dead.

He started preaching about repentance and how important it is for a person to do that. He gave us some good qualities about Patrick and how he'd be missed, yada yada. I just couldn't take it anymore so I stood up and let go of Nathi's grip from my hand.

Me: "Thank you, Ntate Moruti. Firstly I'd like to thank you for taking your precious time to come and preach for a dead beat father – no pun intended."

I could hear gasps of shock as the Lions smiled. Nathi even wanted to laugh, but composed himself. Gorilla shook his head, while Julia was smiling, oddly.

Me: "Everyone expects to hear the good about a person on his funeral, but my siblings and I knew this man way better than any of you. What I can tell you is that he doesn't deserve such a fancy funeral. My mother taught me that we do not speak ill of the dead, but he truly deserves to be buried like a pauper."

This man abused his children, his wife, and even had a side chick who bore him children. Yes, the woman you saw with that ugly wig and cheap perfume reeking in the air, is his side chick. He raped his daughter, my younger sister. So please, can we just cut the bullshit and prepare to get him into the ground before we all get sunburn?" Everyone was shocked except for the Lions. Sylvia was embarrassed as she walked out of the tent. Koko was having the time of her life drinking in between everyone I couldn't give a shit. I gave the shocked Moruti back the mic and went to take my seat again.

Ntate Moruti: "Eh, le utlwile, Bazalwane (you heard it). Let's all proceed to the graveyard."

Thank goodness no one had the guts to tell me shit because I was seriously not in the mood. I have a launch to prepare for and me being here is a luxury because I didn't have to be here. I saw a few people taking pictures and they looked like the tabloids.

I was about to get up and go break one of their cameras, until Gorilla told me that they were invited by him. They're the good guys and would be with us throughout the day until later tonight to cover the launch. Yep, Daddy Funani o dese (rocks).

We went to our Viano, while Gorilla and Julia went to his Mercedes SUV. We followed the hearse with the guys laughing non stop at my stunt, ai.

Thomas: "Eh, Nathi Nice, o kereile segafi (you've found yourself a crazy woman). Eve, how does it feel to not be the only crazy one in the gang anymore?"

Nathi: "Mxm, tsek wena san (piss off, boy)."

They all laughed, while Zoro made yet another weird remark.

Zoro: "Re tla ba kereya basadi ba go tshwana le Chichi, mara (Will some of us ever find women like Chichi, though)?"

I guess once again I'm the only one who felt weird because they were all laughing. I really don't feel comfortable with Zoro's remarks at times, and I can't exactly raise it with Nathi. He'll flip immediately.

We got to the cemetery and that goodness Ntate Moruti got my hint. He just got the coffin lowered, as they covered it up. We arrived at the funeral at 9am this morning, and we're leaving the graveyard at 11 now. Thank goodness. We didn't even stay to

eat, we headed straight to Biggie's house to change into casual clothes and packed away our necessities for later on.

I kind of miss Sam and Ntombi's presence as we were the Notorious 10. We were going to make good use of Ntombi's cooking skills, but ke life I guess. As we approached the venue it was finally starting to sink in, this is our first big baby, the first of many. We're most definitely on our way to being multi-millionaires.

Chapter 83

Chichi

We all worked together tirelessly, shame even Pulane. She's very active for a pregnant woman and even gets up to exercise every morning before work. Menzi still wants her to stop working, but she's still not having it.

Our classy salon is officially here! We have two floors; the ground floor is where all the action begins with a reception area which will be run by Eve until we find a suitable candidate.

Customers can pay via cash, card or deposit. The floor is wide and very huge, with 20 hair stations, as well as 20 basins with all the necessary equipment. With Gorilla's assistance, we managed to interview a few people and of course most of them are from Mamelodi. We did do our part to uplift the community. It just wouldn't be right hiring people who come from far to work here when the unemployment rate is so high in our community.

We needed people who are very good at braiding and styling, so Eve took care of that by getting us at least five people who strictly deal with hair and make up. Apparently one of them is Biggie's cousin, Lerato.

She can be annoying at times, but she's pretty good at that. We also have a section where people would be getting their nails done up stairs; all ten work stations are for manicures and pedicured. It's our little Sorbet up there.

There's a room at the corner up stairs, which caters for massages, beauty and skin services, and we also do door to door services. Eve took care of the hiring of those people as I also got Mandi's help. His mom knows a lot of people in the beauty industry.

Pulane took care of hiring proper cleaning staff and made sure they were legit. Since there's no reason to hide our identities to the world anymore, everyone knows who we are everyone knows us to be the owners of the salon.

The guys will have to pull up their socks as they made sure they learn about this business. We had some change from the heist so we managed to use it to renovate some of the Chesa Nyamas, and also buy two more taxis.

Zoro and Thomas love the kasi life, so they'll be running that side as usual, but they'll also be on standby with our new VW Polo's which will be used for transport in case people want to get here faster, or in case they want everything done at home.

They both love driving so it's their thing.

Nathi and Biggie will remain here so that they can help Eve and Menzi can only do half days as he appointed himself as Pulane's driver even though he bought her a car. He's a doting father to be so we let him be.

By 5pm we were done and the caterers had arrived. We're expecting guests at 6pm. All the VIP's will have their own special tour and then we'll allow all the kasi people to have a view of the tour via tv in their own marquee.

Thanks to Gorilla, we managed to get a huge marquee filling up the whole street. One side is for the VIPs and the other will be for everyone else who got the invite via social media and some who just chose to invite themselves. We have a huge stage set up as well, where we'd be doing the talking, well just Eve and I since the rest have "public speaking issues".

We quickly went to Mandi's house to change and he and my squad from school are also the VIPs. He met us and was so excited to see us, he was already dressed. That's Mandi for you, always punctual. We freshened up as the Men were given their own room to change. As usual, Versace and Gucci were the order of the evening. We look really good tonight. If only my mother wasn't this evil she'd be proud of me.

Lebo is also coming with her husband and Mandi did our make up since we were pressed for time. My hair was curled while Pulane's afro was styled and Eve chose to wear a long and curly weave tonight. The theme colours are Black and Gold and we made sure we blend in with some wearing gold dresses and others wearing a mixture of both. We got our jewelry on and we were good to go.

We proceeded to the venue and the media was already there. The gold carper was set and the photo area as well, we are about to make history. We even have a Facebook page, Twitter Account set up and an Instagram Account too. As of Monday, we're good to go. We're going to be open 6 days a week from 8am to 6pm as we like our church days and we have households to run as well.

We all gathered with Mandi and said a prayer for the evening. After we said Amen, the games began. People were flocking from celebrities to people we don't even know. The employees also came and I'm glad they stuck to the theme. It took about an hour and a half for people to arrive, while the waiters kept the drinks flowing and we had four bar stations, two at the VIP section and two at the other section.

Of course the gate crashers were very happy to see free alcohol flowing, but we didn't mind as long as people behaved themselves. I saw a few school mates, even Kamo came. I saw Koko who arrived with Pabi and Sylvia. Ai, people just never learn.

Koko: (hugging me) "Oh, ngwana ngwanaka (daughter of my child), o berekile man (you've worked really hard)! Kgale ke itse gore o tlo ba successful (I've always known you'd be successful)."

Really, Koko? I just kept quiet and looked at her fake smile. At least the three of them were dressed accordingly.

Pabi: "Hi, Chichi, Hi guys."

Eve, Pulane and I ignored her while the men were walking around and checking if everything is in order.

Pabi: "I just wanted to say..."

Me: "Save it. The bar is over there. Behave or you're dead."

She left in disappointment. Sylvia also wanted to say something, but I shot her a look before she could open her useless mouth and she left us there. Koko was highly disappointed as she thought she'd have a seat in the VIP section, shame. I don't get such people, but anyway. Lebo arrived with her husband looking lovely.

Lebo: (hugging us all) "Hey ladies. You look amazing."

We thanked her as she gave me a nice and brief speech on how she's so happy for me. She told me she wanted to tell me something after the whole speech process and I agreed to meet her afterwards. Gorilla, our newfound father came without Julia thank goodness and it was time to address our guests. I got on stage with My proud Nathi by my side.

Me: "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Firstly, I'd like to humbly thank you for all your taking your time to celebrate our great success, the first of many with us.

Secondly, before we continue, We'll need our first lady to bless our evening with a few words. Please welcome to the stage Eve Legae."

They all clapped as she also got on stage, while Biggie was whistling in the crowd.

Biggie: "Yes! That's my wife, guys!"

The crowd laughed briefly. Biggie had his phone in his hand aimed at her. The press is here to record us, but I suppose it's always more special when your partner records you personally. They are both special like that.

Eve: "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. As you all know we love Jesus and no function can be successful without His word and His blessing. (The crowd went Amen) I have a few words to say; if you know the Bible, you might have heard about the five daughters of Zelophehad, mentioned in Numbers 27. The daughters were five sisters – Mahlah, Noa, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah were remarkable women who made history til their end days. We can all learn through their humility and wisdom as they influenced the making of a new law by God to allow women to own land. A lot has changed since then, but I can tell you is that Black child, it is possible to achieve your dreams. You can do it, as God declares in Jeremiah 29 v 11: "For I know the plans I have for you, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." He also declares in Jeremiah 1 v 5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as a prophet to the nations." We stand here before you as owners of land and owners of a brand new business venture. Many people want us to fail, but we know we will succeed and continue to uplift a lot of people in Jesus' name."

Crowd: "Amen".

Eve: "Let us close our eyes and pray, Dear Lord, I thank you so much for making this day possible. I thank you for letting us all be here and allowing these people to grace

us with their presence. Please continue to bless and guide us and let this evening be a great success. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

Crowd:”Amen.”

She handed the mic to me as Pulane, Menzi, Zoro and Thomas walked up to the stage to cut the Big red bow in front of the salon door together. Yes, it's a big cliché but never gets old.

Me:”We present to you, The Lion Factory!”

As soon as we cut the bow, the lights went on and everyone clapped as they saw our beautiful master piece. Amanda Black got on stage and started singing Power. Nathi hugged me from behind and kissed my cheek as I felt tears of joy streaming down my cheeks. Eve, Pulane and I hugged the rest of the guys, but also to make Thomas and Zoro not feel left out.

Once I hugged Zoro he whispered in my ear.

Zoro:”Nathi is lucky to have you, Chichi.”

I felt really uncomfortable, but I faked a smile and quickly went back to Nathi. We gave the VIP's a grand tour with the rest watching from the monitor in their tent.

Everyone was very impressed as we had our media person asking us questions and taking pictures of the salon on the inside.

Once we went back outside to party, Lebo came rushing to me and hugged me once again, with Nathi by my side of course.

Lebo:”I'm so proud of you, Chichi.”

Me:”Thank you, sis. Thank you both for coming.”

Lebo:”We can't stay long, but I have good news for you. Because of you and Eve, I managed to find my faith in God again and I'm three months pregnant!”

She was so excited that tears were just automatically making their way down her cheeks, causing me to cry as well. We both hugged as I congratulated her. After so many years she deserves this. On top of that she's expecting twins, no wonder she's glowing so much. I hugged her husband and he hugged Nathi as well as they said their goodbyes and left.

Nathi:”I'm proud of you, Ma Dhlamini. Thank you for being a part of my life.”

Me:”No, thank you for choosing me.”

We both kissed as we watched the artists perform and we danced the night away.

Chapter 84

Chichi

Last night was amazing and I'm bloody exhausted. Nathi and I got home so wasted, we had sex on the couch and dozed off there. We got home at 4am, and there's no way we could have made it to church. I looked at the time and it's 12 am.

Even Nathi is fast asleep. Yoh, I got up and made my way to our bedroom to change into shorts and a vest with slippers. As I was about to make my way to the kitchen, I bumped into Zoro coming out of the spare bedroom. I nearly fell from shock.

Zoro:”Ekse (Hi) Chichi.”



Me: "Zoro, o nyaka eng mo (What are you doing here)?"

Zoro: "Eh, gora gore ne o tauwe ne (you were pretty wasted, hey). I called you telling you that Thomas and I would be sleeping here. Ke tlile le Lerato (I came with Lerato)."

Eh, Lerato? Biggie's cousin? Ai Zoro doesn't learn so I just said okay. I quickly went back to the bedroom to get my robe on. I can't walk around practically half naked with Nathi's friends around. I had to wake him up since he was naked with the fleece covering him.

Me: "Nathi! Nkosinathi tsoga, man (wake up)."

Nathi: "Ha ah, man, Baby eish. Ke opa ke hlogo (My head hurts)."

Me: "So does mine, but you have to get up, you're naked and we have people in the house."

Nathi: "Ja, man. Zoro le Thomas ke banna (are men). They'll understand."

I clicked my tongue and threw some cold water on him.

Nathi: "Ah, man, Chichi! That was uncalled for."

Me: "Good morning, to you too, Nkosinathi. Go get changed so I can clean make you breakfast."

He reluctantly got up and went to the bathroom, while I picked up some of our clothes and took them to the bedroom. As I walked to the kitchen, Lerato walked out of the bedroom Zoro was in. Lerato is a big girl, much like Biggie was. She has big boobs, big bums, but she has shape and isn't fat at all. She's what people call Thick. She doesn't have a big tummy at all and has a cute face. She came out wearing Zoro's shirt and that's about it

Lerato: "Good morning, Chichi. Asidli na (Aren't we eating)?"

I knew right there and then that her and I wouldn't get along.

Me: "Excuse me?"

Lerato: "Hao, akere you're the woman of the house. So it's your duty to make us food."

Hehe, I'm being tested here.

Me: "Listen here, Lerato. This is my house and you're not even a guest. You just rocked up here unannounced in the middle of the night to fuck a guy you just met a few hours ago! Not just any guy, one of your employers. If I were you, I'd drop that stinky attitude before you get to know the angry Chichi. I'm not your maid, you can make your own food."

She looked surprised as hell.

Lerato: "Tjo, askies, ne ke sa re ka go kwatisa (I didn't mean to upset you)."

Me: "On that note, go wear something proper before Nathi kicks you out. He doesn't like disrespectful girls."

She gave me a look as she walked away. I don't get why Zoro and Thomas always go for these disrespectful bitches. I made breakfast for all of us nje, since Lerato was

taking her time. I bet she did it on purpose. I made some Mimosa's for all of us, I'm not petty so I'll let this bitch be. Nathi was the first to come out of the bedroom.

Nathi: (hugging me from behind) "Aowa, umfazi wami utenzela wonke umuntu ibreakfast (No, my wife is making breakfast for everyone)?! Hayi, Chichi."

Me: "It's alright, babe. I don't mind."

Nathi: "Let it be the last time, please. I don't want any of those two taking you away from me."

I thought of Zoro's strange behaviour, but I let it go. Perhaps now isn't the right time with us reeling from this new venture of ours. I left the other plates on the counter and sat next to Nathi as we prayed and ate as we watched tv. Thomas came out of the bedroom alone, at least.

Thomas: "Ekse (Hi). Tjo, go ka ba monate go tsoga hierso elke dag, man (It would be nice waking up here every day). Breakfast is served. Thanks, Mosadi wa Nathi (Nathi's wife). Congratulations on the engagement by the way."

Me: (smiling) "Thank you."

Nathi: "Le vaya neng, Tman (When are y'all leaving)?"

Thomas: "Hao, wa re koba, Nathi bjanong (You're chasing us away)?"

Nathi: "Eh, Thomas, you have your own house, angithi (right)?"

Thomas: (chuckling) "My house doesn't have people screaming out of pleasure during sex. Ke (I'm) lonely."

I choked a bit out of embarrassment and drank some of my mimosa.

Nathi: "Mxm, ah man, Tman. Bona nou (Look now)

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Chapter 85

Chichi

After chilling for a while with Zoro, Thomas and Lerato, they finally decided to leave at 5pm. Nathi walked Zoro and Lerato to the car, while Thomas stayed behind as I was cleaning up.

Thomas: "Eh, Chichi, kopa go ringa le wena two minutes nyana (Can I talk to you for two minutes, please)?"

I stopped what I was doing and paid attention to him.

Thomas: "Bona (Look), ka itse Zoro wao fancer (I know Zoro fancies you)."

I gave him a stunned look. I really didn't know what to say so I side-eyed Nathi to see if he isn't coming back anytime soon.

Thomas: "Relax, I won't tell Nathi. I spoke to Zoro about it. He didn't mean to make you so uncomfortable. I'll keep an eye on him."

I just nodded as he walked away with Nathi approaching. He started helping me clean up.

Nathi: "Baby, why didn't you tell me about Zoro's constant remarks?"

I nearly dropped the bottles as I got shocked by his confrontation. I didn't expect him to say that at all. I looked at him hoping he'd say he was joking but he was dead serious. I know better than to lie to him.

Me: "I... I was going to tell you, I just didn't know how."

Nathi: (deep sigh) "Baby, since when do we keep secrets from each other?"

Me: "I'm sorry."

Nathi: "Look, Chichi, you should have told me. I'm not surprised he did what he did, but you should have told me."

Now I'm more confused than ever. Did Zoro confess? Because Thonas said he wouldn't tell him.

Nathi: "Don't give me that look."

Me: "Did he tell you?"

Nathi: (chuckling) "No, I noticed when Tman confronted him about it earlier on. I knew he'd been making remarks. Zoro has always gone for my girlfriends."

I knew it. My hunch was right all along.

Nathi: "Next time, just tell me, please. Zoro is harmless, if he does it again which I doubt he would, I'll sort him out."

I nodded. I'm so glad that's out of the way. Now I know better. I'll be able to be open and honest to him all the time.

Me: "I promise I'll never keep things from you again."

Nathi: "Good."

We finished cleaning up then took a shower together and headed to bed. I was so tired from the weekend, that we dozed off at 8pm. Of course Nathi had to have his daily dose of sex so we had some before we slept.

Five months later.

It's been a hectic few months with my exams out the way. It's June holidays and thank goodness for that. Pulane gave birth to a beautiful bouncing baby boy named Bokang Funani Dladla. Yep, I'm officially someone's aunt. They gave him Funani as a second name to celebrate Gorilla's presence in our lives. Of course he was thrilled. Things fell well into place as Menzi got his Mbeleko done even at his age and had his surname changed. It also made Nathi feel a bit out of place.

He's a traditional Zulu man and it saddens him that he doesn't know his father's family. Gorilla said he'd get us information about that within a week from now. It pains me to see my man so sad. It must be hard yearning for something you've never experienced.

Julia did get a chance to meet baby Bokang, which is a start, but I still haven't forgiven her yet. It probably makes me a hypocrite, but it hurts to be in the same room with her after what she did to me.

Tshiamo is still in Cape Town, and has made remarkable progress. Lebo is thrilled and is left with one more month to give birth. I'm so excited for her. Babies are just too cute and I can't wait to see her boys. Everyone is having boys lately. I aced my exams as usual and so did Glen and my squad. Emmanuel's mother is now cancer free and can't stop thanking The gang for paying for his mother's hospital bills.

Today is the first day of June holidays and it's pretty cold, so since I'm free, I decided to go help out at the salon. We've been doing great and managed to make a huge profit of R500 000 already! I mean wow, business is forever booming and ever since we've grown a bit, Nathi has been a bit busy.

Thank goodness Njabulo is a good lawyer and he even got his practice up and running thanks to us. I still drive every now and then with my learner's license when Nathi isn't around, so today I'm fetching Mandi since Bree was dropped off at the salon earlier. Mandi helps out every now and then with his make up and hair skills. Bree is joining us since we haven't had time to breathe and relax in a long time.

By the way things are going, we might have to open another salon. Even Eve had to hire a new Manager who's been doing really well. Lerato has been in the picture ever since and her and Zoro are getting married next weekend. Yep, after five months of

dating they're tying the knot. We've tried telling Zoro he should wait a bit since he hasn't really gotten over Ntombi, but who are we?

We let him be instead of looking jealous. Thomas is dating the manager, Cindy. She's also very busty and curvy, much like Lerato. I don't know why these two always go for similar girls but I guess it's their thing. She's been coming to our lunches and dinners every now and then, but Thomas is taking it slow. She doesn't know what we really do, so that's good news at least.

Biggie is still running the drug business even though I don't see the need for it. The whole purpose for this salon was that we do things the legit way, but seems like they just want more and more money. We're all meeting tonight at Eve's to discuss a way forward. I got to Mandi's house and hooted. He came out a few minutes later wearing one of his new designs.

Mandi: "Mogwera (Friend)!"

We hugged briefly..

Me: "Hao, Mandi, the way you are forever making new outfits I don't know why you never post them."

Mandi: "Hai, chomi. I'll do that one day. I'm not 100% sure people will actually love them."

Mandi is a very confident person, but I guess we all have our faults and fears.

Me: "Of course they will. The day you get the courage, let me know, akere (okay)?"

Mandi: (smiling) "Of course. So, since we haven't spoken in a while, do you think Bree is still a virgin mara (though)?"

Me: "Hai, Mandisa. O rata go seba (You love gossiping)."

Mandi: "Hai man, chomi. Re no bua fela (We're just talking)."

Me: "Akitsi (I don't know), there's only one way to find out."

We arrived at the salon and found Bree waiting for us. Eve was also there so I greeted her, Cindy and Lerato and chilled with my two besties. I decided to get my nails done, while Mandi got his done as well.

Me: "So, Bree, Mandi here is dying to know if you're still a virgin."

Mandi: "Mara, Chichi."

Me: "Nnete ke nnete (The truth is the truth)."

Bree: (giggling) "Actually yes, I still am."

Mandi and I and the beauticians were quite stunned.

Bree: "What? I was serious when I said I want to wait until marriage."

Me: "And you're certain Bongz isn't cheating or anything?"

Bree: "Are we ever certain? How certain are you that Nathi isn't cheating on you?"

She has a point, though. I don't actually know that for certain.

Me: "Well, I don't really, except for trusting him."

Bree: "See? Exactly. I also trust him, but if I did find him cheating on me I'd most definitely leave him. I know what I want and I firmly believe there are men who most definitely don't cheat out there."

She really has a good point. I wish I had the same will power as she has. But I guess it makes things easier since she and Bongz are both virgins as far as we know.

Eve walked up to us.

Eve: "Wena Brinette, good for you, babes. This one couldn't wait for long after seeing Nathi's anaconda staring at her every night. If a man loves you he'll wait if you want to. Your first time must always be special."

Ai, mara Eve. I don't really regret having sex with Nathi. I just hope he really isn't cheating on me. You never know with these men, really.

Me: "Eve, how do you know that Biggie isn't cheating on you?"

Eve: "Well, what I can say is that no relationship or marriage is perfect. Of course he's cheated on me once or twice before in the past and we were young and immature. What I can tell you is that I made sure he knows that I'm not one to mess with. I'm a real gem not a doormat."

Wow, the way the act around one another you'd swear they never have problems.

Mandi: "How did you do it? Show him you're a real gem?"

Eve: "I shot him, twice."

We all kept quiet due to shock.

Eve: "What? Of course I dealt with the bitches who disrespected me, but one thing you should know, if you find your man cheating on you – deal with him not his side chicks. I only beat them up because they came to my house insulting me and broke my windows. I'd never let a bitch disrespect me and get away with it. But on a normal day, I deal with a cheating man. Ever since I shot him and left him. I took the kids and he begged me for months and even lost some weight. He slowly changed and he proved it to me after a whole year of begging that he had changed, so I gave him one last chance. Ever since then he's never tried that shit ever again."

That's some hectic stuff. I honestly don't know what I'd do if I found Nathi cheating on me, really. As we were talking and listening to Eve's advice, Pontsho, my best friend from Seshego walked in with a huge traveling bag.

Pontsho: "Shuu! Watseba keng (You know what), Tshogofatso. O skaars ngwanenyana, ke tlogile ke hlehla ka di taxi o nale motoro (You're scarce, girl, I had to travel via taxis while you have a car)."

Yep, that's Pontsho for you. I was so happy I jumped up and carefully hugged her so that I didn't mess my manicure. I introduced her to everyone. They basically know her since I talk about her every now and then.

Pontsho: "Yoh, ke nyorilwe man (I'm so thirsty)! Speaking of thirsty where's that gorgeous man of yours?"

I don't like that statement. It's just a bit disrespectful for your friend to call your man yummy.

Eve was unimpressed with her and she couldn't hide it.

Eve: "He's working and wena where do you get the right asking her about her man? O le mang wena (Who are you again)?"

Pontsho: "Yoh, Tshogofatso, since o te skeema magenza le telela kamoka man (Ever since you've been mixing with gangsters you're all disrespectful, man)."

I really hate Pontsho's tone and I hate it more that she showed up unannounced with a huge bag. She should know better than to pick a fight with Eve. Eve was about to snap back at her, but I quickly saved Pontsho from embarrassment.

Me: "Bjanong (so), chomi (friend), o ya kae ka bag e kana kana (Where are you headed with such a big bag)?"

Pontsho: (laughing) "Hao, ke tlile go etela mogwera wa ka for di holidays (I came to visit my friend for the holidays). Setse ke boditje Seshego kamoka gore ke tlile go bona (I already told everyone in Seshego that I'm going to see) my famous friend in Mamelodi. Yoh, champopo e

kae na (Where's the champagne)? O motho wa di levels bjanong (You have levels now), so thanks to you no more Twizza for me."

Pontsho has barely been here for an hour yet she's already left a sour taste in people's mouths, including mine. The way she was dressed and the way she looked nje, all that make up and stilletos tell me that she wasn't in Seshego.

The last time I saw Pontsho she was darker than this with some fat on her. She's way lighter now and wears expensive weaves. I know her parents didn't buy that for her because they seriously hate weaves and aren't rich. I don't like this Pontsho I'm seeing and where's there's smoke, there's definitely fire.

Chapter 86

Chichi

Pontsho's arrival put a damper in my mood. We were having such a good time here until she arrived. I don't get what's with the sudden change shame.

Me:"So, Pontsho, are you here for the whole of June school holidays?"

Pontsho:"Holidays tse fe (Which holidays)? I dropped out of school and have been living in Jo'burg. But I don't have anything to worry about since my bff is rich now akere (right)?"

She must be joking.

Eve:"Hehe, nothing is for mahala (free), sesi (sis). If you want to live you need skills and you need to apply for a job fairly just like anyone else."

Pontsho:"Ah, Chichi is just as much a shareholder here like you, isn't she?"

Wow, okay. This is getting out of hand.

Eve:"Mxm, Chichi, are you done with your nails? I'd like to have a word with you."

Pontsho:"O mo beye plekeng ya gae oo, Tshegofatso (Put her in her place)."

Me:"Mandi, Bree, I'll be right back."

I got up and went to talk to Eve.

Eve:"This chick is bad news. You'd better not take her to your house, Chichi."

Me:"She has nowhere to go, Eve."

Eve:"Hehe, are you hearing yourself right now? I'm telling you she's giving me bad vibes."

Me:"I get you. I feel it too. Where will she stay?"

Eve:"Don't make everyone's problems your problems just because you have history. Nathi won't like her anyway. Take her to Koko's house, she can stay in one of the back rooms until she finds herself a job. Trust me on this one, do not take her to your house."

I know Eve is right, she knows what she's talking about. As much as I feel like Pontsho and I have history, I don't like this new her. As I was about to go back to my friends, My Nathi walked in with a bunch of flowers. He saw me and walked past everyone with a huge smile on his face.

Nathi:"Ma Dhlamini"

I smiled as he kissed me passionately and handed me the flowers.

Me:"Hai, Nathi. Not in front of the people."



Nathi: "They know you're mine, besides, we're all adults here."

I smiled and thanked him for the flowers. Seems like Pontsho couldn't wait to introduce herself. She got up and extended her hand to Nathi so that he could kiss the back of her hand. This chick needs to know her place.

Pontsho: "Hey, Nkosinathi. I'm Pontsho, Tshegofatso's best friend from Seshego. We go way back."

My Nathi never disappoints. He just looked at her from top to toe, and stared at her hand and chuckled afterwards.

Nathi: "Seshego must have some disrespectful brats because from where I come from you wait for the wife to introduce you to her husband. One thing you should know is I never shake a woman's hand unless it's business related. And this thing of you and Chichi coming a long way, I don't get it because she's only mentioned you once or twice throughout our relationship."

Pontsho was a bit horrified by Nathi's disappointing reaction.

Pontsho: "But you're not married, mos."

Nathi got really annoyed and so was I. I heard Lerato clapping hands and gasping in disbelief.

Lerato: "Heh! Banyana ba bangwe ba sebetse man (Some women have balls)."

Nathi: "Do you see this ring? I put it on her finger, you see Chichi is not like some hoodrats who go around offering themselves to useless foreign druglords. Once she's done with matric, I'm giving her the wedding of her dreams. Word of advice; know your place and don't ever pull that shit on me."

I don't know if the drug lord statement was just a pure insult or the truth. But it kind of hit Pontsho hard for a minute.

Pontsho: (saddened) "I... I'm sorry. I'll make it up to you when I get to your house."

Lerato laughed out loud again.

Lerato: "Clearly this girl ga tsebe Nathi (doesn't know Nathi)."

Nathi: (shocked) "Askies? Did you say live with us?"

Pontsho: "Yes."

I don't know if Pontsho is stupid or what, but she even seemed proud of her statement.

Nathi: (chuckling) "The only woman I live with is my wife, Chichi. Wena, you'll make a plan."

Me: "Baby, I was thinking of asking Koko to let her stay in one of her back rooms."

Pontsho looked disappointed by my statement.

Pontsho: "Aowa, Tshegofatso. Nna (Me)? Pontsho Manamela ke dule back room (living in a back room)?"

Nathi: (annoyed) "Wa bereka (Do you have a job)?"

Pontsho: (looking down) "No, but I..."

Nathi: "Then you have no right to speak nje. Chichi mara ni ba dopa kuphi la bantwana ba useless so (Where do you find these useless girls)?"

Pontsho was rather hurt by Nathi's reaction and constant insults.

Me: "Okay, baby, I'll drop her off at Koko's."

Nathi: "No, you had your special day planned with your friends. I'll get an Uber for her, while I drop you guys off. You can call me when you're done, I'll pick you guys up again."

Pontsho: "Tjo, bathong, Tshegofatso. I came here for you and you're going to leave me ke le one (alone) in a foreign backroom?"

Nathi: "Askies, sesi, did you call before pitching up here?"

Pontsho kept quiet. Honestly, her attitude is displeasing.

Nathi: "Exactly, so you have no right to choose where you're going to live. Don't irritate me. You'd better sit there and wait for your Uber. Lerato, please make sure she gets into the right car. I doubt she even knows what an Uber looks like. Chichi, Mandi, Bree, asihambeni (let's go)."

That's Zulu men for you, they don't beat around the bush. Pontsho looked so ashamed. I greeted her goodbye and promised to call her. I left Eve smiling to herself while shaking her head. I hope Pontsho leaves soon because I truly am not in the mood for any more drama. Things have been going so well these past few months.

Chapter 87

Chichi

Nathi was kind enough to drop Mandi, Bree and I at Menlyn Maine as we wanted to have a bit of fun. I hugged and kissed him goodbye as he gave me his black card. Ai, Nathi gives me too much money. I still have about R80 000 untouched in my bank account. He always says a woman can never have enough money. Mandi always says I should enjoy this as it only comes once.

I just hope I don't get too drunk and forget our meeting tonight at Eve's. I'm still a bit unsettled by Pontsho, but I won't let her ruin my day with my friends. We got to Turn 'n Tender and placed our drink orders. I settled for a Sex on the Beach, while Mandi ordered a Caiphrina and Bree got herself a Cosmopolitan.

Bree isn't much of a drinker, but Mandi and I ai, we are just something else. We got settled and they started shooting questions as expected.

Bree: "Bjanong (So), Chichi, what's with your friend?"

Mandi: "O bitsa ntwela chomi, chomi (You call that thing a friend, friend)? Gape she has zero manners and zero class. Did you see the hideous pile of make up on her and those eyebags, not to mention her weird and stinky attitude? I swear she's on drugs or something."

Bree: "Nathi did mention something about Foreign drug lords. What if she's really here because she ran away from them, Chichi?"

Eish, these questions were all making me dizzy. I wasn't in the mood to talk about Pontsho, honestly.

Me: "Ai, guys. Pontsho and I grew up together, hey. To be honest she's always been a bit loud, but I've never seen her like this. I'm just as shocked as you are."

Bree: "Ai, hlokomela sesi (be careful, sis). She's after your man."

Mandi: "Ao, man. If Bree saw it too then you know you should be careful."

Bree: "Mxm, wa bora Mandi (you're boring)."

Mandi: "Wena o rata go iketsa skoon pampier (You like acting all holy). What would you have done if a chick behaved like that with Bongz?"

Bree: "To be honest, I'd walk away."

Mandi: "Ai, wena mara, Maria Magdalena. You can't always let people walk all over you."

Bree: "It's not that. If Bongz decided to stand up for me the way Nathi did today, then I'd be all for it. But if he chose to keep quiet or entertain it, I'd genuinely walk away."

Mandi: "Eish, ja ne. Chichi you're blessed to have a man like Nathi. Everyone, literally everyone wants a piece of him and if you don't watch out, that Pontsho girl will have him."

Me: "But Nathi would never cheat on me, would he?"

Mandi: "Well, she's not exactly ugly. In fact she's quite good looking with her dark skin. Men are into melanin nowadays. I'm saying back home y'all tend to, you know, take matters in your own hands."

Bree: "Bathong, Mandisa."

Mandi: "Keng (What)? Black magic is real, baby. Lots of girls our age are into home made chemical engineering. Nna I'm just saying watch out. Yes

you're a prayer warrior, but bitches like her would do anything to get girls like you out of their way."

Eish, Mandi got me thinking hard. Could Pontsho really use black magic to get Nathi? We were always so close and I told her everything. Yes, she's always been a bit too ripe for her age, but I doubt she'd do that to me. "Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light" as said in 2 Corinthians 11 v 14.

Pontsho has always been nice to me, but always went for older guys. Now that she's dropped out of school, I can only wonder why. She's my age and a 17 year old wandering the streets of Jo'burg can only mean one thing – she's a hustler. What kind? I'm not so sure.

As the three of us began conversing and having a great time, I Started getting irritating WhatsApp texts from Pontsho.

"I thought you were a real friend, but you chose your new buddies instead of me."

"We've come too far for you to leave me like this, Tshegofatso."

"You should have stood by me when your man was disrespecting me like that."

"Okay, I'm really sorry for being such a bitch. But can I please come stay with you? This place is a dump. I'm not used to such."

"Why aren't you responding to my texts? Mxm, o dronka ke go ba le tshalete (money has gotten into your head)."

"Please send me some airtime, I'm running out of data. Help a friend out."

She kept bombarding me with texts until I got fed up and put my phone on silent.

Mandi: "Haowa, ska mpotsa gore (Don't tell me) that's Nathi sending you nude pics."

Me: (deep sigh) “Ai, it’s Pontsho.”

Bree:”Tla re bone (Let’s see).”

I gave her the phone as she and Mandi viewed the messages with displeased looks on their faces.

Mandi:”Aowa, aowa, aowa. Ke moleko o (She’s a problem this one). Chichi, nna ke re (I’m saying) cut a bitch off.”

Bree:”I agree with Mandisa. This girl is bad news and seems really desperate and unstable.”

I sighed and looked down.

Mandi:”Bona (look), let me make things simpler for you.”

Mandi took my phone and blocked her.

Mandi:”See? Problem solved.”

I don’t know about that, but maybe it’s a good solution for now. I just hope she doesn’t start nonsense with me. We had a few more drinks and called Nathi to come fetch us. We started dropping Bree off and then Mandi.

Nathi:”Yoh, Baby wami (My baby). Thank goodness we’re alone. Ngivukelwe (I’m horny). A re bethe one (Let’s have a quicky).”

Me:”Mara Nathi, we have to be at Eve’s soon.”

Nathi:”Come on, I’ll be quick, please.”

Ai, Nathi.

Me:”Alright.”

We’ve had sex in a few odd places, but never in the car. He was so excited as he was driving around looking for a secure spot for us to do the deed. We parked and quickly went to the back seat as he rammed inside of me. The urge of having sex while wondering who might walk by was amazing. After a few minutes we both came together.

Nathi:”Yesses, Ma Dhlamini. I wish I could just find a permanent home in your pussy man. Imnandi lento (This thing is delicious).”

I smiled as I blushed. Ai, mara Nathi. We went back into the car and drove to Eve’s. While on our way there, his phone rang.

Nathi:”I don’t know this number. Baby, please check it for me using Truecaller.”

Me:”Alright, baby.”

I checked it and I was astonished. Has Pontsho really stooped this low? I became quiet for a minute.

Nathi:”Inumber ka bani (Whose number is it)?”

Me:”It’s Pontsho’s.”

Nathi: (shocked) “What the fuck?! How did she get my number?! And why is she calling me?”

I shrugged my shoulders.

Nathi: (clicking his tongue) “Umgani wakho (Your friend), Chichi, uzonya (is going to shit herself. I’m telling you. I don’t appreciate easy bitches calling me.”

Yoh, and just like that our day was semi-ruined by my friend from back home. I myself got a bit pissed as I checked my phone and saw a message from her in my spam folder since I blocked her.

“They say money changes people. Dula o le bjao (Stay like that). Wa lebala gore ne o sehlaftse kwa Seshego (You forget that you used to be covered in dust), gona bjale wa njikela (now you’re turning your back on me) when I need you most. Your precious moment won’t last forever, Tshogfatso Mashabela.”

I clicked my tongue as I threw my phone in my bag. What the fuck is this bitch up to and who does she think she is threatening me? She has managed to piss at least 8 people off in less than 24 hours. I’m a Lion and once I’m bothered, I strike.

Chapter 88

Chichi

As we approached Eve’s house in a very sombre mood, Nathi’s phone rang at least four to five times. I got so bored and pissed off by Pontso’s irritating actions that I became sober. Nathi was spitting fire and driving a bit faster than usual. Once we got to the house, he parked and answered the phone and put it on loud speaker.

Nathi: “What?!”

Pontsho: “Hao, Nkosinathi, I just wanted to talk to you.”

Nathi: “yey wena sfebe (Hey, you bitch). Only Chichi calls me that and where the fuck did you get my number?!”

Pontsho: “I... I got it from your Instagram page.”

Nathi: “Lalela lana wena (Listen here). Clearly you don’t know who you’re dealing with. Don’t ever fucking disrespect my wife like that again. Continue harassing us again, I’ll give Gupta a call and tell him about your whereabouts. I bet he doesn’t know where you are.”

Pontsho went quiet for a minute and I wondered who Gupta was and what the hell was going on.

Pontsho: “Please don’t do that. I... I won’t bother you again.”

Nathi: “You’d better fuck off!”

He hung up and let out a loud sigh.

Nathi: “As’hambe (Let’s go).”

We both got out of the car as he held my hand. I could feel the rage running through his veins. What I love about Nathi is that he always shows affection, even when he’s angry. It’s really adorable and thoughtful. We walked in and he went straight for the Tequila.

Eve: “Hao, Chichi, dintshang ka monna hao (What’s up with your man)?”

Me: “Ai, Pontsho.”

Eve: “What happened?”

I explained to her what happened from the lunch date to a few minutes ago. Zoro, Lerato, Biggie and Thomas, were stunned just as much as Eve was. Menzi and Pulane were preparing for Bokang’s baptisim tomorrow.

Eve: "I told you not to trust her and yet you were prepared to have her in your house."

Thomas: "Hai, Chichi, o kare o tlo bolaya motho (Seems like you'll have to kill someone)."

I'm honestly done with killing people. I'd hate for it to come to that and besides I can't kill everyone who gets in my way. That's not right.

Zoro: "Maybe we should get Ndumiso to just do a background check on her."

Me: "Good idea. I don't know why I didn't think of that."

Zoro: "Don't worry

I'll text him. What's her full name?"

Me: "Pontsho Manamela."

He nodded and started typing on his phone.

Zoro: "Done."

Me: "Thank you."

Ever since Zoro's weird behaviour months ago, I decided to keep my distance. Ever since he started dating Lerato, things were pretty much back to normal, but you just never know. While we waited for information regarding Pontsho, we started discussing a way forward with our business.

Me: "Okay, we've made half a million rand in profits. We've already excluded the tax and the employee's salaries. I suggest we move onto the next phase, which is opening our next business."

Eve: "I'm all for it."

Zoro: "Once we do that then what?"

Biggie: "Mara Zoro, do you ever pay attention? We're going to open our own Garage and expand the taxi business in a few months."

Zoro: "Ja, I know all that, but when will we start buying our own houses? I'm tired of living in Mamelodi now. It's high time we also stay in the suburb."

Ai, Zoro always wants to try and ruin things.

Lerato: "I'm quite happy with living in Mamelodi. I honestly don't mind staying there forever."

Biggie: "Zoro, you know we can't be rushing things. Why do you always have to try and ruin everything? Didn't you learn ka (with) Sam?"

Zoro could see all eyes were on him and probably thought about what Biggie was saying.

Zoro: "Eish, Hade (Sorry), man Biggie. Net flopo I want to start my own family, wa bona (you see)? And I feel that we should all live large in the burbs like you. It's only fair."

I don't get where this sudden interest in the suburbs comes from since Biggie bought this house with his own money before the gang got extended.

Nathi: "We all agreed that we'd all buy our houses at the same time. Kanti ungenwe yini (What's with you)?"

Zoro looked really weird and decided to change the topic. Somehow I feel like he's starting to have his own plans and is derailing from our plans. The guys have better sort him out quickly.

Perhaps I can get Lerato to tell me what's up with her man's sudden change of behaviour.

They say change comes when you least expect it. You should never bargain on a person because they can turn on you when you need them most. Ecclesiastes 5 v 10 says: "Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless."

All we ever wanted was to have a good life and build a legacy the right way. Seems like Zoro is starting to have his own plans and now the money is getting to his head. He's already spent R500 000 on his wedding and he was never a classy guy. I don't even know what to make of it, but I'm getting worried.

Chapter 89

Chichi

We all got a bit uncomfortable after Zoro's seemingly odd request or suggestion rather. We tried not to dwell too much on it, but we could see Biggie and Nathi getting really anxious about it. Zoro's phone beeped.

Zoro:"Oh, Chichi, Ndumiso got back to me regarding information about your friend." I'm not really sure if I actually want to hear what she's been up to.

Nathi:"Azishe (Let's hear it)."

Zoro:"Well, she apparently dropped out last year and has been living in Jo'burg with Gupta."

There's that name again. Who on earth is Gupta?

Zoro:"All he could send was she just upped and left and we don't know why. But he'll ask around and get back to us."

Me:"Who's this Gupta?"

Nathi:"Just one of our ex suppliers. He left us to go and start his own drug ring in Jo'burg. He's small fry, but plays dirty."

Me:"What do you mean?"

Nathi:"He sells really lethal merchandise and he deals in some human trafficking."

I got shocked and felt my heart beat so fast, I could pass out. What on earth was Pontsho doing with a human trafficker?! And why is she back? She probably ran away from him. This is really messed up. Nathi could see I was getting worried for a second.

Nathi:"Relax, he won't do any harm to you. In fact, he's not even allowed in Mams. If he ever comes here, he knows he's a dead man. That's probably why Pontsho came here. She knows he won't be able to touch her while she's here."

As I don't get why she would mix herself with such people but who am I to judge? We finished our supper and Nathi and I headed to our house. Along the way I could see something was pondering Nathi's mind.

Me:"Want to talk about it?"

Nathi:"It's nothing major, Ma Dhlamini. Just this Zoro thing. Is it me or does he seem a bit distracted? Like he's just got his own plans?"

Eish, this is a tough one. To me it does seem like Zoro wants to be Nathi. I don't know how to say it so I'm just going to spit it out.

Me:"Yea, I noticed. But honestly speaking, Nkosinathi. It does kind of seem like he wants to be you if not like you."

Nathi:"Haibo, usho kanjani (what do you mean), Chichi?"

Me:"I mean look at how he's changed ever since he's met Lerato. He's starting to dress more like you and he doesn't even wear his Dickies nonsense. No more beanies

and now he cuts his hair like yours and even wears the same shoes as you do. I don't know, but don't you see it?"

Nathi got a bit quiet for a second as he was trying to process all of this."

Nathi:"Come to think of it, you're actually right. I didn't really notice it, but now that you've mentioned it. It's as clear as daylight. Is Zoro that obsessed with us njena?"

I had no words other than telling him he must just keep a serious eye on him. We finally got to the house

took a shower together and went straight to bed. We have to be up early tomorrow so that we could be there for Pulane and Menzi's baptism for baby Bokang. Nathi and I are the God parents which makes sense since I'm the aunt and he's the best friend. No one else had a problem with it.

It's Sunday morning and Nathi and I are up early together. It's something really rare unless I'm going to school. We wore our best Versace attire. Eish, I'm a Versace addict and I just can't help it. I'm glad my Nathi can dress in formal wear now. He looks so professional most of the time.

We arrived at church after about 30 minutes and found Pulane and Menzi already seated in the front. There really was no time to chat with people as usual outside. I went to Pulane and hugged her first, and then Menzi. I got the chance to hold Baby Bokang for the first time ever since he was born. Oh, babies are so cute. They smell so good and just melt your heart. Nathi likes talking about us having our own one day and I honestly can't wait. As I was rocking the baby for barely two minutes, Puleng's annoying aunt, Hilda appeared out of nowhere. She's been helping Puleng with the baby since her mom and dad are on vacation. I know, right?

Hilda:"He eh, Puleng! O ka se tlogele mang le mang a kuke ngwana hle (You can't let just anyone hold the baby). Batho ba bangwe ga ba itse go ikilela (Other people can't stay clean for long)."

Wow, so this lady just assumes I'm forever draped in dick. In black culture it is believed that the baby isn't supposed to be seen until after he or she turns 3 months old. Reason being a newborn isn't strong enough to ward off evil and uncleanness. So if the baby gets held by someone who has sex regularly, the baby might be ill or possibly die.

Puleng: (annoyed) "Mmane weh, kopa o dule fase kwa, please (Aunty, please go sit over there)."

As she was about to protest, Puleng gave her a stern warning and she left. Menzi just shook his head in disbelief.

Puleng: (embarrassed) "I'm so sorry, Chichi. She can be a handful at times."

Me:"It's okay."

I handed him back to her and hid my disappointment. That Hilda lady is out of order nje. The rest of the Lions were seated right behind us. As I was scanning the room, I saw Gorilla approach with Julia. I really don't know how to act around her lately.



They greeted us all and we greeted back. They sat a bit farther from us which was okay with me. As I looked around again, I saw Pontsho, wearing a Burberry outfit with gold stilettos and a different wig with the same horrid pile of make up on her face. I thought she'd heed Nathi's warning last night, but I guess she doesn't listen. I'm getting really tired of her stunts.

Chapter 90

Chichi

As Pontsho walked through the church, she literally looked for a place to sit in front so that she could see us. It was so obvious. I felt Nathi's body tense up and I just assumed that he's as tired of her bullshit as I am. He squeezed my hand even tighter and I reciprocated. He's been uneasy ever since, but I tried my best not to dwell on it. The service was great even though Eve wasn't part of it. Micah was making appearances every Sunday and it was really good seeing him like this. Healing works wonders for a person, even Julia. She's glowing now and her beauty is coming back slowly but surely. I think also having a good support system helps a lot.

Having that one person you can depend on is a real blessing. Gorilla has been Mama's crutch ever since and he just seems to be loving it. He's been hinting marriage but seems like Mama wants to fix things with us first. It looks like her and Menzi are sort of okay, but it will take a while for me. I'm starting to think I'm a bit selfish.

The time for Nathi and I to shine came as we had to stand behind the proud parents of baby Bokang. I've never been happier. For some reason my brain told me to look Pontsho's way and it seemed like she was winking at Nathi who tightened his jaw after that. I don't get why this girl is so busy trying to squeeze herself into my man's life. Brenda Fassie's once warned us with her song "umuntu ngeke umconfirme" (You can never confirm a person).

Anyway the service ended beautifully and today, we handed our Sunday soup services to other people as Eve is hosting a lunch for the Dladla's. Thank goodness Hilda isn't coming with. No one really gets her and Pulane keeps saying she drives her up the wall and she just can't wait for her to go back home. As we were exiting the church, Lo and behold Pontsho appeared. I rolled my eyes as I just couldn't fake it anymore. Pontsho: "Hi Tshogofatso, Hi Nathi."

Nathi: (pissed) "Kodwa yini (What is it with you)?! What do you want wena?!"

I think Nathi didn't even realize he was shouting as we were walking to the car.

Pontsho: "Hao, don't be like that, Nathi. I just wanted to apologize. To the both of you."

Nathi: "You've apologized, now beat it."

I could feel Nathi tense up. People hardly get under his skin, but seems like Pontsho does it and quickly. Thomas came out of nowhere and stared her straight in the eye with Cindy by his side.

Thomas: "Pontsho, voetsek, vaya (piss off), leave!"

Pontsho: "But..."

She didn't get to finish her sentence.

Thomas: "Let's make life simpler right now. I'll personally shove you into my boot and take you to Gupta since well all know he isn't allowed in Mamelodi, akere (right)? O thoma go re tlapela (you're becoming really annoying), Pontsho, or should I call you Black Diamond?"

Pontsho widened her eyes after Thomas' last statement and quickly walked away.

Bathong (Gosh), there's something these people are not telling me. I can honestly feel it in my gut. But Nathi and I don't keep secrets from each other, mos. Could he be keeping a secret from me? As we proceeded to the car, Thomas asked to have a word with Nathi. I looked at them both suspiciously, but I let them be and waited in the car.

Nathi

This girl is really pissing me off right now. Things have been really good between Chichi and I and I can't even recall a fight between us. She's so fragile and young, I don't know how to break the news to her. I should've told her last night, but I just couldn't. I can barely keep it together now. I've been tossing and turning in my sleep and now, I'm shaking like a damn leaf since this Pontsho bitch keeps following me like a nasty STD.

Thomas: "Ekse (Hey), Nathi. Kgante o flopisa keng (What's your deal)? Put that bitch in her place before she tells Chichi the truth."

Nathi: "Tman, I have tried. This girl is about to ruin my relationship, I can feel it. I can't lose Chichi, man. I can't."

Thomas: "Then there's only one way to deal with her, you have to tell Chichi. Besides, it's in the past, way before Chichi even got into the picture."

Nathi: "Eish, Tman. It's not that easy. I really didn't know she was Chichi's best friend. I'm freaking out, man. Maybe I should just kill her."

Thomas: (shaking his head) "You know very well she's Gupta's best asset and that will be declaring war. I'll think of a way to get rid of her, but come clean before Zoro finds out. I bet he'll go to her running with this."

He's right. I don't trust that Zoro's feelings for my woman have seemingly evaporated. I have to be honest with my wife. I feel like such a hypocrite. Here I am, the advocat of no secrets, yet I'm keeping this one from the love of my life. When they said the past always comea back to haunt you they weren't lying.

Chichi

I kept stealing glances at Zoro and Nathi from the side mirror and I could see what they were discussing was pretty intense. My gut feeling told me they were talking about Pontsho. They always get rid of pesty bitches like her, so why can't they just squash her like they do the others? I saw him approach the car wiping the sweat off his face. Nathi's forehead always sweats a bit when he's nervous. He got into the car and took a deep sigh.

Me: "Are you okay, baby?"

Nathi: (nervous smile) "Yes, Ma Dhlamini, I'm perfect."

I gave him a faint smile and he held my hand and looked deep into my eyes.

Nathi: "I love you, Ma Dhlamini, I really love you."

He looked so worried, scared is more like it. His eyes just screamed fear and I saw tiny sparkles of tears approaching. My gosh he's even shaking. I'm worried, but now isn't the time. So I decided to reassure him.

Me: "I love you too, Ntate (Mr) Dhlamini."

He slowly removed his hand from mine and we drove off to Eve's house in silence.

We were the last ones to arrive

oddly. We walked in and Nathi pulled a chair for me as usual. At least they hadn't started eating. Everyone was there, including Julia and Gorilla.

Eve: "Oh, thank goodness! Bathong, I'm starving and I was just about to call you."

Biggie: "Hai, man, baby. Leave them. Maybe they had a quick one before coming here."

I looked down and thought of Gorilla and Julia's presence, but they didn't seem to mind.

Cindy: "Ha ah, Biggie, man. Respect the elders."

Gorilla: "Hey, I'm not a fossil, bakithi (my goodness)."

They all laughed while I faked a smile and Nathi was quiet and nervous.

Eve: "And then? Nathi, what's up?"

Biggie: "Akere kao botsa (I told you). Ne ba le busy ba (These two were busy)."

The others laughed while Thomas seemed to be saving the whole situation.

Thomas: "Hai, I'm hungry. Let's pray."

Finally, Gorilla blessed the food and we ate. Bokang must be sleeping because Pulane didn't have him on his lap.

Julia: "So, Pulane, ngwanaka (my child), how is motherhood so far?"

Pulane: (smiling) "Yoh, it's tiring, but I'm loving every moment of it."

Menzi: "I'm so happy, I can't wait to score again."

They all laughed as I kept stealing glances from Nathi who just looked nervous as fuck.

Julia: (smiling and shaking her head) "You're supposed to wait at least three months until you do the next deed. Black culture e re bjao (says so)."

Menzi: (astonished) "Aowa, Ma. The doctor said 8 weeks mos! Yoh three whole months without being fed?! I won't survive."

They all laughed out so hard, even Gorilla and Julia.

Pulane: "You'll have to suck it up. And don't even think of cheating on me or else." (She waved a steak knife in front of him).

Everyone laughed at their canter. It's quite funny, but a bit serious too. Pulane once grabbed a woman's hair while she was pregnant right in the store. The woman should have known better than to flirt with Menzi like that in front of Pulane. Even though Menzi wasn't entertaining her, Pulane still went for her. She should thank her

ancestors because she was wearing a wig. Maybe it was hormones, but he knows better than to mess with his wife.

We ate dessert and had a few drinks. After dessert, Pulane and Menzi had to leave early, as they have a curfew or something. I don't know but Hilda said so. They left the rest of us as we enjoyed each other's company. We even moved to the lounge to enjoy the fireplace since it's winter. I offered to help Eve with the dishes so that we could gossip a bit, and Lerato and Cindy helped as well. We like doing it the old fashioned way, even though they have a dishwasher.

Nathi has been quiet all day and barely said a word during the meal, which is so unlike him. He kept squeezing and rubbing my thigh gently underneath the table every now and then. Eve has always said God didn't give a woman intuition for nothing. When it strikes, believe it.

Me: "Eve, have you noticed how strangely Nathi has been behaving?"

Eve: "I thought you didn't notice. He left here acting weird nje last night and the whole time during the church service. Even now during lunch. I told you, believe your hunch, sisi (sis). Something is definitely up."

Lerato: "I think it has to do with your annoying friend, babe. That girl ke moleko (is a problem)."

Cindy: "You know, I once had a situation back home where my neighbour was married to her husband for over 30 years. They hired a nanny for their grandkids, and before you know it the husband was fucking the nanny."

Ai, Cindy.

Eve: "Mara Cindy. E tsena kae taba eo (Where does that fit in)?"

Cindy: "I was getting to that part akere. So, it turns out that this nanny girl was using muthi on this poor madala all along."

Eish, Cindy is getting me worried now. I'm a prayer warrior nna and besides, Pontsho has never been to my house.

Me: "So how did they find out and did they ever fixed that?"

Cindy: "Ah, sadly Mdala (old man) died of a heart attack while the nanny was on top of him. While the wife was cleaning just before the funeral, she found the muthi stashed right behind the headboard in their bedroom. I'm saying girls can go through a lot just to get your man."

Eve could see I was getting worried.

Eve: "Don't worry, Chichi. Nathi isn't bewitched, mara be careful of that girl."

Eish, I was even more stressed than I was five minutes ago. I've never dealt with such a situation before. I have no idea what to do.

## Chapter 91

Six days later

Chichi

It's the wedding day today and I'm pretty excited. I can't be as excited as Lerato though, but hey, who doesn't love weddings. I haven't seen or heard from Pontsho in

a while and that goodness for that. Nathi has been having his weird moments every now and then ever since Sunday.

At times I find him staring at me in the middle of the night and he hasn't been sleeping well. He's back to his insecure self, sending me a text every hour and asking me to never leave him.

Even the sex is a bit different, on some days he'd be a bit rough and other days he'd be so slow, he always tells me he loves me after sex as usual and asks me not to leave him no matter what. I've even asked for Eve's advice, but she said he's acting like a guilty man.

She even said I should just point his gun at him and he'd confess everything, but hai. I don't want to do that. I don't know what's happening, but I gave up trying to get him to talk.

Anyway, Eve, Cindy, Pulane and I are all Lerato's bridesmaids while Nathi, Thomas, Biggie and Menzi are all Zoro's groomsmen. We've become a new family yet again and I do hope that this time Zoro and Thomas don't back down.

We're in our bride's room, getting ready and doing some final touches while sipping on some champagne. I can't wait to get married to My Nathi. Weddings are like funerals, they have a way of bringing people together.

Lerato looks really amazing in her wedding dress. Made of silk, and has a high slit in the front, and exposing her gorgeous cleavage. Her wedding dress is silky beige, while our bridesmaid dresses are black, although our designs are the same. I must say, Lerato really has taste. Zoro is seriously lucky to land a fox like her.

While we were helping her get ready and getting our bouquet's in check, Pulane decided to check in with Menzi to see if everything is in order. She put Menzi on loud speaker, which was a very big mistake.

Pulane:"Hey, Babe. Le (Are you) ready?"

Menzi:"Eish, bjang (how), baby when Zoro has gone AWOL? No one can find him, and the ceremony is about to start in five minutes."

The look on Pulane's face couldn't be compared with Lerato's horrid look on her face. In that instant, I could tell Pulane regretted putting Menzi on loud speaker.

Lerato:"What?! Is Zoro having second thoughts?!"

Menzi:"Eish, baby you have me on speaker? Tell Lerato not to worry, we're on our way to look for Zoro."

Menzi hung up and just like that, Lerato's make up was ruined as she wailed like a widow who's just been informed of her husband's passing. Yoh, Zoro is too unpredictable for my liking. He can't have this beautiful woman dress up in a R100 000 wedding dress for him to dump her on the day. They'd better find him or else I'll kill him myself.

Zoro

It's my wedding day today and as much as I love Lerato, my love for her can't be compared to the love I have for Chichi. I've tried, many times to get over her, but I

can't. Sometimes I lie awake at night next to Lerato staring at Chichi's pictures. I know, I'm a dick, but I can't help it.

The truth is I've always loved Chichi, even when I was with Ntombi. Her beautiful, caramel skin, her gorgeous smile and infectious laugh drove me over the edge the first time I met her. I still even remember what she wore that day. I don't know perhaps I've gone mad, but I'm in love with Chichi. Nathi will have to forgive me, but I'm going to have to set my heart free.

He's always gotten all the beautiful girls and has always had girls be loyal to him, until Ntombi. I don't know what's so special about him? Why can't Thomas and I ever be blessed with girls who love us unconditionally the way they love Nathi? Even Biggie has his ride or die and Menzi found his.

I know I've paid so much money and even flown everyone to Cape Town for the wedding, but I can't do this. I sat at the bar we had lunch at the time we all came to Cape Town and all I can see is Chichi. Thomas says I'm obsessed with her and that it's not real love, but perhaps he's only doing it because of his loyalty to Nathi.

They say that you shouldn't ever sacrifice true love for anyone. So why should I marry someone I'm not in love with? Her father is going to kill me, but I'd rather risk it. I need Chichi by my side, I mean I know she's not totally happy with Nathi.

Thomas

Yoh, Out of all the things Zoro has done in life, this is by far the dumbest thing ever. How can he ditch his fiancée on the wedding day after spending half a million rand on the whole wedding? This boy needs to stop smoking weed. We're getting too old for this, man.

Gorilla offered to go search for Zoro with me and after driving around for almost two hours, I was about to give up.

Gorilla: "Ai, yazini (you know what). Stress can mess with a person. Does he still have his phone with him?"

Thomas: "Ja, I think so."

Gorilla: "I'll get Ndumiso to track it for us."

After a minute or so Ndumiso told gave us Zoro's location. At least we're not far from the beach bar. Why the hell would he be having a drink in the cold on his wedding day while his soon to be wife is waiting for him? Gorilla and I walked up to him and found him drinking whiskey. Ai, ja ne.

Thomas: "Ekse mfo (Hi, bro). Zikhipani (What's cooking)?"

Zoro: (deep sigh) "Waitse gore dintshang (You know what's up), man Thomas." It's no use beating around the bush and I'm pretty sure Gorilla might have better advice for Zoro. I'm all out of words.

Gorilla: (sigh) "Zoro, don't you think we all know that you're in love with Chichi?"

Zoro: (wide eyes) "How did you know? Tman, o mmoditse (did you tell him)?"

Thomas: "No, I didn't have to. It's pretty obvious."

Gorilla: "Bona (Look), Zoro. You think you love Chichi, when in actual fact you're not. You're infatuated by her, by everything Nathi has. It's just something in your nature that you have to fix. How long will you run after all the women in Nathi's life? How long will you run away from love, real love? What you're feeling for Chichi isn't real.

I'll tell you what real love is, it's when you love the other person more than they love you, it's when a person cares for you so deeply, that you keep asking yourself if you're the right person for the job. Love is kind, patient, it makes you honest and makes a person stay with you and bear with you even when they know they shouldn't be at times.

It's honestly time to put on your big boy pants, Zoro and be a man. Now, tell me, do you want to give up a chance at that with Lerato for chasing after Chichi, who belongs to someone else?"

I looked at Zoro and seems like he was thinking long and hard. Now I see why everyone loves Gorilla. He's very wise. I myself go to him for relationship advice at times and thanks to him I was able to commit to my love, Cindy.

Zoro: (deep sigh) "You're right, Gorilla. You're absolutely right."

Gorilla: "I know. You acted selfishly just to chase infatuation. You can fix this whole thing, though. It's never too late."

Zoro: "Kanjani (How), Baba? I'm sure Lerato wants nothing to do with me right now."

Gorilla: "Unfortunately that's what being a man entails. You'll have to bear the pain she causes you if she chooses to. Be a man and face her. No more running."

Zoro nodded and got up. He was a bit drunk, but hey at least we're going to have a wedding even if it's happening hours later than the stated time. I don't know if Zoro actually heard Gorilla, like really heard him, but I do hope we won't have this conversation with him ever again. Ke utlwile nna man (I've had it).

Chapter 92

Chichi

Lerato is a serious mess. Yoh, mara Zoro is a real dumb fuck. She's been crying non stop and we've been trying to console her. Her make up is already ruined and the guests are waiting. Her father came in here shouting saying he told her not to accept Zoro's lobola and that he never liked him to begin with. Really? It's always nice when they themselves accept lobola, but when shit hits the fan they come up with all sorts of "I told you so" theories. Black people.

Eve: "Lerato weh, stop crying. Look now your face is swollen. Zoro is coming back, you'll see."

Lerato: (crying) "I should've known this would happen. I should have known the moment I found him staring at your pictures, Chichi."

Eh, everyone looked at me while Lerato was still crying. For some reason Eve wasn't surprised, which tells me she knew about this. How come I'm only finding out now?

Me: (frowning) "What are you talking about, Lerato?"

Lerato: "The other day, I found him staring at your picture in the middle of the night. He thought I was sleeping, but I wasn't. When I asked him about it the following morning, he said he was just scrolling through old pics. I didn't buy it so I went through his phone and I found lots of pictures of you.

Pictures he had saved on his phone. I got angry and confronted him about it. That's when he confessed that he loves you and he just can't help it. Can you believe it? Yet I was dumb enough to agree to marry him. Bona nou ke kae (Look where I am now)." Yoh, this is a lot to take it. Actually, it's a shit load to swallow. I honestly don't know what to say.

Me: "Lerato, come on. Zoro loves you, otherwise he wouldn't have asked you to marry him."

Lerato: "Maybe it's high time I stop fooling myself. He told me straight up that he loves you."

Pulane was too dumbstruck for words. I myself was speechless and luckily Eve always has something to say. Cindy was in pure shock. She's about to get even more shocked once Thomas exposes her to our real life.

Eve: "Lerato, pull yourself together. If Zoro really loved Chichi, he would have left you a long time ago. He's probably going through some rough things."

Cindy: "I agree with Eve, Lee. You can't really drop everything you've worked so hard for."

Eve: "Listen to me, and you'd better listen really well. We're wives of Lions, honey. Lionesses always protect their families. You're not going to cry on your wedding day over your stupid husband not knowing what he's doing. Pull yourself together. When he comes in here you'd better make your demands. It's what we do. From there you're going to put up a big ass smile and marry the man you love."

Cindy, Pulane and I were staring at Lerato in silence as Eve was telling her that. Seems like she was processing it and after a while, Lerato nodded and wiped off her tears.

Eve: "Good. I'm glad we understand each other. I'll get Max to come and redo your make up."

As Eve was about to walk out, Thomas, Gorilla and Zoro the moron walked in. He looked a bit drunk and it was pretty obvious since I could smell alcohol on him. Lerato tried to pull herself together, but once she saw him the tears began flowing again.

Zoro: "May I speak to my wife, please?"

He didn't have to ask us twice. Cindy, Eve, Pulane and I left as Gorilla and Thomas followed us. We had to go wait in the Gents' bedroom where they were getting ready. As we walked in we were pretty quiet and so were the guys. I found Biggie, Nathi and Menzi standing at the balcony, having a drink. I could really use one right now.

Gorilla: "I'll leave you all to it and let the guests know that the groom has arrived."



We nodded and he left. Thomas went to join them outside and we used this moment as the perfect time to gossip.

Pulane: "Eve, why didn't you warn us?"

Eve: "Ah

I didn't think Zoro would pull a stunt like this. Zoro came to my house drunk as fuck the other night, confessing his undying love for you, Chichi. So I had to slap him back to his senses and give him the facts. The following morning, he seemed to be back to normal, I really had no idea things would turn out like this."

Ja neh, the secrets are a bit too much now. I just hope that Zoro has come to his senses. I'm too exhausted nje. He needs to grow up.

Zoro

The moment I walked into the bedroom and saw Lerato in tears with her face swollen like that, was the moment I knew that I actually fucked up. I never meant to hurt her like that. Gorilla is right, its time I do right by my wife. She doesn't deserve to be hurt like this. As soon as everyone left us alone, I could see she was on the verge of breaking point. It broke my heart into a million pieces. I was really selfish and I wasn't treating her right. She looks so beautiful in that wedding dress and now I ruined her perfect moment. I walked up to her and held her hands.

Zoro: "My skat (My love)."

She couldn't keep it anymore as she broke down. I held her in my chest and shed a tear. I have to bury my feelings for Chichi. She belongs to Nathi and Lerato belongs to me. I love her, I really do. I'll learn to love her the way I love Chichi. That's the least I can do.

Zoro: "My skat (love), I'm really sorry. Ne ke sare kao hurta (I didn't mean to hurt you). Kopa o ntshwarele (Please Forgive me) please."

She cried for a few minutes and calmed down as I gently stroked her back.

Zoro: "My skat (love), please say something."

She looked at me with her red eyes.

Lerato: "Kabelo, it's okay if you want to call off the wedding. I don't want to be responsible for your unhappiness. It will be hard for me to live with it, but I'll heal eventually."

My heart broke as she said that. Could she really be so selfless to sacrifice her own happiness for my own selfishness?

Zoro: "Lerato, I love you. I'm sorry for hurting you. I'm willing to spend the rest of my life proving it to you."

She kept quiet for a while and composed herself.

Lerato: "Okay."

Zoro: "Dankie, my skat (Thank you my love). I promise you I'll never hurt you like this ever again."

I kissed her gently and wiped her tears off her face.

Chichi

As we were waiting on Zoro to come back with feedback, he eventually came back after 15 whole minutes. I doubt my relationship with Lerato will ever be the same again. She'll probably resent me deep down and always see me as a threat. I don't even know how to act around her anymore. As we were about to go back to Lerato's room, Nathi gently grabbed my arm.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, can we talk?"

Me: "Not now, baby, we have to get ready. Can we do it after the ceremony?"

Nathi: (looking down) "Okay."

I pecked his lips and ran to Lerato's room. She looked a whole lot better than she did a few minutes ago. She was even smiling again. This must have been the most agonizing three hours of her life. I tried my best to smile, but deep down I just wasn't okay with this whole thing. Knowing that the groom went AWOL because of me.

We got ready and proceeded to walk down the aisle. The décor is so beautiful, with yellow and white roses everywhere. The chapel is exquisite. It just makes me dream of my own wedding with My Nathi one day. Lady Zamar's Dangerous Love was serenading us as we walked down the aisle, pretty ironic if you ask me.

I looked at Nathi and his eyes were fixed on me. It felt like it was just the two of us in the whole room at that particular moment. He mouthed "I love you" to me and I smiled back at him. I was the last one to walk down before Lerato appeared.

Toni Braxton's I love me some him was playing as our bride walked down the aisle. I don't even know why, but they're weird like that. I just hope that after today, we can forget about Zoro's thing for me.

Lerato appeared in her beautiful wedding gown and fur coat since it's winter. She's also wearing a veil as her mother insisted because she doesn't have any children. Her father looked grumpy as hell, but hey, the heart wants what it wants.

Lerato

My heart was broken into a million pieces a few hours ago. When the message came that Zoro had gone AWOL I immediately knew that it was because of Chichi. I don't hate her, I just envy her. Nathi worships the ground she walks on and the man who claims to love me can't do the same for me. It hurts, deep down it hurts.

When he came back and declared his love for me it gave me a glimpse of hope that perhaps one day he'll treat me the way Nathi treats Chichi. All the men in this crew treat their women like gold. Zoro loves me, yes, but he hardly makes the effort that the others make with their other halves.

I'll keep praying that he'll get over her and be mine completely.

Chapter 93

Chichi

The ceremony was really beautiful. One would swear we didn't have drama a few hours ago. I kept stealing glances at Nathi who was looking at me the whole time. I just realized how much I actually love him and I can't wait to be fully his one day. I doubt anything could make me leave this man.

After the Priest said the famous line “I now pronounce you husband and wife, you may kiss the bride”, Zoro gave Lerato the most passionate kiss I’ve ever seen. Come to think of it I’ve never seen them kiss like this – ever. Truth be told it was a beautiful wedding, just like Pulane and Menzi’s. Lerato is officially Mrs. Lerato Moloi.

We proceeded to the reception venue and fun was definitely had from the beginning. Lerato and Zoro were dancing so much, I never knew he could dance so well. We were doing our step, kasi style and man, Nathi can dance. I’ve learnt a few moves from him in the past year and I must say I’ve gotten better at it.

The speeches were great, really except for Lerato’s father being adamant that Zoro was never the right man for Lerato. That still didn’t stop us from having all the fun in the world. The food was awesome, the drinks were flowing and not changing outfits made it even better. We got them really nice gifts, but nothing tops the groom’s gift to the bride, a brand new Renault Captur. I must say they’re doing really well for small times kasi gangsters.

As we were dancing and drinking, Lerato’s father was properly drunk after a few bottles and was singing a different tune about Zoro now. Ai, my fellow black people. Nathi was also enjoying himself as he hugged me from behind.

Nathi: (whispering in my ear) “Ma Dhlamini.”

Eish, the way he calls me that makes me so wet.

Me:”Mmm.”

Nathi:”Let’s go outside to talk.”

Me:”Yoh, Nkosinathi, gwa tonya (it’s cold).”

Nathi:”Come, we’ll go to one of the rooms.”

Me:”Hehe, are you not planning on undressing me before the night ends?”

Nathi: (chuckling) “No, unless you want me to.”

He bit his lip making me so tempted, but I was having fun. Sex can wait. We went up to our suite since we booked rooms until Monday morning. Nathi closed the door and kissed me passionately. Yoh mara Nathi, the way we’re having so much fun downstairs it’s only 6pm. I’m not ready to bang all night aowa. He kissed my neck and I felt wet instantly.

Me:”Nathi...”

Nathi: (smiling) “I love you, Ma Dhlamini.”

Me:”I love you too, Baby.”

Nathi:”Promise me you won’t leave me, Chichi. I love you so much it scares me at times.”

Me:”I promise, Nkosinathi. I have no reason to leave you.”

He looked at me and I could see the fear I saw a week ago in his eyes again. The same scared, trembling Nathi. I’m very worried now.

Me:”Nathi, what is it? Wa ntshosa (You’re scaring me).”

Nathi:”There’s something I have to tell you.”

Those dreadful seven words are the words no one wants to hear.

Me: "I'm listening."

He held my hands and stared me in the eye.

Nathi: "Two years ago, before I met you

Gupta hosted a party. That was before we banned him from coming to our territory. I know Pontsho from back then, because she's always been his number one prostitute until he upgraded her to girlfriend status. She's his right hand girl, and often goes around searching for his next victims. She basically lures girls to be sex slaves for a very good fee."

I thought I've heard it all. Pontsho? A prostitute and a human trafficker? She's only 18.

Nathi: "I was a bachelor back then, so he hosted a party for us guys as his farewell from the crew. Zoro left early and I was left with Menzi, Biggie and Thomas. He brought a few of his prostitutes, on the house. One of them was Pontsho, known as Black Diamond. We ended up having sex with them. Basically we had an orgy with Pontsho and four other girls. It wasn't my proudest moment and I had no idea she was your friend."

My heart was beating so fast I felt like it was going to explode from my chest. I felt hot and sweaty, which caused me to be dizzy. I fell on the bed in a seated position buried deep in thought. I could sense Nathi's fear.

The silence in the room was so gripping, it felt like someone died. Yes, it happened way before I got into the picture, but how do I get the thought of Nathi pleasing Pontsho with other girls out of my mind? Knowing that she tasted him before me even, is heart wrenching. Even if he had told me this before, what difference would it have made?

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, say something, please."

I don't know what to say to be honest. But I figured being silent would mean I was judging him in his mind.

Me: "Nkosinathi, I... I honestly don't know what to say."

He bent down before me in a very depressive state.

Nathi: "Say anything, Sthandwa sami (My love)."

Me: "I don't judge you. These things happen. It's just that, now it will be impossible for me to get that image out of my mind. What happened happened, Nkosinathi. We can try and move on from that."

He breathed a sigh of relief and kissed my hands.

Nathi: "Ngiyabonga (Thank you), Ma Dhlamini. I was scared shitless thinking you'd leave me."

Me: "Just promise me one thing."

Nathi: "Anything."

Me: "Promise me she'll never get to have you again – ever."

Nathi: "I belong to you, baby wa ka (my baby). Now and forever."

He kissed my forehead and hugged me. He offered for us to go back downstairs, but I was not in the mood anymore. We took a shower instead and cuddled in bed. Truth is, I can't stop thinking about him being on top of Pontsho.

What if I'm too boring for him and she'll end up taking him from me? She's obviously got way more sexual experience than I do, so she's bound to try and hook him again. What if I don't satisfy him sexually and he's just bearing with me?

Proverbs 3 v 5-8 says: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

I've been confident with Nathi throughout this whole year but now I'm not so certain of myself anymore. The devil has invaded my relationship and planted doubt in my mind. And now, I don't know what to do anymore.

Chapter 94

One week later

It's been a week since the wedding, and today is also the last day of the holidays. Since we didn't go to church last Sunday as we were in Cape Town, we have to go today. Nathi has been so great this past week, it's really as if a huge weight has been lifted off his shoulder.

I managed to go visit Tshiamo while I was there and she is doing better than good. She's even put on some weight. Lebo also gave birth the day after the wedding and we all got to see her boys, including Julia. Seems like Tshiamo and I are stagnant in forgiving her.

Perhaps it's time to hash it all out. She's really trying and I mean, we are all children of God at the end of the day. She named those cute boys Oagile and Oatile which means the family has grown. Her husband is Sotho so I guess it makes sense.

Zoro and Lerato came back from their honeymoon in Cape Town yesterday and they seem pretty happy from what I've gathered. I'm happy for them truly and I just hope Zoro doesn't mess with her. Thomas on the other hand proposed to Cindy right after we got back from Cape Town.

Apparently Gorilla gave him some perspective on life and seeing Zoro get married, he didn't want to wait any longer. He's only been dating Cindy for three months and he says she's the one. I'm all for love, as they say if a man knows, he won't wait.

I've tried letting go of what Nathi has told me even though my own mind has formulated all sorts of scenarios and now I'm officially insecure. Me, Tshagofatso Mashabela insecure, can you believe it? My confidence has been stripped from me by my doubts and constant thoughts. I don't like stressing Nathi out, even though he can see that something is on my mind.

We got ready and wore our best attire as always. It's still winter, but it doesn't mean we can't be dressed properly. Fur coats are a thing for us ladies now and the men well they always dress to impress. We've become a real hit now and the media admires us

and thankfully we're in the spotlight for all the right reasons now. I was deep in thought while waiting for Nathi to finish up in the bathroom.

Nathi:"Ma Dhlamini, what's on your mind?"

Me: (fake smile) "Nothing. I'm just thinking about how good God has been to me." He looked at me and raised his eyebrow. I'm still bad at lying, especially when it comes to him.

Nathi:"Ma Dhlamini, I know something has been eating at you. I know you well, don't forget that. You've been tossing and turning at night and you tend to wander deep in thought out of nowhere. Now please tell me what's bugging you."

Me: (sigh) "It's just, I keep thinking that Pontsho will take you away from me. It's stupid, I know. I'm so insecure lately, I even feel like maybe our sex life is a bit boring for you. I don't have a lot of experience, Nkosinathi and I know deep down you like it the way she gave it to you."

Nathi frowned in disappointment as he held my hands.

Nathi:"Chichi, do you honestly think that low of me? Why would I propose to you and give my life to you if I didn't love everything about you? Relationships aren't just about sex, and yes I like getting freaky every now and then, but I love you because you have morals and self respect. What I did with Pontsho was just pure lust, I would never do that with you. I love and respect you too much."

I felt the tears building up. I've been bottling this up for so long that the waterworks just streamed down my face. Nathi held my chin up with his one hand, while gently wiping the tears off with his other hand.

Nathi:"Chichi, once you get it through your head that what you and I have is pure love, you'll understand that I don't need wild sex like that. Sure, I'd love to experiment with you, but when you're ready. What you and I do isn't fucking – it's called making love and I'd do it forever if I have to. Don't doubt yourself like that, it's not what Lions do."

He kissed my forehead and hugged me as I got hypnotized once more by his amazing scent.

Nathi:"I'm not going anywhere. I'm yours, Chichi."

For some strange reason it felt like that was a goodbye statement, like the last time Nathi and I would ever be wrapped in each other's arms intimately like that. Maybe I'm officially going crazy, but it truly felt like that.

We went to church as usual and the service was really great. It was nice seeing Mandisa after so long, I honestly can't wait to go back to school. After church, Nathi and I made our way to our usual spot. Today we didn't cook, we're handing out food parcels instead. As all ten of us were doing that, Pontsho appeared with Pabi. Yoh, trouble always follows me. Seems like they even attended the church service today.

Ponthso:"Hi, Tshegofatso. Can I please talk to you?"

Me:"I'm busy."

To be honest, I don't really know why I'm so hostile towards her. I feel a bit jealous. I side-eyed Nathi and he didn't seem bothered by her. He just continued handing out parcels.

Pabi: "Wa bona (You see)?! Ke go boditse (I told you)! Tshelete e changer batho (Money changes people). Even us at home she doesn't bother taking care of us."

Yoh

these two now remind me of Azania nje. I was about to flip, but Nathi came in.

Nathi: "Askies lena mafele ke lena (Excuse us you cockroaches). I don't recall us saying we're serving bitches today. As you can see, we're busy doing the Lord's work, now either you take a parcel or voetsek!"

Nathi was so stern, Pabi knows when to leave. I'm just not sure about Pontsho.

Pontsho: "Fine. You've made your choice, Tshegofatso."

Just like that, they each took a parcel without feeling guilty about it and left. I don't know what Pontsho meant by that little threat. Perhaps it's time for me to off her once and her for all.

Today Nathi and I aren't having lunch at Eve's, instead we're just spending our day together at home. He cooked lunch for us and we had a drink or two and we watched some soapies. It's quite chilly outside since it started raining an hour or so ago, so being indoors is what we really need. Around 16:00, Nathi needed a drink refill, but I'm good since I'm going to school tomorrow.

He went out to the mall to get himself a few more drinks and to get me some snacks. He kissed me goodbye, grabbed his keys and left. Barely ten minutes since Nathi's departure, I heard a frantic knock on the door.

This is weird since no one called for a visit. I opened the door and I saw a frantic Pontsho crying hysterically with a messed up face. She really looked like someone beat her up. She just threw herself into my arms and I hugged her. I don't know but I truly feel sorry for her. We were friends at some point.

Me: "Pontsho, what's wrong?"

Pontsho: "I.... He... I..."

She could barely get a word out. Her eyes were bloodshot and she was limping a bit. I let her sit down and got her a glass of water to calm her down.

Me: "What happened to you and how did you get here?"

Pontsho: (shaking) "I'm so sorry to bother you like this. I was in some guy's car. We met a week or so ago and he told me he's taking me to his place and that he lives around here. So, when I saw him take another route I knew he was lying and was probably trying to kidnap me. I tried getting him to stop the car, but he increased his speed, so I got out while the car was moving. I fell out and injured myself. I'm really sorry, Tshego. I know I haven't been the most polite person to you ever since I've arrived, but I had nowhere else to go."

I don't know if her story was genuine or not and Nathi will most definitely not like her being here.

Me: "It's okay. Sit and we'll figure something out. I'll get Nathi to get on it and find this guy."

For someone who seems like she's in a state of shock, she was pretty alert and looking around the house. As soon as I said that she jumped a little bit.

Pontsho: "I don't want to be a bother. I know Nkosinathi probably hates me. Can I please use your bathroom, then I'll be on my way."

Hao, she doesn't even have a bag or anything on her so how will she get home? She seemed pretty persistent on using my bathroom so I let her. Maybe she wants to freshen up before she goes back home. I searched through my purse and took out a R100 note to give her. It's the least I could do. After five minutes of waiting for her I didn't hear the toilet flush or anything, so I decided to go look for her. As I got up, Nathi walked in. Eish, I'm in serious shit.

Nathi: "Yoh, sorry for taking so long, baby. There was a bit of a queue."

I gave him a faint smile and Pontsho walked out of our bedroom. I don't know but something must be definitely wrong now. The bathroom is right next to the bedroom so it can't be hard to miss. Why the fuck would she go to my bedroom? I looked at Nathi who was beyond livid.

Nathi: "Chichi, what the fuck is this whore doing here?!"

I tried to explain, but he wasn't having it.

Pontsho: "I.. I'm sorry, I just..."

Nathi grabbed her neck and pinned her against the wall.

Nathi: "You think I'm dumb wena sfebe (you bitch)! Get the fuck out of my house before you leave in a body bag!"

He threw her onto the floor as she ran out. He then looked at me with bewildered eyes. Yoh, perhaps I shouldn't have let her in.

Nathi: "Yazini (You know what), Chichi. You never learn. You just let that whore into our house over a few bruises? How do you even know she's telling the truth?"

He's right. I don't know whether she's being truthful or not. Bottom line is I fucked up, badly.

Me: "Nkosinathi, I'm sorry."

He wasn't even having it.

Nathi: "I need a shower."

And just like that our day was ruined by an unlikely source. I tried watching some tv and waited for him, but he didn't even seem interested. I found him lying in bed playing with his phone, so I decided to go take a shower as well. I thought maybe getting into the blankets naked would soften his heart, but I was wrong. He switched off his side lamp and turned to the other side. My heart was broken because Nathi never rejects me – ever. I tried talking to him and touching him, but he wasn't interested.

Me: "Nkosinathi..."

He even cut me off.



Nathi: "Lala (Sleep), Chichi."

I dozed off to sleep with a broken heart. I tried sleeping again after waking up to pray at midnight, but from there, I struggled to sleep. I tossed and turned while Nathi was sound asleep. It was as if my spirit was troubled. I had bad dreams, of evil spirits I couldn't understand. I tossed and turned until my alarm went off for school. And just like that my nightmare began.

Chapter 95

Chichi

My alarm went off as I got up to get ready for school. Nathi was still fast asleep. He usually gets up first before me, makes me breakfast, packs me lunch and drives me to school. Today I'm surprised. Perhaps he's still mad at me which is very odd because we never go to bed mad at each other – ever.

Me: "Nathi, tsoga (wake up)."

Nathi: (annoyed) "Ai, man, Chichi. Why o ntsosa kgante (Why are you waking me)?"

Yoh, the tone in his voice made me regret doing that. Nathi is never like this.

Me: "Hao, Nkosinathi. It's Monday."

Nathi: "So?"

Eh, banna (wow).

Me: "So, aren't you taking me to school?"

Nathi: "Hai, I bought you a car mos? O ka ikisa (You can drive yourself)."

I felt so heartbroken. I expected my Nathi to say he's joking or something, but he was dead serious. He didn't apologize or have any regrets afterwards. I got up and texted Glen to come fetch me.

Fortunately, he didn't mind. I took a shower and got dressed with Nathi still in bed. I feel so hurt. I don't even know what to do. You know that pain of feeling like your gut has been stabbed with a very sharp knife? That's just how I feel.

I made myself lunch and prepared to wait for Glen outside the gate. I can't stand being in the house when Nathi's so cold towards me all of a sudden. I've never experienced his coldness so I really have no idea how to act. Glen came to fetch me at least.

Glen: "Sho sho, Chichilicious."

Me: "Hi."

Glen: "Eh banna, and then? Kuhambani (What's up)?"

I tried not to cry but my tears failed me. I let the flow and Glen got really surprised.

Glen: "Eh, Chichilicious. Dintshang (What's wrong)? Ugrand (Are you okay)?"

Me: "Yes, it's nothing."

Glen: "Aowa man, you're crying on the first day of school and you're saying its nothing? Tell me."

Me: "It's really nothing. Let's go, I'll tell you later."

Glen looked really worried, but he let me be. We got to school and the excitement I felt yesterday went down the drain this morning. I couldn't even concentrate in class. Break time came and I couldn't even stomach my lunch. Is this what heartbreak feels like?

Mandi: "Hao, Moghel (girl), what's wrong? Sale o le suur since vroeg (You've been sour all morning)."

Glen and the crew were awaiting my response.

Bree: "Yea

it's really unlike you, Chichi."

Mandi: "Ba go hladile (Were you dumped)?"

Yoh I don't know why but as soon as he said that the waterworks began.

Glen: "Ah, man, Mandisa. Bona nou wa mo llisa (You're making her cry)."

Mandisa: "Tjo ne ke dlala fela (I was joking)."

Bree: "Chomi keng (Friend, what's wrong)?"

Me: (deep sigh) "So yesterday Pontsho came out of nowhere."

I explained the whole situation up until when Nathi got angry and went to bed without talking to me.

Glen: "That's so unlike Nathi."

Mandi: "Aowa, le wena o nale pelo e sweu too much (You're too kind). Ga le tshabe boloyi (You're not afraid of witchcraft)."

Bree: "Ai, maybe he's just angry, but question is what was she doing in your bedroom?"

My question exactly. I don't even know what to think at this point. I'm so saddened that he hasn't even called or texted me as usual. Perhaps Pontsho did do something. I'll have to ask Eve for some advice.

After school came and I was still drowning in the pit of my own misery. Glen drove me home trying to make conversation, but I just wasn't hearing anything he said. He parked at my gate before I got out.

Glen: "Chichilicious, if you come to school sour like that tomorrow I'll have to sort my big brother out. You're too pretty to be sad like that man."

I managed to laugh a bit.

Me: "Thanks, Glen. I really appreciate it."

Glen: "Sho sho, same time tomorrow?"

Why not? It's not like I can predict what Nathi's mood will be like tomorrow.

Me: "Sure. Same time."

I smiled and waved goodbye as he left. I took a deep breath before walking into the house. I found Nathi gone. He didn't leave a note or anything, so I decided to swallow my pride and call him. It rang for a long while which is unusual. He answered just when I was about to hang up.

Nathi: "Chichi."

Okay, I'm back to first name basis.

Me: "Nkosinathi, I just wanted to find out what time you'll be back so I can cook."

Nathi: "I don't know what time I'll be back. You can do what you want."

Hao and just like that he hung up on me. I felt some pain in my gut, and in my chest. I guess that's how you feel when you're really sad. I wiped off my tears. It's no use crying and I knelt down in the bedroom and prayed.

Me: "Dear God, thank you for bringing me back home safely today. Thank you for all my friends and family. I don't know what is going on with my Nathi, but please be with us, Lord. Protect him and guide him wherever he is, Lord and please help him make his way back to me. Isaiah 59 v 19 says: "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." I know this is just a test Lord, please make things okay again. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Chapter 96

Chichi

I was still sad I even decided to listen to gospel to lift my mood. I decided to make some Chicken a la King, since Eve taught me how to make it a few weeks ago. I had the ingredients and everything and by the time I was done, I set our small table in the lounge, put some of his beer in the fridge and waited for him to come back.

I've already finished my homework, so I watched some tv and waited for him. I checked the time and it was 6pm. He walked through the door and I couldn't read his emotion. I just sat there waiting for him to greet me.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini."

My stomach was in knots but as soon as he called me that, I knew that my Nathi was back. He knelt down before me and kissed my hands. I felt goosebumps as I looked at him.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, ngiyaxolisa mfazi wami (I'm sorry, my wife). I don't know what came over me. It's almost as if something dark just overcame my spirit and made me be that way towards you. I was with Eve today and she told me what to do. I'm really sorry, baby wami (my baby). Please forgive me."

I smiled with tears streaming down my face. I really need to stop crying.

Me: "It's okay, Nkosinathi."

He pecked my lips.

Nathi: "Kunyuka kamnandi (It smells so nice). Uphekeni (What did you cook)?"

Me: "I made you Chicken a la King."

I said that proudly as he smiled with a huge surprised look on his face.

Nathi: "Heh, ufudniswe ubani (Who taught you)?"

Me: "Hao, Nathi. A lady can never reveal her secrets."

Nathi: "Hehe, okay. Let me dish up for us."

Me: "No, you sit. I'll do the dishing this time."

He smiled as he nodded. I brought him a plate do wash his hands and a cloth as I knelt before him. He was so impressed and smiled. I just wanted to be a little different and treat him like a king. I dished up and served him with a breakfast tray and his favourite beer. We prayed and ate.

Nathi: "Hehe, Ma Dhlamini, are you trying to make me marry you before you finish school? Kucala nini uguqa wena (Since when do you kneel before me)."

Me: (smiling) "Since I've been learning some Zulu."

Nathi: "I'm impressed."

He kissed my hand. After eating we watching some more tv and he started kissing my neck. Yoh, I can't remember the last time we had some good old sex even if it wasn't that long ago. We hardly sleep without doing the deed unless I'm on my period.

Me: "Nathi."

He kissed me so passionately and I responded. My body responded to his gentle, sensual touch. The heater was on so it was quite warm. We needn't go to the bedroom. He fondled my breasts and it reminded me of my very first orgasm right in this couch over a year ago. I took off his shirt and unbuckled his pants.

I started rubbing his penis with my hands and he moaned in pleasure.

Nathi: (moaning) "Ma Dhlamini."

He removed my jean and dipped his finger in my jeans and started rubbing my clit. That always drives me crazy.

Me: (moaning) "Nathi... I need you now."

Nathi: "What's the magic word?"

Me: "Please..."

Nathi: "Please who?"

Me: "Please, Mntungwa."

Yoh, he likes it when I call him that. He removed my undies in the blink of an eye and removed his briefs. He slid into me as I moaned, as he kept stroking, his dick decided to sleep. Hao, this has never happened before. I could see him getting embarrassed.

Nathi: "Baby, this has never happened before, you know that."

Me: "It's okay, baby. Let me try blowing you, maybe it will work."

He just nodded in embarrassment. I got down on my knees and put his dick inside of my mouth. I could hear him moan but even after a few minutes it wasn't getting up.

How because it was rock hard few minutes ago? Nathi was beyond embarrassed and he picked me up and lay me on the couch. He put his mouth on my pussy and sucked it gently and then increased his pace until I came. I missed that

but I knew he felt bad about it.

Nathi: "That's the least I could do since I couldn't satisfy you completely."

Eish, men and their ego. The disappointment in his face.

Me: "It's okay. It happens. You're probably stressed babe."

He just gave me a faint smile and pecked my lips.

Nathi: "Come, let's go to bed."

I nodded as we switched off the heater and tv and went to bed. Nathi was once again fast asleep while I had bad dreams yet again. The same bad dreams I had last night. I keep dreaming of someone I can't see with an evil laugh and fire, lots of fire. I woke up and checked the time, it's midnight and I decided to pray really hard. After my prayer I went back to bed and I managed to fall asleep after a short while.

My alarm went off yet again since it's a brand new day. Nathi was fast asleep yet again. I don't get it.

Me: "Nathi, Nkosinathi wake up."

Nathi: "Ah, man, Chichi not again toe."

Yep, back to square one.

Me: "Nkosinathi kgante keng (what is it)? Yesterday you acted funny and then last night you were okay. Now you're acting like that again. What's happening?"

Nathi: "Yoh, yoh! Chichi man! It's too early in the morning. Ska nstessa please (Don't stress me)! Just take a shower and go to school and leave me in peace!"

Something must be really off nje. I don't get this hot and cold behaviour. This is too stressful and I don't need this right now. Evil has found its way into my home and I need to get rid of it. I got up and took a shower trying not to cry. I can't cry. Not today, not today. As I got dressed I received a text from my mother. It's odd, we haven't spoken in a very long time.

"Tshegofatso ngwanaka (my child), I know you're still mad at me, but please be careful. Evil has found its way into your relationship with Nkosinathi. You have to pray, my child. Pray more than you ever hard before you lose him."

My heart started beating faster than usual. I felt so hot and overwhelmed. My mother has dreams at times and mostly they come true. What does she mean by this? I decided to give her a call.

Julia: "Tshegofatso."

Me: "Hello, Mama."

Julia: "O kae (How are you)?"

Me: (sigh) "Ke right, how are you?"

Julia: "Ga ke right (I'm not okay). Disturbing very disturbing dream. I was afraid to tell you. I didn't want you to think that I'm seeking attention or something."

Me: "No, it's okay, Mama. Please tell me about the dream."

Julia: "I dreamt of someone close to you coming between you and Nkosinathi. He's going to fall for this girl, but it won't be natural. So he's going to change completely and treat you very badly, ngwanaka (my child). In the process she'll invite danger into both your lives."

This is too much to take in. I started panicking as I thought long and hard about what she just said.

Julia: "Please, Tshegofatso, pray, my baby. Never forget prayer. The devil comes in many forms. Remember that."

Me: "Okay, Mama, I will. Thank you."

Julia: "If you need anything, don't hesitate to call me."

Me: "I won't, Mama. Goodbye."

I hung up and got dressed. I'm even more depressed than I was yesterday.

Chapter 97

Chichi

Two weeks later

I've been so stressed and busy that I haven't really spent much time with Eve and Pulane. Nathi has gone from bad to worse, he no longer drives me to school, no longer cooks for me, he doesn't even touch me and barely even talks to me now.

He gets up in the morning without letting me know where he's going and comes back late in the evening and I don't even ask him anything otherwise he'll bite my head off. I've been so depressed that it's even visible. I've lost a bit of weight and I hardly even eat anymore. I've been praying but for the first time in my life I feel like God isn't hearing me. I cry myself to sleep like a lost girl. We've been going to church as always, but Nathi barely even holds me like he used to.

Things are really bad that it's affecting my studies. Today is Friday so I asked Glen to drop me off at the salon so that I could have some girl talk with Eve, Cindy and Lerato. Pulane will also be there at least. I walked in and Pulane saw me first. She jumped on me and gave me a huge hug.

Pulane: "Oh, honey. Are you okay?"

I haven't heard those words in a while since I've banned my squad at school from asking me about Nathi. I just felt like drowning in my tears. I burst into tears right there and then. Pulane just hugged me, as Eve, Cindy and Lerato came towards me and also hugged me.

While we sat down not even caring about what people thought about me bawling my eyes out, Nkosinathi walked in and he wasn't alone. He came in laughing in a way I haven't seen him in a long time. He had Pontsho on his arm with Pabi walking in behind them. I wanted to die right there. The humiliation was unbearable. Eve got so angry, she walked up to Nathi.

Eve: "Nkosinathi, what the fuck do you think you're doing?!"

Nathi: "Well, hello to you too, Eve."

Eve: "I asked you a question. We don't do whores in this salon."

Nathi: "I came to get my new friends here, awuboni wena (Can't you see)?"

Wow, I just felt so much pain in my gut as I saw Pontsho and Pabi smirk at me.

Eve: "Heh! Yazi uyasijwaela (You're full of shit you know), Nkosinathi. Can't you see your fiancée over there crying because of your stupid behaviour?!"

Nathi didn't even care that Eve was raising her voice at him. He was calm as fuck.

Nathi: "Oh, Chichi. I saw her this morning. Hayi naye ukhala kakhulu man (She's forever crying). Anyway, get Black Diamond and Paballo here the full set. You know, nails, hair and make up."

As Pontsho was about to go sit at one of the stations, the fuming Eve went to her desk and took out her gun. She pointed it at Pontsho, and she got frightened and hid herself behind Nathi. She probably did it on purpose to fuel my anger.

Nathi: "Yoh! Eve, waze wa ba dramatic (You're so dramatic). I don't know what Biggie sees in you."

Eve: "Heh! Ska ntlwaela masepa (Don't fuck with me), Nathi. I'll fucking shoot you and you know it. O tla hlatsa masepa bao jisiteng difebe tse (You'll vomit the shit these bitches fed you)!"

Eve was spitting fire, but Nathi wasn't bothered.

Nathi: "Hao

Eve, I also have shares in this salon in case you forgot."

Eve cocked her gun and shot at Nathi's feet, but missed. Nathi, Pontsho and Pabi jumped in fear while the rest of us tried recovering from that loud bang. Eve was getting ready to shoot again, until Nathi decided to leave.

Nathi: "Okay, okay, Eve. We'll leave. Asihambeni mantombazana (Let's go, girls)."

Nathi and those two bitches left while Pontsho winked at me before leaving. It's official, I've lost my man. He's galavanting these streets with those two bitches and I'm going to be a laughing stock.

Eve: "Let's go upstairs, girls."

We went upstairs on the balcony where we sometimes have a drink or two and watch the sunset. Eve brought a lot of champagne with us as we headed upstairs. I didn't even care if I was in my uniform or not. We got there and I wailed like a woman in mourning. It's partially the case, since I'm basically mourning the end of my relationship.

Barely six months since we got engaged and I'm losing it. I curse the day Pontsho came back into my life. I curse the day she came to my house! Eve opened the champagne and wine bottles as we drank.

Lerato: "I'm not a fan of violence, but I say kill her. Both her and Pabi. You've let Pabi get away with far too much."

Oh yes, ever since Cindy has accepted Thomas' proposal, she's been let in on how we operate. She couldn't sleep for days at first, but she's okay with it now.

Cindy: "Hayi, killing is a bit extreme."

Eve: (fuming) "So you would just let a bitch get away with that with Thomas?"

Cindy kept quiet.

Eve: "My thoughts exactly."

Pulane: "Tjowe! Let's get them kidnapped and tortured in the Chamber, once. Ke gatvol (I'm fed up)!"

Me: "I'm just going to move out, guys. I can't stand being in the same house with Nathi."

They all looked at me shocked and in disbelief like I was insane.

Pulane: "I'll get Menzi to knock some sense into him."

Eve: "You're not leaving that house, wena. You're going to turn that bedroom upside down and search for that muthi. No one will kick you out of your own home, Chichi. It is time to fight."

Cindy: "Yoh, boloi ke mathata (witch craft is a problem)."

Me: "I really don't have the energy, Eve, really."

Eve: "That's why we're here. Come on."

She dragged me as Lerato, Cindy and Pulane got up as well. I was a bit tipsy. Alcohol and sadness don't go together.

Lerato: "Re ya kae, Eve (Where are we going)?"

Eve: "The day you all realize that this life isn't for the weak, you'll wake up and be like me. Sometimes you've got to get your hands dirty. No bitch will ever force any of us to leave our homes!"

We all squeezed ourselves into Eve's BMW and drove off.

Chapter 98

Chichi

We all got into Eve's car and she drove off in high speed as usual. She's not a wreckless driver, but she is a very fast driver. I realized after about ten minutes that the route she was taking was to my house. Cindy just kept drinking wine from the bottle, while Lerato and Pulane were a bit scared like I was. Knowing Eve she might just get there and shoot Nathi.

We parked at my house and we were all afraid to get out.

Eve: "Phumani (Get out)."

Eve was livid, so we did as she said.

Eve: "Open the door, Chichi, man."

I slowly unlocked the door and we all got in. Nathi wasn't home, but what did I expect after seeing him with Pabi and Pontsho? Eve didn't waste time as she headed straight for the bedroom. We followed her.

Eve: "Do you have gloves somewhere in the house?"

I nodded.

Eve: "Yoh, nkosiyami (My goodness)! Since when are you so weak, Chichi?! Go get the gloves for us so we can start digging."

I pulled myself together. She's right. Since when am I so weak vele? I got gloves for us all and we literally turned the bedroom upside down. There was nothing underneath the bed or inbetween the mattress so we kept digging again. Lerato was busy on my side of the wardrobe, while Cindy was busy on the other side. Eve and I were busy with the bed, searching every inch.

While Eve was busy on the mattress, she found a small hole on one of the corners of the mattress. It looks like the mattress was cut into. Eve dug into it and found a very small plastic packet with some black stuff in it. The smell was horrible, even worse than blood. Where the hell did Pontsho find the time to plant that shit in my mattress?



Cindy: (shocked) “Yoh! Ke tsibile (I knew it)! Yoh ba nyana ba Limpopo ba tseba sehlare (Limpopo girls know witchcraft), no offence, ngwaneso (sis).”

None taken, really. I’m too drained for this.

Pulane:”We should burn this.”

Eve:”Good idea. I’ll get someone to get rid of this. In the mean time we need to show Ntate Phiri this shit so he can tell us what the fuck is in this.”

We sat down and had a few drinks while we waited for a few guys to come and collect the bed. Slender and a few of the guys who are our drivers came and collected the bed, while delivery guys came to deliver my brand new bed. Eve ordered it for me online. It’s nice having money, everything happens in the blink of the eye.

Eve:”Now, Chichi. You’d better listen to me right now, honey. I’ve been you before and believe me I wasn’t as strong as I am today. But believe me when I say this; you’ll get through this.”

Eve always says the right words but at this particular moment

I just don’t believe what she’s saying. I doubt anything can be fixed between Nathi and I after this.

Eve:”Remember when I told you Biggie once cheated on me?”

I nodded, while Lerato, Puleng and Cindy listened attentively.

Eve:”I was a serious mess. I mean 19, with two kids, I barely knew anything. I was ready to leave, Until I thought to myself I’m going to leave and then what? Do I let a bitch get away with the man I fought so hard to groom? He’s not a dog nor a building but damn, I worked hard hey. I was not about to let some girl take Biggie away from me. So, I made him choose.

Either the kids and I or his bitch. I taught her a lesson first because she disrespected me. I would’ve understood had Nathi cheated on his own accord, but this bitch came into your house and decided to play God with you and Nathi’s lives. Now that’s where you come in. What are you going to do about it, Chichi? Are you going to let her walk away with this or are you going to end this shit?”

I thought about her statement for a while as they stared at me awaiting a response.

Me:”Okay. Let’s end her. I’m tired of this kak (shit).”

Eve:”That’s exactly what I was hoping you’d say. Let’s go girls.”

We got into Eve’s car again and drove off. By now it’s 5pm and we drove past Hans Strijdom Drive so I knew we weren’t going to Eve’s. We drove into the far east side of Mamelodi East and after about fifteen minutes we arrived at a house with a huge yard and a back room.

Eve:”Let’s go.”

We all walked in hesitantly and were met with Ntate Phiri. So this is where he lives.

Nate Phiri:”Hao, Eve, wa tlisa skeem sa gao sohle (You came with your whole squad)? O tlisitse mathata fela (You’ve brought trouble).”

Eve:”Dumela (Hello) Ntate. Dilo di boima (Things are tough).”

Ntate Phiri:”Kea bona (I see). Wena mosetsana, o ihlokomele pele o lahlehella ke mpa eo (You, my girl, you’d better take care of yourself before you lose that child in your womb).”

He said that pointing at me. I widened my eyes in shock as Lerato, Cindy, Pulane and Eve looked at me inquisitively. What the fuck? Did I just hear him correctly? Me? Pregnant? No ways. I’m on the IUD. Come to think of I haven’t seen my period this month and I haven’t gone for my gynae appointments in months. There’s no way I’m pregnant, though. Eve says Ntate Phiri never lies, but this aowa. This changes everything.

1 Corinthians 10 v 13 says: "No temptation has seized you that isn't common for people. But God is faithful. He won't allow you to be tempted beyond your abilities. Instead, with the temptation, God will also supply a way out so that you will be able to endure it." I find that hard to believe right now. My life is spiraling out of control very quickly.

Chapter 99

Chichi

I stood there feeling so dizzy as if I'm about to faint. Ntate Phiri is making me dizzy. Me: "Askies Ntate, ga ke tshepe o bua le nna (I don't think you're talking to me)." Ntate Phiri: (chuckling) "Di pono tsa ka hanke di bua maka (My visions never lie)." I'm in serious shit. I can't be pregnant.

Ntate Phiri: "Ga re tseneng (Let's go in)."

We all followed him to his consultation room. We took off our shoes before entering as instructed. I was trembling in fear as I walked in with Pulane holding my hand. We knelt down on one of the reed mats. I've never been to a Sangoma's hut before and it smells like different types of herbs all over. I've seen and done much worse, so this can't be that bad. Ntate Phiri took his little bag filled with bones and started chanting weird noises.

Ntate Phiri: "Futswetsa (Blow)."

He said to me and I did as instructed. After blowing, he chanted those weird sounds again and threw the bones. The five of us watched him in suspense. I've seen such scenes on tv and I hope and pray that the bones don't have any bad news for me.

Ntate: "Mmm. Makhosi! Badimo ba re ditaba tsa gao di thata (The ancestors say your situation is tough. Ee, chomi ya gao e berekile molekane wa gao (Your friend bewitched your boyfriend)."

Eve: "Re kereile ntwe ko mpetong wa gae, Ntate Phiri (We found this in her mattress)."

Ntate Phiri: "Hmm. Nkabe le sao fisa (You shouldn't have burnt it), empa go lokile (but it's okay)."

Eve: "Will you be able to help us, Ntate?"

Ntate Phiri: "Ee, wa tseba a gona ntwe e hlolang Modimo le badimo (Yes, you know nothing is greater than God and the ancestors). Ke tlo hloka go bereka kamora ya gao (I'll have to cleanse your bedroom) and ke tlo busetsa sehlare sa gae go ena (I'll reverse whatever she tried on you back to her). Empa, go thata go lokisa molekane wa gao (It's going to be tough to fix your boyfriend)."

We all got puzzled.

Me: "O ra bjang, Ntate (What do you mean)?"

Ntate Phiri: "Setse a mo jisitse go fetella (She's already fed him love potion), and you know what they say about the horse and drinking water. I can't help him until he sees for himself that he's under a spell. Only then can I cleanse him.

You're going to go under a dark road with this girl and don't even think of killing her. The man who'll kill her will do that very soon. This is a test to prove how much he

loves you. He really loves you, that's why you'll need to protect those babies with everything in you."

Yoh, this man is going to make me piss myself right here and now. Babies? I'm only in Grade 11! This can't be happening! I felt my palms getting sweaty as I got thirsty. He's speaking in such riddles it's crazy.

Ntate Phiri: "He'll come around, but you'll have to keep praying for him and cleansing your bedroom. That girl is out to ruin you and she'll ruin him in the process as well. Her drug lord boyfriend will cause problems for you once he finds out they are together. You need to be strong my child."

The fact that he's saying Pontsho and Nathi are together nje. It's driving me insane. Since this Nathi and Pontsho is serious I just have to ask.

Me: "Err, Ntate Phiri, kopa go botsisa (May I ask)?"

Ntate Phiri: (Chuckling) "O ska lla ka pelo (Don't stress), your prayers are working. Mochene wa gae o palwa ke go bereka (His machine can't work right now).

Everytime they'll try to have sex, it won't work. What happened the other night between you won't happen again. He'll get erect when he's with you only, but don't sleep with him.

You'll disturb your pregnancy. Ke tlo gofa di hlare tsa go nwa (I'll give you herbs to drink) to protect you and your unborn baby. As soon as she learns you're pregnant, she'll do everything in her power to try and kill those children since she herself can't conceive. Be brave, my child and do not, under any circumstances leave your house and do not tell him you're pregnant. Not right now. We need to work on him first."

I can't deal with this shame. This is isn't how I pictured my life with Nathi a year after we first started dating. Cindy's wedding is literally next weekend. How will I finish school when I'm pregnant? This is just messed up. Ntate Phiri mixed me some herbs to drink, and left with us to my house.

As he entered, he chanted those weird sounds again and after he was done cleansing I could feel relieved in my spirit. My whole body felt lighter and I knew that muthi was the cause for my bad dreams and disturbed sleeping patterns. He gave me some impepho (incense) and candles and snuif. I have to use them when I pray at midnight and 3am.

He made me feel like there is indeed light at the end of the tunnel. I'm just saddened I can't share such big news with My Nathi. Pulane said she'll go with me to the gynae tomorrow just to confirm what Ntate Phiri said and to check if everything is okay. Now that I recall, I must have conceived back in Cape Town as it was really the last time we had sex.

James 1 v 17-18 says: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created." And my favourite scripture of all time Phillipians 4 v 13: "I can do

all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Everything will be okay, it always ends up okay.

Chapter 100

Chichi

My Lion Squad is really awesome. I have to say Chichi is a really good big sister and I’m so glad she takes that title this seriously. I took a bath and used some herbs Ntate Phiri gave me to bathe with. I then cooked some meat balls and spaghetti.

I didn’t make much since I had no idea Nathi would be home or not. I decided to eat instead of waiting on him. By 9pm he still wasn’t home, so I decided to go to bed. I got up at midnight and Nathi’s side of the bed was empty. I thought of cying, but then I didn’t want to stress myself anymore. I have to think of the babies from now on.

They matter most. To think Nathi has been dying to have kids of his own and now Pontsho has dug her claws into him. I can’t bear the thought of losing Nathi and my unborn babies.

I decided to pray the way Ntate Phiri asked me to and for the first time in two weeks I slept like a baby. I asked Glen not to fetch me today since I’m going to the doctor. I won’t be able to concentrate at school knowing that I’m pregnant and not sure of everything is okay.

So since I decided to stay absent, I set my alarm for 8am. Once it rang, Nathi was still not back. This is the first time he’s slept out ever since we’ve been together.

I took a bath and used the herbs again. After I got out of the bathroom, I heard Nathi walk in. I checked the time and it’s 8:30 am. Ja ne. He doesn’t even look remorseful about yesterday. I felt a hot sting in my chest thinking of what happened yesterday at the salon, but hey,

I won’t let him get to me. I proceeded to lotion my body, while he walked into the bedroom. He looked like he’d been drinking all night and smelled like a bloody shebeen and the smell made me a bit nauseous. I’m just over it for now, really. He sat on the bed without greeting or apologizing to me. Instead he stared at my naked self.

Nathi:”Ma Dhlamini.”

I internally rolled my eyes as he called me that. How dare he walk around with bitches and spend our money on them all night then come back all chilled like this. The nerve! I ignored him and got dressed.

Nathi:”Ma Dhlamini, ngikhuluma nawe (I’m talking to you).”

I ignored him and bent over to put on my shoes. He firmly grabbed my arm and I just flipped. I thought of all the shit he’s put me through all these weeks and now he wants to “talk”. Bottling things up never had the desired results.

Me:”Yey wena, Nkosinathi! Nyi khuluma nawe ya eng?! Khuluma nawe ya masepa! You’ve been nothing but an asshole these past two weeks and now you suddenly want to talk?! You walked into the salon totally disregarding and disrespecting me and now

you want to talk? Bona mo (Look here), ska ntle ka masepa (Don't come here with that shit)!"

I yanked my arm out of his hand as I proceeded to tie my hair.

Nathi:"Baby wa ka (My baby), I'm sorry. I don't know dintshang ka nna (what's wrong with me)

but please don't leave me."

I just ignored him and kept breathing heavily. I always hear Eve say men are full of shit sometimes and now I'm experiencing every bit of it.

Nathi:"Why aren't you at school today?"

I was ignoring him and having a whole mental conversation with him. Thinking to myself 'Oh, now you care?!'

Me:"I'm on my way to the doctor."

Nathi's eyes widened and he suddenly looked full of worry.

Nathi:"Are you sick? What's wrong?"

I decided to toy with him a little bit.

Me:"Oh, I don't know. I haven't been feeling so well, lately so I'm going for an hiv test as well as std screening, the works."

He laughed. Men. The audacity. Sebete (the liver).

Nathi:"Why would you do that when you're the only woman I sleep with?"

Mxm, this guy. Maybe Ntate Phiri was right. I should just pray and have faith in God.

Nathi:"Can I go with you?"

Eh, banna. All I can say is Korobela (love potion) is dangerous shame. One day he's fine and the next he's off. I never know where I stand lately. I'd love him to be there, but Ntate Phiri strictly told me not to tell him yet.

Me:"No. Pulane is coming with me."

Nathi: (saddened) "Okay, then. I'll be here when you come back."

Idiot didn't even notice the bed is brand new. I took my bag and headed out since Pulane texted me saying she's outside. I left Nathi standing there like a lost puppy. Pulane and I arrived at my gynae's office and I was a bit nervous.

She told me that it's not uncommon for women to fall pregnant when they're on the IUD.

Sometimes they fall out or malfunction. She asked to do a transvaginal ultrasound. Eish, I'm not comfortable with this, but if I can open my legs for Nathi for pleasure then surely I can open them for health reasons.

She did the ultrasound and all I heard her do was confirm Ntate Phiri's vision.

Dr. Manyane:"Yep, you're definitely pregnant. 7 weeks to be exact. There is your IUD in your uterus. Sometimes they just miraculously fall in there due to rough sex mostly."

Wow, I'm speechless. My twins have been growing inside of me without me having a clue. I shed a tear knowing how I yearned to have My Nathi with me. My Nathi, not the Nathi I see now. Pulane was with me throughout and I'm grateful for her.

1 Samuel v 27 says:"For this child I prayed and the Lord answered my prayer." I silently said that prayer in dedication to my Nathi. All shall be well, it just has to be.

Chapter 101

Chichi

Pulane was really supportive and great. I kept dwelling on Nathi's small gesture of support and love this morning when je said he'll be waiting for me when I come back.

I didn't even want Pulane to take me out, I had hoped Nathi would be home to make me breakfast as always.

As Pulane parked at the gate, I saw Nathi's car gone from the driveway. My heart sank immediately as the tears built up. I wanted to hide them from Pulane, but it was too late she already saw me.

Pulane:"Bula gate (open the gate) so that I can park."

Me:"You don't have to pity me, P. I mean Bokang is waiting on you."

Pulane:"Don't be silly and open the gate, Ma Dhlamini."

I sighed as I faked a smile through the glistening tears. Pulane and Eve could always see through me. She made her way in as I opened the gate for her. I felt so much pain in my gut, it was just unbearable. As soon as we walked in, I told her I'd be right back.

Pulane:"I'll make us some food so long."

I nodded and went to the bedroom. I closed the door as I opened the small Baby diary I bought on our way back. I just saw it and fell for it immediately. You put a picture in and write something next to it. Starting from the sonograms, to the actual pictures of the baby. I sat and thought to myself how deep these claws must be on my Nathi. Some bitches just don't have peace in their hearts. I took out the sonar picture, placed it in there and wrote my first caption.

"Dear unborn babies, I promise to love and care for you. Things are really bad between your father and I right now, but I promise you he loves you very much. I can't wait for us to see you again. Jeremiah 1 v 5 says:"

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." I have a good feeling about you for God chose to give you two to me at this specific time. See you soon. Love Mommy."

I kissed the picture before I closed the diary and put it in my drawer. I switched on the candle and burnt some mphepho (incense) and prayed; "Dear God, I thank you for this wonderful gift that you saw me fit to have. I ask you to strengthen me throughout this difficult time.

I've just found out yesterday that I'm expecting and already I have the whole world on my shoulders. Please help me overcome this, for my babies' sake. In Jesus name I pray. Amen."

I had tears making their trails down my cheeks, and they felt so hot like they were burning their way down my face. There's always a difference between tears of joy and tears of sorrow.

They just don't have the same feeling, emotionally and physically. I felt a slight headache coming on so I pulled myself together. I went out of the bedroom and found Pulane had already finished making breakfast.

Me:"Thank you, sis. You really didn't have to."

Pulane:"Nonsense. It's my job to do this."

We sat and ate in front of the tv. She even put the heater on for me and put a fleece blanket over my legs.

Pulane: "You need to keep warm and take your supplements. Menzi treated me like an egg while I was pregnant with Bokang."

That also saddened me because I know deep down Nathi would treat me like an egg too had he not been under this spell.

Pulane: "Don't worry, Nathi will come around, Chichi. Wena (You) just focus on yourself and those two lives you got in there. Being pregnant with one is tough but carrying more than one and being in school is not easy at all. We're here for you. And your mom is also here for u."

She probably has a point but at this moment it's really hard to believe. When you're in a bad situation, people can only console you up until a certain point. By this time it was 13:00 so We watched some series on Netflix and my phone beeped. I checked it and my anxiety shot through the roof.

An MMS came through from an unknown number; "Ke go boditshe gore o tlo sehlefala gape ngwanenyana (I told you you'll go back to your dusty self)." That was the caption of underneath a picture of Nathi and Pontsho in white robes on top of a bed.

I just felt my body tense up and my tears building up again. Pulane noticed my silence.

Pulane: "Chichi, keng (What is it)?"

I had no words, I just gave her my phone. She looked at me with such pity. At times people just run out of things to say.

Pulane: "Leave her. We'll deal with her later. Just focus on yourself."

I didn't even have the strength to cry or nod, I just remained quiet. A few minutes later, my phone kept beeping with notifications. I checked it and my day just became ruined. Pontsho posted the pic online. And just like that, I was trending yet again for all the wrong reasons. Some people even came up with the hashtag

#FromCarameltoMelanin, is Chichi Mashabela Nkosinathi Dhlamini's past?

Another picture emerged of my medical report. Someone leaked the report and now the whole fucking world knows that I'm pregnant! There's even a picture of my sonogram attached. There's no fucking way Dr. Manyane leaked those pictures. Eve recommended her and has been using her for years!

Pulane: "Fuck this! I'm getting on it right now, Chichi. Please don't stress."

This is not what I had in mind a year ago when I met my Nathi. I just stood up and went to the bedroom and locked myself in there. My phone kept beeping with messages and phone calls. My Mother, Gorilla, Mandisa, Bree, Glen, Eve, Lerato, Cindy, Menzi even Biggie contacted me. Everyone contacted me except The one person I've been hoping to hear from. My Nathi, my own Nathi didn't even bother. I know I'm fighting a spiritual war, but this is just too much.

Exodus 14 v 14 says:” The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” I am hopeless and I can’t even think anymore. I switched off my phone and drifted off to sleep.

## Chapter 102

Pontsho Manamela

I’m so happy now. My goal has been achieved. This stupid bitch thought she could have it all, not when the Black Diamond is around. Now I can finally break free from Gupta. He can’t enter Mamelodi no matter what, and with Nathi by my side, I’ll be able to have him killed for good.

My muthi has been working so far and Nathi has been spoiling me. I don’t give a fuck whether his dick sleeps when we try to fuck or not, I’ve even been giving him blow jobs, but still nothing has been working. I’m just glad I don’t even have to fuck him at all especially since I’m HIV positive. He hardly touches or kisses me. Hell he won’t even go down on me, but that’s not an issue. As long as he keeps the money coming. Pabi has been on my case now and has been a tag along. She’s starting to be too demanding and it’s really annoying me. Nathi is mine now, even though he likes talking about Chichi. As soon as I hear him tell me about her, I just dip some of my Moratiswa (Love potion) in his drinks and he falls for me all over again. I don’t care if I have to force him to love me, at the end of the day he’s mine now.

It’s that bitch Cindy’s wedding with Thomas on Saturday and he invited us. I can’t wait to cause havoc shame. Those so called Lions will get to know the real Black Diamond. As for Chichi, hehe, her life is spiraling out of control and I’m loving it. I saw her going into Dr. Manamela’s surgery, so I bribed the new temporary Receptionist to give me Chichi’s file information. It was so easy shame. People can do a lot for a mere R2000. Once she sent me the pictures, I uploaded them on Twitter and Facebook.

It was so easy since Pabi has done such shit before. I’m still amazed she’s still alive. I’m just glad that they can’t touch me now, no matter how hard they’ll try. While she’s sulking and crying in her bed, I’m lying in bed with Nkosinathi at Protea Hotel. It’s time I show her that she’s not all that.

I want Nkosinathi to give me R50 000 for shopping today. I put some potion in his beer just before he took a shower, even though my sangoma told me not to overdo it. But who cares? The more I give will be the more it works, right? He got out of the bathroom and put on his clothes.

Pontsho:”Nkosinathi.”

Nathi:”Ja.”

Ai, that’s weird. He’s been calling me Black Diamond ever since I put that shit in his bed. Now I’m surprised he doesn’t even want to spend the night with me tonight.

Pontsho:”Ke kopa o mfe R50 000 toe (Please give me R50 000).”

Nathi:”Wena, ska nhlolla please (Don’t bore me). Selo sa go tshwana le wena se dirang ka R50 000 (What does a thing like you do with R50 000)?”



Heh banna. I hope and pray this potion isn't losing its touch so soon.

Pontsho:"Ah, baby, akere I need some clothes."

Nathi: (sigh) "Alright. I'll transfer it to you right now. Just don't make it a habit."

I smiled broadly. He took his phone and just as he was about to transfer the money, he came across the social media posts.

Nathi:"Hey, wena Pontsho! What the fuck is this?!"

He showed me his phone and I became a bit frightened. His eyes were bewildered and his veins were popping from his face.

Pontsho:"I don't understand what you mean."

Nathi:"Don't fuck with me! You posted these pictures!"

I kept quiet as he came closer to me.

Nathi:"Mxm, difebe di ya lapisa waitse (Bitches are tiring you know). You can't even get my dick up, you useless cunt."

As he was about to walk away I made the mistake of grabbing his arm.

Pontsho:"But I thought you want to be with me."

Nathi got so mad and slapped me so hard with the back of his hand and I fell to the ground.

Nathi:"Don't ever, disrespect Chichi like that again!"

With that said

he left without giving me my money.

Nathi

I don't know what's been happening with me lately. Everything has been happening so fast. I just found myself being attracted to Pontsho for whatever reason. Chichi annoys me so much lately, but at the same time I still love her. She's my wife to be, I just can't help this feeling. Sometimes my dick gets hard and sometimes it doesn't. I've never had such a problem before. I've been treating her like shit and I don't know how to stop it. Every time I think of mending things between us or going to get help, Pontsho comes and makes me weak to my knees all over again.

Now everyone is angry at me, even Menzi. Maybe it's high time I spoke to Gorilla and asked for advice. I've been having bad dreams and my mother has been visiting me in my dreams. She keeps telling me to be careful. "Nkosinathi, vuka uphaphame (Wake up) and take care of Chichi." She keeps telling me that over and over.

For some reason ever since that day Pontsho walked into our house, everything changed. I can't even pray properly anymore and all I keep doing is hurting my wife. I love my Chichi so badly it hurts, but I just can't help this feeling I have of Pontsho. She revives me even though we don't even fuck. I feel so guilty because she's been giving me oral sex. I need to be saved, honestly.

Now I just found out on social media that my woman is pregnant, with twins! I've been such a dick to her and I need to try and fix this. I really have to.

Chichi

I've been asleep for hours, I even lost count since my phone was off. I got woken by Eve banging down my bedroom door.

Eve: "Chichi! Chichi bula mo (Open up)! If you don't open this Door, I'll shoot it open!"

We all know she's more than capable of doing that. So I got up and unlocked the door. My body feels so heavy and my head hurts like hell. It probably must be from all the crying. I unlocked the door and found all four of them standing there. They walked into the bedroom.

Eve: "Bathong (Goodness), Chichi! Haowa man! A pregnant Lioness doesn't sit and cry all day, man. Keng ka wena (What's wrong with you)?"

Me: "I'm drained, Eve. I'm seriously drained. I just want to sleep."

Eve: "Get dressed, you're coming with us."

Me: "Aowa, man Eve."

Eve: "If you don't get dressed within five minutes, I'll drag you out of here if I have to."

I sulked and changed into a jean and shirt with a fur coat and boots. It's still winter, so I have to dress warmly. As we were about to walk out to the car, Nathi came driving in and rushed out frantically.

Nathi: "Chichi! Baby can we talk, please?"

How I've been longing to hear those words from him, but that picture and those people's comments keep playing in my mind. I can't do this right now. I ignored him and proceeded to the car. He grabbed my arm.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, please."

I slapped him so hard out of impulse while I was shaking at the same time.

Me: "Let go of me, Nkosinathi."

He slowly let go of me with disappointment written all over him. I got into the car and Eve drove out in high speed as usual, while Nathi stared at us as we drove away. I feel a bit better after slapping him. Maybe I should shoot his dick back into sense next time.

Ephesians 4 v 26 says: "If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day." I'm about to do something bad all because of the bulging rage inside of me. I can feel it and I won't even regret it.

Chapter 103

Chichi

Eve decided to take the whole squad yet again to who knows where. I don't even know where we're headed, but I'm glad I'm gone out of that house. I just need a breather nje. As we drove I saw us parking outside Koko Mokgadi's house. Yoh, I'm so over my family. I can't even do this right now.

Eve: "Phumani."

We did as instructed. We all know better than to argue with Queen Eve. We headed into the yard and found Koko sitting on her chair as usual.

Koko Mokgadi: "Yey lena (Hey you)! You can't just barge into my yard like that! Tshegofatso! O nagana gore o mang wena (Who do you think you are)! Just because your life is in shambles now..."

She didn't even get to finish her sentence as Eve pointed her gun at her.

Koko Mokgadi: (Scared) "Hai, ngwanaka (my child). Ne ke te dlalla fela (I was only joking)."

As she was apologizing, Pabi walked out of the house.

Pabi: "Koko le wena keng na (What's wrong with you)? Why o rasa (why are you making noise)?"

As soon as she saw us she became frightened and stood frozen. I felt so much rage as soon as I saw her. This bitch has ruined my life for way too long. I'm sick of people kicking me when I'm down. I laughed for her throat and kicked her in the stomach.

Eve just stood there and watched as the others were frightened. I was so pissed, I got on top of her and punched her non stop. I think I went on for about five minutes until someone pulled me away from her.

Pabi was bleeding a bit through her nose and her lip was bust open, her face was swollen. She was screaming while Koko was scared she remained quiet. I couldn't give a shit, really.

Lerato: "Chichi, that's enough, babe. Let's go."

This time I expected Eve to take charge as always, but to my surprise Puleng was the one who was in charge.

Puleng: "Lerato, Cindy, put this bitch in the boot."

Pabi was screaming and begging

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trying to attract attention to us, but I kicked her on the face and she blacked out immediately.

Eve: "Wena Koko, if you ever tell anyone about this, I'll put a bullet through your fucking head."

We got into the car while Cindy and Lerato put Pabi in the boot and Eve drove off in high speed as usual. We arrived at Eve's house and found Nathi's car outside along with Menzi's, Thomas' and Zoro's. I felt really uneasy and uncomfortable.

I just don't have the energy for Nathi right now. We got out of the car and left Pabi in the boot. We walked in and found everyone in a sombre mood. As soon as they saw me they all stood up.

Biggie: "Sovereign, are you okay?"

Me: "I'm fine. Hello Zoro, Menzi, Thomas."

Menzi: "Can I talk to you?"

Eve: "You can do that later. Baby, please go and get Pabi from the boot."

Menzi wa speechless as I really didn't even feel like talking about my miserable life. Nathi looked like shit and was drinking. He couldn't even face me. How fucked up is

this? We should be celebrating Cindy and Thomas' union this weekend, but instead we're dealing with my shit yet again. Biggie went out with Thomas and came back carrying Pabi.

Eve: "Take her to the chamber."

They did as instructed and came back.

Eve: "We don't want any disturbances until we come back, please. Girls, asihambeni (let's go)."

We walked to the torture chamber and just like that, we were officiating our status as the Queens of the crew. It's high time we started dealing with things ourselves. Men are sloppy as fuck. I'm ready to ruin Pabi's life.

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Chapter 104

Chichi

The four of us went into the Torture Chamber and tied Pabi to the chair. It's about damn time. I told myself I'd never kill or torture anyone ever again, but today is the

day this bitch will regret ever being related to me. She was still unconscious and her cheek was purple.

I just thought of everything she did to me; all the insults, the shitty treatment she used to give me at school, the first social media incident. I've let this bitch off the hook way too many times. I need to sort her out as in yesterday. Pulane didn't waste time, she took the famous bucket and poured water with ice in it. She poured it on her face and she woke up gasping for air.

Pulane: "Tsoga sfebe (Wake up bitch)."

Lerato and Cindy sat on the chairs in fear. Eve poured herself some whiskey and sat on one of the chairs next to Cindy. I stood next to Pulane, staring at Pabi.

Pabi: "Where am I? What is this place?"

Pulane: "It's your worst nightmare."

Pabi started laughing out loud.

Pabi: (laughing) "Wena (You)? Paballo o weak (you're weak), man. You couldn't even hurt a fly."

Pulane didn't waste any time, she took out a knife from one of the shelves and stabbed Pabi's knee. Pabi screamed out in pain and her tears weren't even affecting me at all.

Pabi: "Please! I'm sorry! Yoh!"

Pulane: "How the fuck did Pontsho get hold of Chichi's medical file?"

I thought this would take long, but nope, Pabi sang like a canary.

Pabi: "Pontsho bribed Dr. Manyane's Receptionist. She's a temp since the original one is currently on leave. Please, please, let me go. Chichi, ba botse ba ntlogele yoh (Please tell them to let me go)."

Hao, for a mean bitch like her I thought this wouldn't be that painful at all. She walks around like she owns the world nje, even when she was dating Mr. Legae. I felt so angry. How could two women, one of them being a mother on top of that stoop so low? I understood the whole thing she started last year when she exposed The Lions, but this, this is way too personal and I can't let her walk free.

Pulane: "Pabi, you're a mother, akere (right)?"

Pabi nodded.

Pulane: "I can't hear you!"

I've never seen Pulane this ruthless. They say you should never pick on an ever smiling person, because the day they snap you'll see flames. That's exactly the case with Pulane.

Pabi: "Ye... Yes."

Pulane: "Now, would you want to hurt a fellow mother?"

Pabi: "I, I didn't know she was pregnant until Pontsho made me post those pictures."

Pulane pulled the knife out and stabbed her in the other thigh as she winced out in pain once again.

Pabi: "Please, Pabi hle! I didn't mean all the things I said to you."

Pulane: "That's for lying. I hate liars, you should know that by now, Paballo. Now, tell us where is Pontsho? Think carefully before you answer."

Pabi looked really frightened and in serious pain. How on earth did she even survive childbirth?

Pabi: "I really don't know where she is right now."

Pulane pulled the knife out.

Pabi: "Wait!"

Pulane: "You have 20 seconds."

Pabi: "She and Nathi were at Protea Hotel in town today

but that's all I know. I don't know where she is right now."

Pulane was about to let her go, but I wasn't all about that.

Me: "Not so fast, Pulane. Pabi, do you know how your dearest mother went mad? Do you know who cut off your daddy's rapist dick?"

Pabi looked frightened her eyes were locked onto mine.

Me: "That's right. You're looking at her. I'm the one that cut off your daddy's little dick and your mother saw it right here. His blood was oozing from his useless dick and your mom cried like a little bitch right where you're seated."

I could see her eyes glistening with tears. For the first time in my life I saw remorse in this whore's eyes.

Me: "Now tell me, Paballo, give me one good reason why I shouldn't kill you today? And please leave your baby out of it because we all know you don't give a fuck about her."

Pabi let the tears flow as she looked at me with sorrow in her eyes.

Pabi: "Because... Because we all deserve second chances."

I got so mad hearing her of all people say that. I took the knife from Pulane's hands and shoved it deep into her left eye. She screamed like a little bitch as we all saw the blood oozing from her eye.

Cindy vomited while Lerato froze. They'll live.

Me: "Paballo, ever since I came to Mamelodi you have been nothing but mean to me even when I didn't do anything to hurt you. I want you to remember this day the next time you even think of doing evil deeds. I want you to live long enough like your fat ass mother to see me get married.

I want you to see me give birth to my twins and I want you to suffer until you repent. You've been nothing but a nasty pest that not even repellant can fix. Death would be too easy of an option for you. Go to hell, you little motherfucker."

I ripped the knife out of her eye as Cindy vomited again. Eve was drinking all along, unbothered by the whole situation.

Me: "Let's go, girls. We'll get Nathi and the guys to clean this up."

We left the study and proceeded to the lounge. I've been waytoo nice for long enough. It is high time I show people who I really am and what I'm actually capable of. I saw all the guys seated, having drinks and they got up, staring at me with pity yet again.

I'm so sick of men doing shit and always expecting women to forgive them. They fuck around then buy you a nice, expensive gift and then expect everything to be forgiven. Nkosinathi walked over to me with his red eyes, and in his half drunken state.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, I..."

I put my finger up.

Me: "You listen to me, Mr. Dhlamini. I'm not one of your little puppies. Yes, it's my fault Pontsho found a loophole into our lives, but your dumb ass decided to let everything we worked for go out the window the minute new pussy was served."

Nathi: (interrupting me) "Chichi, please..."

Me: "I'm not done, now shut the fuck up and let me finish."

He kept quiet finally. All the rage inside of me was ravaging me like a beast waiting to come out and reveal itself.

Me: "You should have prayed harder, fought harder. You should have asked for advice or given me a small chance to show you that you were fooled. Now I'm pregnant and a fucking laughing stock. Instead of celebrating Cindy and Thomas this week, we're all busy fixing your fucking mess and now your witch side chick has gone AWOL.

You'd better go and take that bitch out of there and clean up – ALL OF YOU. When you're done you'd better come and sit down so we can discuss the family business. I don't want any of you pitying me or asking me how I'm doing. I don't need that shit right now. All I need is for you to tell me how we're going to ruin Pontsho once and for all."

They all looked at me in pure disbelief.

Me: "What are you waiting for?"

They all got up and proceeded to the study. I heard Zoro mumble under his breath.

Zoro: (mumbling) "Yoh, re masepeng (we're in shit) because Nathi o bhanisitse (made her pregnant)."

Me: "Askies?!"

Zoro: "Niks, niks, Chichilicious."

They all proceeded and walked away, while Nathi looked at me for a while and I stared him straight in the eye without moving. The ladies were all quiet and Nathi finally decided to walk away in shame. For the first time ever since we started dating, I disrespected him, but he sure as fuck deserved it.

Proverbs 31 speaks about womanhood. It speaks of the kind of woman who wasn't a woman who worked strictly in her home with her children; didn't remain silent when she had an opinion; a woman who wasn't weak and passive in her presentation; a woman who didn't refrain from making her mark on the world. I'm a Proverbs 31 woman. It is high time people get to know who I am.

Chapter 105

Chichi

I wish I could have a strong drink right now. Pulane and Eve were chilled, while Lerato and Cindy were shivering.

Eve: "Have a drink lena le two (you two). You'll be okay. When Chichi first experienced the trauma of the Torture Chamber, she vomited just like you Cinderella. That time her own Nathi whacked her Accounting Teacher's head off with a sword. He also happened to be my brother in law and Pabi's baby daddy."

They both looked even more frightened as Eve said that.

Eve: "I told you when you entered the family that you'll need to grow a thick skin. Chichi killed her own father. So you'll learn fast. You'll just have to."

Cindy: (trembling) "I don't think I can do this. This is all too much for me."

Eve: (sigh) "Cindy, you're the weakest amongst us, you know. Do you love Thomas?"

Cindy: "With all my heart."

Eve: "Do you want to lose all this money? This lifestyle?"

Cindy: (softly) "No."

Eve: "Then you'll have to suck it up and get used to it. You're getting married to one of the most powerful men in this country. We're about to get richer. Now pull up your girly pants because you're already in too deep."

I could see Cindy contemplating it, but Eve is right. It's no use backing out now. Love isn't perfect. The men came out dragging a screaming Pabi. She was traumatized as fuck and I loved it. Biggie and Thomas were carrying her, while Nathi, Zoro and Menzi were walking behind them. Those three decided to come sit with us, while Biggie and Thomas walked out.

Me: "Excuse me what do you think you're doing?"

Menzi: "Heh banna (Goodness), Chichi. I'm still your brother."

Me: "And I'm still your sister. You failed to beat the shit out of your best friend and get him help. You ALL failed. Now you ALL have to do one job – together, the way we do it."

They all looked at me like I'm crazy.

Me: "Biggie and Thomas are waiting for you. They're nobody's slaves."

They all sulked and mumbled below their breath as Nathi was just quiet. I couldn't care less. I had my juice while the ladies had their drinks. We sat and spoke about the wedding for a change, a fresh breeze of conversation.

We did that while waiting for the guys. They guys came back after a whole hour and a half. I think they probably took their time to get away from me – the new pregnant devil. But I couldn't give a flying fuck. These boys get away with too much. They came back sulking like little puppies and sat on the chairs.

Eve: "Now can we get down to business?"

They all nodded in shame.

Eve: "We have a serious problem. Nathi, you've been sloppy and as a result, Pontsho wired R500 000 to her account a few hours ago. That's all our profit which we've been saving."



They were all shocked.

Biggie: "But we never saw it. How come we didn't receive any notification?"

Eve: "That's because she made sure that ur doesn't reflect, man. Hayi ni slow nina (You guys are so slow). This means only one thing, either she's working with someone clever, or she's learnt a thing or two from Gupta."

Menzi: "So what now?"

Me: "We call Gupta. We let him know what his bitch has been up to. You did say he's been searching for her, isn't it?"

They all looked like they were afraid of answering me. Mxm, pussies.

Me: "Hao, suddenly you guys are ignoring me now?"

Biggie: (laughing) "Baby, she reminds me of you when you were pregnant. She's spitting fire this one, man. Nathi, mfanaka (my boy), you're in shit!"

He laughed while the rest of us didn't even find the joke funny. Eve chuckled and so did Pulane. The rest were walking on eggshells. I'm done playing nice. It's high time we sort shit out.

Me: "Biggie, do you still have Gupta's numbers?"

Biggie: "Sure."

Me: "Call him."

Nathi looked a bit nervous, but I couldn't care less. Biggie took out his phone and dialed his number and put it on his ear.

Me: "Put it on speaker."

Biggie wanted to laugh, but chuckled instead and did as instructed. After a few rings he answered.

Gupta: "Big man. Long time no see, Oga (Boss)."

Biggie: "Ja, Gupta. What's cooking?"

Gupta: "Are you seriously asking me that oo? I've been expecting your call."

Biggie: (chuckling) "For what, now, G?"

Gupta: "I know your man Nathi has been busy with my ashawo (prostitute). She might be a whore, but she's my whore oo."

Biggie: "Gupta, what's your point?"

Gupta: "My point is

Oga (boss), that you and your men have now invited war against you. I'm coming for you now."

Biggie: (chuckling) "Gupta, your bitch stole half a million from us and we're going to need it back."

Gupta: (laughing) "How is that my problem oo? You see now, Oga, you and your men lied to me, saying that you knew nothing of my Black Diamond's whereabouts. Only to find out your boy has been fucking her. I don't give a fuck about the truce. You've cost me a lot of money by hiding my best from me. I'm coming for you and everyone you love."

For some surprising reason, I wasn't even scared at all. I was bewildered and angry and pretty much ready for this fucker.

Biggie: (chuckling) "You do know that I don't take well to threats, right? You do know what I do to people who threaten my loved ones, don't you?"

Gupta: (laughing) "I don't care. You'll never find me. I'll get you before you get to me."

Biggie: "Hehe, so confident. This is war then, fucker."

He hung up, leaving Cindy, Lerato and Nathi in serious despair.

Me: "Why do the rest of you look so scared? Are you afraid of Gupta?"

Thomas: "Aowa, man, Chichi. We're not."

Me: "Good. You're all more than capable of protecting us so here's the plan: You five are going to look for Pontsho, after the wedding. The rest of this week will be spent on preparing for Thomas and Cindy's union. As soon as that's over, you won't sleep until you find the bitch. When you do, you'll bring her here. I want Gupta to see me kill her. She's his weakest link and trust me when I say that will make it easier for you to kill him."

Biggie looked impressed as well as Zoro, Eve and Pulane. The rest still looked a bit scared.

Menzi: "You're not killing any more people."

Me: "Are you my father now, Menzi?"

He kept quiet.

Me: "I trust this is a deal then. Nkosinathi, give me your car keys."

He looked at me like I was insane.

Nathi: "But, you only have your learner's, Ma Dhlamini."

Me: "Exactly, which means I'm more than capable of driving. Now hand them over."

Nathi: "But aren't we going home together?"

Me: "No, we're not. Here's what you're going to do; you're going to go see Ntate Phiri so you can vomit all the dirt she fed you. Then you're going to do some soul searching. We're going to be together and look happy at the wedding because we owe Cindy and Thomas a happy wedding day. Once it's over, you'll find your own place to stay until you figure out who you really are. Once you do find out who you are which I hope will be sooner than later, you'll find your Father's family and pay lobola for me. My kids won't be born out of wedlock, unless you have second thoughts about being with me. Now, hand over the keys."

I said that with my hand open. Nathi looked so defeated while the rest were speechless. He slowly took the keys out of his pockets and handed me the keys. I took them and turned around preparing to leave.

Menzi: "Let me at least drive behind you."

Me: "No. I'm going back home to my miserable, cold bed. If you dare even bother to follow me, I'll fucking shoot you. I know where Nathi keeps his gun in the car."

They were so astonished.

Me: "Take this as a lesson the next time one of you goes rogue and you don't do shit about it. Girls, I'll see you tomorrow morning since I'm famous and won't be returning to school for a while."

With that said, I walked out. I'm a phenomenal woman and Nathi and the rest of those idiots need to know it.

Chapter 106

Chichi

Fear and rage are the only two things that can give you the utmost courage you never thought you could have in your life. Ecclesiastes 7 v 9 says: "Keep your temper under control; it is foolish to harbor a grudge." I don't even intend on holding a grudge, I intend on burying the hatchet along with this bitch. Not only did she almost ruin my life, she ruined my relationship, and took our livelihood.

Nathi will learn a hard lesson from this and get over it, but as for Pontsho. She's the one o tlo sehlefalang (who'll go back to her dusty self). I'll fuck her up so hard that even her parents won't be able to have an open casket funeral. Ntate Phiri will have to forgive me this time.

I felt really brave as my new self. Perhaps it's the pregnancy hormones, but deep down I'm all kinds of fucked up. I'm hurt and saddened, but I refuse to dwell on the shit Nathi has caused me. The principal didn't even waste time this time around. He told me straight not to come to school until further notice since the media is on his case. They're even lying about me making shit up like me being pregnant by a teacher nje. As for Dr. Manyane's receptionist, I'll make sure she knows who I am by tomorrow morning.

I got into the house and it feels so cold and lonely. It's almost as if all the love we used to share here has been sucked out of this house. Nathi and I made a lot of memories in here. I didn't picture my first pregnancy announcement to be on social media, but fuck it. It's out there so why should I be ashamed?

I low key miss my Nathi. I miss the cuddles, the hugs, the good night kisses and massages, our prayers together and his contagious smell. I miss catching him staring at me in the early hours of the morning. I miss his goofy texts messages and annoying phone calls.

I miss picking names for our future babies and planning our future wedding. I miss him, but not enough to surrender. Gone is the sweet and quick forgiving Chichi. The next person who'll disrespect me will shit themselves. I took a shower and made myself a quick meal. I've had a pretty long day. I then went to the bedroom, burned some incense and lit my candles and started praying. I felt so much lighter afterwards and I decided to lay in my bed. It's high time I face the world, so I decided to call my mother.

Julia: "Oh, Tshego, ngwanaka (my child)! Ke neng ke go fonela (I've been calling you). O sharp (Are you okay)?"

Me: "Yes, mama. I'm okay."

Julia: "I'm sorry about what's been happening. I'm so sorry I wasn't there to protect you, Tshego. Everything works out according to God's will and those babies are all part of his plan. Isaiah 43 v 1 says: "Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine." I've always known you to be a Prayer Warrior, ngwanake (my child). The Lord has always been with you, Tshego. Everything will work out, just you wait and see."

I felt myself get so teary as my mother was consoling me. I haven't had such a pure and decent conversation with her in so long that this is actually bitter sweet.

Julia: "That girl will stop at nothing, but God has your back."

I nodded involuntarily as the tears blinded me.

Julia: "O robale pila, ngwanaka

a ke batle go go senyetsa nako (Sleep well, my child, I don't want to waste your time)."

Truth is I really didn't want her to hang up.

Me: "Mama, can we please talk for a little while longer? I miss your scriptures. You've always known what to say and when before things got really bad."

Julia: "Very well then. Do you remember the five scriptures I taught you to remember whenever you were in fear?"

Me: "Vaguely mama. Please remind me."

I could tell Mama was so delighted to just have a decent conversation with me.

Julia: 1. Deuteronomy 31:8 "He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

2. Romans 8:28 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

3. Isaiah 43:1 "Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine."

4. 1 John 4:18 "Perfect Love Casts Out All Fear"

5. Psalm 18:2 "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer."

The last scripture is my favourite out of all of them.

Julia: "Do you remember the story of Hannah, Samuel's mother? She was the childless second wife of Elkanah, but yet remained diligent in prayer and perseverance. She did indeed receive her gift from God and named him Samuel, and still remained faithful to the Lord.

I want you, Tshego to remain diligent in prayer and never forget God's stance in your life. I named you Tshegofatso for a reason; believe it or not you have blessed The Lions in so many ways and thanks to you they have managed to change their behaviour and even get married."

I felt my heart warm up instantly. She managed to put a smile on my sad face.

Me: "Yes, I hear you, Mama. Thank you so much. I really appreciate it."

Julia: "It's my job, honey. You'll always be my baby."

I smiled as I said goodbye to her. My own mother managed to warm my heart after such a long time. God indeed works in mysterious ways. I dozed off to a peaceful sleep after a while. I got up early tomorrow morning, with so many missed calls and texts from Nathi. I won't even bother reading them because I know if I do now, everything will be turned to shit. I don't want to be weak and fall for his sweet talking.

I got up and took a shower. I got dressed and still decided to risk it and drove out alone. I headed to Dr. Manyane's surgery without wasting time. I found the temp receptionist. I see her tag name indicates her name is Khosi. Mxm. She froze immediately as soon as she saw me.

Khosi: "Uhm... Hi Ms. Mashabela, how can I help you?"

Me: "You can help me by quitting your little job here. If you don't resign as of immediate effect, I'll fucking shoot you."

I slightly took out my gun and pointed it at her. She got frightened and nodded.

Me: "Good girl, I'll do the honours."

I decided to call Dr. Manyane."

Me: "Doctor! Doctor!"

Dr. Manyane: "Keng na Khosi (What is it)?"

As soon as she saw me she was quite shocked.

Dr. Manyane: "Oh, Ms. Mashabela, how can I help you?"

Me: "Hi, doc. Your receptionist here has something to tell you."

Khosi: "I... I... I sold Chichi's medical report to someone in exchange for R2000. I'm really sorry."

Me: "And?"

Khosi: "I'm resigning with immediate effect."

Dr. Manyane was livid.

Dr. Manyane: "Khosi, you're just a temp here and already you're doing such?! This is my job you're talking about! You've cost me a lot of clients and I'm not even sad that you're resigning. You know what? You should be glad Chichi isn't pressing any charges! In fact, leave immediately."

Khosi was so sad, she took her bag and left the surgery in tears. Serves her right for selling her morals for a mere R2000. She doesn't know me very well this one.

Chapter 107

Chichi

After leaving with Khosi from Dr. Manyane's office, I didn't let it end there. She needs to know what happens when you sell your soul for cash. I grabbed her by the arm and took her to my car, well, Nathi's car. What's his is mine so it's our car now. Khosi looked scared shitless and I loved it. She needs to be taught a lesson so she could tell people what happens when you mess with me.

Me: "Take out your phone."

She did as instructed with shaky hands.

Me: "Now, you're going to go live on your facebook or instagram and tell the world what a useless woman you are. You sold my medical records for a mere R2000 and that you're a poor excuse of a woman."

She looked at me wiiery.

Khosi: (shaky) "No, I can't do that."

Me: (sigh) "Khosi, you're really testing my patience. I have things to do today like prepare for my friend's wedding, you know. So hurry up."

She contemplated it for a second. I could see she was buying time, so I took out Nathi's gun from my bag and she panicked.

Me: "Do you want me to force it out of you?"

Khosi: "Okay. I'll do it."

She logged onto her Facebook and started recording. I reminded her of what exactly to say. People will do anything under duress.

Khosi: "Hi, guys. I just wanted to let you know that I'm the one who leaked Chichi's medical report. I know I shouldn't have, but greed got to me. I was paid a mere R2000 by Pontsho Manamela and I deeply regret it. I'm a poor excuse of a woman and nobody deserves to hire me."

Me: "That wasn't so hard, now was it?"

Khosi: (teary) "Can I go now?"

Me: "You can go, but if you dare delete that video, I'll find you and I'll personally cut out your useless womb before you even conceive, got it?"

She shook her head in fear.

Me: "Good. Now fuck off."

She hurried out as I put on my shades, started the car and drove off. I'm wearing one of my best outfits today, my brand new Gucci jumpsuit with knee high boots and a fur coat. I arrived at the salon and found the girls already waiting on me. Eve was so happy she jumped on me and gave me one of her fat hugs.

Eve: (smiling) "Hehe, Ma Dhlamani kayi one! How are you, mommy?"

Me: (smiling) "I've never been better. You?"

Eve: "I'm fabulous, baby. I loved seeing you in action. Finally you've grown a pair of tits."

Me: (laughing) "Eve, you're so silly."

I went ahead and sat down and greeted the rest of the girls.

Cindy: "Hao, Chichi, aren't you going to ask Eve how Nathi is doing?"

Me: "He's fine, I know it. Otherwise if he was dead, you guys would have told me about it long ago."

Pulane burst into laughter and so did Lerato. It was very nice to see her and Cindy relaxed after last night.

Eve: "But shame, he has been down all night. He even went to Ntate Phiri with Gorilla this morning."

Me: "Good for him."

Lerato: "Hasn't he at least called you?"

Me: "I have him on my block list for now until further notice."

Pulane: "Tjo, ja ne. You're really hard core. Those babies aren't doing you justice."

Me: "I just need him to sweat a bit so that the next time his eyes even land at another woman, he thinks of these days."

They all laughed, as we got ready to head out to do the final fittings of our dresses.

We're using the Viano today, for comfort and space plus we're fetching our dresses from the bridal shop. We walked in and the driver headed out with us.

Lerato: "Yoh, but Chichilicious, you scared us, hey. I know you're used to that but I was even more shocked to see Pulane in action."

We all laughed.

Pulane: "You two need to learn fast, man. You can't be going around crying and being scared all the time. When are you going for your shooting lessons?"

Cindy: "Eish, you know I'm clumsy, Puleng. I don't do well under pressure."

Pulane: "You'll have to learn fast because you heard that idiot Gupta on the phone last night."

Cindy: "Yes, and now I'm worried about our safety with the wedding approaching.

Eve: "Which is why we're going shooting today. You need to learn proper self defence."

Lerato: "Speaking of Gupta, how on earth did you come up with that, Chichi when you don't even know the guy?"

Me: "Lee, what I've learned about this gang is that you need to grow a thick skin.

Sometimes you need to think fast because believe me, even though we're constantly surrounded by five men, their brains are pretty slower than ours. The sooner you learn to think like a Lion, the better.

Anything could happen, like now, Pontsho stole our money and I doubt we'll even get every single cent back. We've worked our asses off for that money, so now unfortunately we all have to come up with plan B on how we're going to purchase the garage we want."

Lerato: (smiling) "No I see why they all rave about you so much. You truly are the brains of the family."

I hope she didn't low key mean Zoro by 'everyone'. But I think we're past that, I think so.

Eve: "Yes she truly is. We would've been small time gangsters still if it wasn't for Chichi's genius brain. No wonder why Nathi is going crazy."

We all laughed as a part of me hoped and prayed he is doing alright. He's still my man after all.

Nathi

I didn't sleep well last night, man I actually didn't sleep at all. Chichi isn't giving me a chance of which I don't even blame her. I've honestly been nothing but an asshole and I couldn't even be there to reel in the news of my first child, my first children. I kept staring at her sonogram picture which was leaked, and then at our pictures together. I miss that contagious smile and her infectious laugh.

I really miss being around her, cuddling with her and inhaling her unique scent. My Chichi is like no other and I curse the day Pontsho walked into my house. I'm not perfect, but I should've prayed. My guys should have seen the signs and helped out, beat me up if they had to. I just hope she can forgive me for everything.

I've tried to locate the bitch even with Ndumiso's help, but the cellphone she used was found at the hotel we were at. She took our money and made a run for it. I'm hunting for blood and she'd better hope and pray I don't catch her. As for Gupta, he'll regret ever threatening our wives like that. Ma Dhlamini is carrying precious cargo and I can't afford her to get hurt especially now.

The gents all went with me to Ntate Phiri and he gave me a whole lot of herbs to drink. I had to drink about five litres of it while vomiting at the same time. Ukugapa

isn't child's play. I had to do it, for Ma Dhlamini. I vomited some black things and apparently it's all the stuff Pontsho fed me. The more I vomited was the more I came back to my senses. I remember everything she did to me and I remember the drinks she kept feeding me.

I'm so glad I didn't fuck her because we just found out that she's also HIV positive. Thank goodness Ntate Phiri cleansed my house and my Chichi can be safe from voodoo. Pontsho won't rest as she'll try her all to kill my kids, but Ntate Phiri says she'll get burnt badly.

She's going to try a heavy spell to kill my unborn kids, but get hurt instead. He also cleansed us all and made us stronger as we have to prepare for Gupta. It's war now and we have to be ready at all angles.

I miss my woman so badly and I'm shit scared of this new her. Chichi has never been this fiesty towards me. Menzi says it's the pregnancy, but Biggie says she's always been this way, it just took one moment to activate it. We even saw a video of Facebook of Khosi, the woman who supposedly leaked Chichi's medical records. I bet this has Chichi written all over it. She's just so fiesty and angry, and I just hope she doesn't overdo it. I need her to be fine. Her and my kids.

She's not even bothered by my calls and texts and has even blocked me. I'm not okay and I've never had to beg and sulk at a woman like this before. But Ma Dhlamini isn't just any woman, she's my woman, Le pyatla la ka (my gorgeous babe). I'll do whatever it takes to bring the spark back.

After Ntate Phiri's session, we're headed to the shop to get our final fittings done and to collect our suits. They were all custom made and Thomas is so excited. I can't wait to marry my woman.

## Chapter 108

### Chichi

Few days later.

It's Saturday morning and I'm so excited. Cindy's wedding dress is so beautiful, plus her having the same body structure as Pulane makes it even better. It's a stunning blush pink, strapless mermaid dress and she opted for Pink and Gold wedding theme. We bridesmaids have Gold Maxi dresses and we can wrap them in different ways around our necks. We're all going to wear fur coats since it's still winter season. They're also getting married in Cape Town, at the same venue, The Grande Kloof Boutique Hotel. We all flew here as usual and booked our rooms. Just like the last wedding, we're getting dressed in the same rooms, I hope nothing bad happens this time. At least this groom isn't missing, and we're all having drinks, except me of course.

Eve: "Cinderella, tonight you must give Tman the works. O mofe yona kaofela (you'd better give it all to him)."

We all laughed.



Cindy: (embarrassed) “Hao, Eve. I always give it to him good, mara.”

Eve: “It’s time to try the real things, you know; bondage, anal. The works.”

We all looked at her shocked.

Eve: “What? Don’t tell me y’all never do it.”

We kept quiet for a while.

Pulane: “Hai, Menzi is too conservative in bed. He’d never let us try bondage yoh. I once watched 50 Shades with him and he said ke dilo tsa baloyi (it’s witchcraft).”

We all burst out in laughter. Yoh I can Imagine Menzi saying that vele. But that’s as far as I’ll ever let my imagination go. I can’t so any more than that.

Eve: “Menzi does look a bit boring shame.”

Pulane: (frowning) “He’s not boring, man. He just doesn’t like experimenting much.”

Lerato: “But he does go down on you, right?”

Pulane nodded.

Lerato: “Yoh, thank goodness. I’d never survive without Zoro sucking my baby Lee.”

We laughed out so hard we even forgot we had to keep it down.

Me: “Hao, Lerato. You even named your pussy?”

Lerato: “Yep. And his is Stallion. So just know when I tell him I want Stallion, I’m talking about his pipinaiza (dick).”

Yoh, we bust out so much in laughter that even tears were coming out.

Eve: “You’re not the only one who has oet names for their privates. Mine is Regina and his is Derick.”

Yoh hai that one takes the cake shame. We laughed out again and Maxine was getting angry because our tears were messing up our make up.

Maxine: “Hai, you see now, girls! You’re ruining my master piece!”

Cindy: “Askies, Max. Sorry ne.”

He just clicked his tongue in frustration as he continued with Cindy’s make up.

Pulane: “Bjanong (so) why do you call yours Regina and his Derick?”

Eve: “So that no one would know that we actually want to fuck.”

We laughed out again. Maxine will have to forgive us shame.

Lerato: “So, Eve, what’s anal sex like?”

Eve: “Well, it’s a bit uncomfortable at first but once you use enough lube, it is the bomb. I also peg him every now and then.”

Eve is a real sex freak shame. What on earth is pegging?

Cindy: “What’s pegging?”

Eve: “It’s when I put my finger up his ass or when I fuck him with a dildo.”

We all looked at her in astonishment. I genuinely thought that only porn stars did such. Where do Eve and Biggie ever find the time to experiment like that. I guess it automatically happens when you’ve been together for so long.

Lerato: “Hai, Eve you and Biggie are freaks shem.”

Eve: “You guys are virgins shame. Cinderella, here’s a tip; the next time you give him a blow job, put your tongue on his asshole and lick it. It’s called rimming by the way.”

Yoh, hai Eve is too much nje. Isn't that hole actually meant for excretion only? I need to read up on that.

Pulane:"Hai, Eve, man. You're corrupting our children."

Cindy:"Actually... Zoro and I always rim each other. It's normal for us."

I nearly spit out my juice, while Pulane and Lerato looked at her shocked. Eve was laughing. This topic can go on forever aowa. Surprisingly Maxine isn't complaining. He's gay by the way and works at our Salon.

Eve:"Hehe, I'm not the only freak here, I guess. Wena Chichi, you're so quiet. Keng o kare o tima Nathi bjana (Why does it seem like you don't give Nathi any)?"

Everyone turned to look at me. Ai, awkward. Now I have to divulge about my sex life.

Me:"Hai, man, Eve. I'm just not that experienced, but I do give it to him hao. Well, I used to. Now

he'll just have to grovel back to me."

Eve:"Well, when a man made you angry, just punish him by making him suck your pussy dry, babe. You need some pleasure nawe. Cerebros is dealing with both of you."

Me:"Keng Cerebros bjanong (What's HSP now)?"

Eve:"Lack of sex, duh."

Ai, to be honest I truly miss Nathi. My bed has been so cold without him, but he needs to sweat a little bit. I'm still angry and he needs to be taught a lesson, a hard one. We finally got done with our make up and proceeded to the ceremony venue. Everyone was already waiting and it instantly reminded me of Zoro's wedding.

That day everyone was happy, especially Nathi and I. I remember how we looked him in the eye as he stared at me and told me he loved me. Now, we're just going through so much and I'm 8 weeks pregnant. As always, I'm the last one to walk down the aisle. The bridesmaids were serenaded by Sia's Chandelier. It was finally my turn to walk down and I saw Nathi.

He's not the same Nathi I saw weeks ago. He's so depressed and looks like he's aged overnight. My heart felt so sad, I'm actually defeated. I miss my Nathi, the happy and forever smiling, loving and sweet Nathi. Maybe it's time to start working on forgiving him. It's not entirely his fault, I'm also to blame for my sweet heart.

I felt tears threatening my eyes, but I didn't let them fall. I looked at him as he stared at me. He never let me out of his sight until I approached the altar. I looked at him while I stood next to Pulane as he mouthed "I love you" again to me. My tears defeated me and I let them fall. I quickly wiped them away with my fingers as I didn't want to ruin my make up.

Cindy approached the red carpet with her father. This is such a beautiful day, man. Weddings are just awesome. She was serenaded by John Legend's All of Me. These two aren't like Lerato and Zoro. Their love was pure from the beginning. For the first time ever since I've known Thomas, he is so selfless and caring and soft.

He really loves and adores her. He just can't go a day without calling her like five times just to ask her how she's doing and sends her an appreciation message on a daily basis. He's so affectionate and romantic I'm truly shocked. This day just seems too perfect. Call me superstitious, but we hardly have a celebration that goes well like this nje without anything bad happening. The Priest started the ceremony.

Priest: "We are gathered here today to witness the holy union between Cinderella Palesa Mabaso and Thomas Goodman Shabalala."

Yes, Cinderella is really Cindy's birth name. Apparently her mo was obsessed with Cinderella, hence Cindy is such a doll face nje. People think it's her nick name until they actually see her ID.

Priest: "The groom asked me to keep it short as he just couldn't wait for this day. He's been waiting all too long for this moment."

The guests laughed.

Priest: "Let's get to it. Please say your vows, Mr. Shabalala."

Thomas: "Cindy, my beautiful, selfless wife. I never thought God would actually bless me with my very own Cinderella, literally. You're the Queen of my castle, the root to our tree. Without you, I'm honestly nothing. You loved me even though you thought I was just a small time taxi driver.

You make me feel like the only man in the world. When you walk into a room, the whole room shines. Your beauty radiates and makes even the angels themselves feel jealous. I ask that God preserve us long enough to see our beautiful grandchildren be born one day. I promise to love you til eternity. I promise I'll always make you smile and always make you breakfast.

I promise to always put you first because a Lion cannot reign without his Lioness. I love you so much, mother of my future cubs. I can't wait to start this journey with you."

Cindy was in tears and so were we. We've never heard Thomas say such beautiful words to anyone ever before. Nathi had his eyes fixed on me, making me even more emotional. I was no longer crying because of the beautiful vows, I was crying because I miss my Nathi and that I wish I could reel in our moment of this pregnancy together. It's time for me to stop being selfish. As Cindy said her vows, I kept staring back at Nathi and I mouthed "I love you too." That was enough for him to drop the tears that he's been fighting back. The tears kept streaming down his face and he never bothered to even wipe them off.

He just kept looking at me with his tears flowing and I knew just then that we were having a mental conversation. If only humans could participate in Telepathy. That was his way of saying he's sorry. Nathi seldomly cries so when he does it's a bloody big deal. I saw a faint smile revealing his cute dimples. My Nathi is back, uMageba wami, Ntate Dhlamini wa ka, father of my twins.

The priest finally said the famous words.

Priest: "You may now kiss the bride."

Thomas didn't hesitate, he kissed Cindy so passionately yoh. The elders didn't even bother. Gorilla and Julia were also here. We proceeded to our celebration venue and he groomsman and bridesmaids had to walk out holding hands. Nathi held my hand as I locked mine in his.

Nathi: (whispering in my ear) "I'll never disappoint you ever again, Ma Dhlamini." I smiled and looked at him as we walked together hand in hand.

Me: "I know."

Just then everything seemed like it would work out. Nathi and Chichilicious are back in action. 1 Corinthians 13 v 1 says: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

Chapter 109

Chichi

This wedding is making me feel all kinds of love. We sat next to each other and it felt like our very first date together. He's nervous as hell and I kind of love it. Time for the first dance came and the couple slow danced to Vusi Nova's Thandiwe.

After two minutes the rest of us followed and I danced slowly in Nathi's arms.

Inhaling his cologne and scent just made me fall in love with him all over again. I looked in his eyes and I still see truth in them. Nathi's eyes never lie and that's one of the reasons why our love just remains pure no matter what happens.

The wedding was just a beautiful sight as we enjoyed ourselves and half of Cindy's family was drunk nje. Her dad started telling everyone how his daughter is now the wife of a Tycoon ai. Black families and their drunken tendencies.

We danced the night away but I felt so tired around 8pm which is unusual. Pulane did say that pregnancy makes a woman so tired and lazy at times. I guess I'm starting to feel that now. Nathi could see me yawning as we sat at our table.

Nathi: "Let's get you three in bed, Ma Dhlamini. You look tired."

I looked at him and smiled as we walked to our room. Once we got there he made me sit on the bed as he took off my shoes. He rubbed my feet while he knelt down in front of me and I smiled. This guy is just amazing. No evil can truly break a pure bond between two people in love.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, thank you for giving me another chance. I promise you I'll never ever let you down again like that. You're my world, Chichi and now you've blessed me with the world's greatest gift."

Eish, Nathi can make me cry. Or maybe it's the pregnancy hormones. He stood up and kissed me passionately. My body betrayed me as I felt instantly wet. Oh, I miss sex, man. He slowly got on top of me and made slow, passionate love to me. I didn't even get a chance to try some of Eve's tips as he was just focused on pleasing me.

Yep, when a man wants to apologize he'll give you the best sex ever. I didn't even have to punish Nathi, he muffed me like the world was coming to an end. We drifted in each other's arms as we ended our perfect evening.

Nathi

I'm so happy Chichi gave me a second chance. I know I've been a real dick, but I love her so much it pains me. Now it's even worse because she's pregnant with my kids. I've been hoping that she would forgive me because I can't protect her when she's angry at me. All this Gupta shit has got me worked up.

Pontsho fucked us up and the day I find her I'll make sure I skin her alive, literally. As for Gupta, I'll make sure I remove all his limbs and organs while he's alive and conscious. We've even had to beef up security because we just don't know what Gupta is capable of right now. We're in Cape Town so he's not banned from coming here.

Ndumiso has tried his utmost best to find that whore Pontsho, but to no avail. Ntate Phiri said we should relax, she'll come to us herself. I don't even know what he meant by that, but he's never wrong so I'll let it be. Gupta is our main concern right now and we need to find a way to recover our money lost in order to proceed with the purchase of the garage.

I slept like a baby with Chichi in my arms. I truly missed these days. There's nothing better than body heat, but I got disturbed by my dream. It's been an occurring dream for the past week now.

My late mother keeps coming to me in my dreams telling me to protect Chichi, as danger is lurking. This is leaving me uneasy and I just don't know what to do. I'll have to call Ntate Phiri. I don't want to stress Chichi with all this, she's pregnant and doesn't need stress. My kids need to be alright and in order for that to happen, she needs to be alright as well.

I've been praying hard ever since I've been healed from Pontsho's shit. I don't ever want to be away from my wife again. It's high time I pay lobola, so I'll have to speed up the process. Gorilla told me he's found my Father's family. Apparently it was easy for him since they saw me on tv and have been looking for me ever since.

They live in Kzn, so it won't be that hectic to reach them. I'm planning on paying lobola next week and I've already spoken to Julia. I thought she would be angry, but to my surprise she agreed in a heartbeat. I can only pray that Themba lami (My hope) will agree to this. I just want her to be mine, officially.

One week later.

Chichi

Cindy and Thomas stayed in Cape Town for their wedding

while we had to come back to our lives. Even though the Principal told me to stay away until further notice, I decided not to give my enemies the power over me and I went back to school. He tried to protest but eventually gave in.

Fellow learners were staring and making comments, but at the end of the day there can only be one Chichi Mashabela and they won't say anything to my face. Bree and Mandi are a bit disappointed that I fell pregnant, but I told them that for the mere fact that I fell pregnant while on the IUD means that this was all God's plan.

There's a real reason and purpose as to why I'm pregnant as we speak. They remain supportive though. Glen on the other hand is over the moon that he's going to be an uncle soon. It's Friday morning and I won't be going to school today.

We're on our way along with the whole Gang, and Gorilla and Julia will be accompanying us. We're going to see Nathi's father's family. Glen is coming with and so is Uncle Mzwakhe.

Nathi moved back in as soon as we came back from Cape Town. He's been taking care of me like he used to before the Pontsho saga. He's been massaging me, making my lunch and just being an awesome boyfriend.

I went back to Dr. Manyane for a scan just to include him and make him happy. He was over the moon about it and it filled my heart with Joy that we could experience seeing our unborn babies together.

Eve is on her way here with the gang in the Viano. We really need to get miney and buy ourselves a car like this. I'm so tired of renting. Julia, Gorilla and Glen will be traveling together in a separate car and we'll meet in Kzn.

We're driving there and Thomas is driving us, with Zoro in the front seat. The whole road trip started on a good note with all of us happy. Everything is finally falling into place. Nathi was very happy, which isn't really odd, but he just seemed too happy. He was making jokes all the way, stopping on certain landmarks and street signs to take pictures. He was literally the life of the party, which is Zoro's job.

Biggie: "Eh, man, Nathi. O thabile thata ka jeno (You're too happy today). I hope ga re ile go lla (Something bad isn't about to happen) soon."

Nathi: (laughing) "Hai, man Biggie. Dilo di monate bra yaka (It's all good, my man)." Ever heard of the saying "Lethabo le tla le sello?" Which means with too much happiness, comes sadness. For some strange and odd reason, I felt like something bad was about to happen. As Thomas kept driving, Biggie asked him to stop alongside the road to pee. As we stopped, Biggie got out and did his business.

Zoro also did the same. As they were about to walk back into the car, a random, Black Mercedes SUV stopped in front of us out of nowhere. The guys came out with AK 47s and started shooting. I froze as I heard bullets flying. Nathi threw me down and the guys along with Eve and Pulane were shooting back.

Nathi: "Chichi, get down!"

Cindy and Lerato were down with me as they were scared as fuck. I said a short prayer in fear and after about five minutes, there were no more bullets flying.

Zoro: "Shit! She got shot!"

That's all I heard before I blacked out.

Chapter 110

Chichi

I woke up with my ears ringing and beeping machines around me. I looked around and realized that I'm in hospital with a drip connected to my wrist. I jumped in fear as I thought of my babies.

Nathi: "Relax baby wa ka (my baby). You're fine. The three of you are fine."

I breathed a sigh of relief as I sank back into the bed.

Me: "Then why am I here? Why am I connected to a drip?"

Nathi: "You just had some dehydration, Ma Dhlamini. You're fine."

I started recalling the incident that landed me in here. I recall the gunshots.

Me: "But, the gunshots. Who was shot?"

Nathi: "Eve was shot in the arm, but it's nothing major. The bullet shot her and went through her arm. She's lucky she's not even injured. She'll be able to use her arm again in no time. Don't worry about a thing. Eve ke lesole (is a soldier)."

Yoh Nathi seems so calm nje.

Me: "What about the trip?"

Nathi: "We got another car. It's on its way as we speak."

Me: "And those guys?"

Nathi: "They were sent by Gupta. One of them was alive after we took them down, but he just said that Gupta is still in Jozi, but in hiding."

Yoh this Gupta guy wanted to finish us all. And then Pulane? Since when does she handle shootings. Lerato and Cindy need to learn fast or else we won't make it out alive next time.

Nathi: "I'm sorry I got you involved in such a life, Ma Dhlamini. It was never my intention."

Me: "It's okay. I chose you, all of you and I meant every word."

He smiled and kissed me on the forehead. I got discharged after a few minutes, and while walking out with Nathi's aid since he says I'm carrying precious, fragile cargo, I saw Eve walking out of the other room as if nothing ever happened. She wasn't even wearing an arm sling.

Me: (shocked) "Eve!"

Eve: (smiling) "Hey, Ma Dhlamini wa Nkosinathi. A re vayeng (Let's get moving). The Dhlamini family is waiting on us."

Me: "Bathong (Goodness), Eve. You were shot an hour ago."

Biggie was walking beside her.

Biggie: "This one ke mafavuka (This one doesn't die easily). She resurrects shame."

These two are just weird. If I were him and this was my wife, I'd flip right now. I saw Pulane and Menzi was sitting opposite her. Seems like Menzi is upset with Pulane or something, but she seems unbothered. I don't know if it's true or what, but this crew brings out the bitch in us women.

We walked out as Nathi was still by my side and we walked into a different Viano.

White in colour this time, with another one behind us. I gave Nathi a questioning look.

Nathi: "It's our guys, babe. For security detail. Nothing hectic."

I nodded and walked back in. We proceeded to drive since we were about half an hour away from where we were headed. We finally arrived in Ballito, and stopped at a very simple, but nice orange house. It wasn't very big but seemed big enough for a family of about 5 or 6 people.

I got confused as I saw so many people a tent and a bus. I thought we came here to meet Nathi's paternal family and introduce him and Glen to their ancestors. I gave Nathi a questioning look yet again and he smiled broadly, revealing his beautiful dimples.

Me: "Nathi, what's happening?"

Nathi: "I'm paying lobola for you today, baby."

Eve: "Surprise!"

I looked around and everyone was smiling in the van, and it just brought me to tears. Ai, if pregnancy is like this then I really don't want to do it again.

Nathi: "Hao, baby, I thought you'd be happy."

Pulane: "She is, it's just pregnancy hormones. O tla tlwaela (you'll get used to it), akere (right) baby?"

Menzi just kept quiet.

Pulane: "Yoh!"

Biggie: "Aowa banna, Pulane, Menzi wa tepa (enjoys sulking) man. Maybe you should get pregnant again. Bokang has turned him into a real softie."

Menzi: "Mxm, tsek (piss off), man, Biggie."

They all laughed as we walked out. Yoh, Nathi is full of surprises shame. He's very romantic too. I just hope he's not paying lobola for me because I'm pregnant. We've been engaged for months now, I know.

I just assumed he'd pay lobola for me after matric. Or maybe he's doing it out of fear since I told him to do it after this whole Pontsho saga. Either way, I'm very happy.

I saw people who looked like they're from the village, with those traditional elderly attires. I saw a few people from my father's side and Koko Mokgadi and Aidah were also here. Aidah looks a bit better shame, but I think one mistake she'll really lose it. The marquee is big and closed off on the sides, so I'm not able to see what's happening inside. We walked into the yard and found tables filled with food and pots, people were already done cooking. As soon as they saw Nathi, Glen and I they were ululating.

We were stopped by an old lady, probably in her 70s but still looks really strong, although a bit thin. She was ululating with a broom in her arms. She was a very light

but had dimples and hazel eyes just like Nathi and Glen.

Old woman: (Ululating) "NKOSI DLAMINI wena wekunene, wena lowacedza LUBOMBO NGEKUHLEHLETELA. Sidlubuladledle sakalobamba, sona sitsi SIBADLA SIBE SIBADLUBULISA. Samketi SINEMBOVU EMALANGANI



Wena losidvwaba silutfuli, singabantolo sifute ekhabo NYOKO ,NKOSI  
wenalowabophela LOKUHLE EMTFUNTINI wentela BAFATI  
BETEKUHAWUKELA.

NKOSI!!! DLAMINI! (Clan names). Bafikile abantwana bakho Sbusiso (Your children have arrived, Sbusiso). Se ba ibonile indhlela, ba buyile ekhaya (They've seen the way and found their way back home). Siyaba amukela Dhlamini, vikela abantwana bakho na bezukulu bakho (We welcome them, Dhlamini, protect your children and your grandchildren). Amukela indodakazi yakho esha, umfazi ka Nkosinathi (welcome your new daughter, Nkosinathi's wife)."

She ululated again after people were listening to her attentively. I gather she's the great aunt and elder of the family. She welcomed us and hugged us all. When she approached me she gave me a stern look and made funny sounds, much like Ntate Phiri always makes. Nathi was beaming with pride, it felt so good seeing him like this. I guess it's really nice having a sense of belonging.

Old woman: (burping and making sounds) "Mntwanami (my child), uMthande uNkosinathi, ungamshiyi futhi ungampheleli inhliziyo (Love Nkosinathi, don't leave him and also be patient with him). Uthando lwakhe for wena uyamangaza futhi izitha zakhe zikwatile (His love for you is unique and beautiful and it has made his enemies angry). Ingozi iyeza, mntwana wami, kodwa uqaphele futhi ukhumbule ungapheli inhliziyo (Danger is lurking, my child, but be careful and remember, be patient)."  
I don't know much zulu but all I heard was danger and be patient. I gave Nathi a confused look.

Old woman: (chuckling) "He'll explain everything to you."

Hao, is she trying to be funny? She just spoke to me in English. Why didn't she do that all along?

Old woman: "Don't worry, I'm an old woman, but very wise. I love you already, just like the Dhlamini ancestors. They welcomed you long before you met Nkosinathi. They are then ones who guided you to his path. Everything that happened was for a reason. You're going to experience a huge storm before the calm, my baby, but always remember, do not leave Nkosinathi. You're the chosen one."

Hai, this woman and her riddles. Is she a prophet or sangoma or what? I just nodded with a brief smile as the people outside sang while we made our way to the house. There was a wendy house and about ten rooms outside in the yard. These yards are so huge, I wish I had a yard like this. Us women had to go to our own room, while the men went to theirs. Mama also followed us and Nathi whispered in my ears before leaving.

Nathi: "I'll see you later, Mrs. Dhlamini. Ngiyakuthanda yezwa (I love you, okay)?"  
I nodded as he kissed my cheek and Mama pulled me gently to our chosen room. We entered while Lerato, Cindy and Pulane assisted with carrying the bags while Eve just had her handbag in one arm. I guess her injured arm is still painful.

Me: "You guys are sneaky. You knew about this and didn't tell me?"

They all laughed, while Cindy was crying tears of joy. She's a cry baby like me. Eve:"Ah, you know I'm very good at keeping secrets. I wouldn't tell on anyone even if I had a gun to my head."

We all burst out in laughter.

Julia:"I'm glad he managed to surprise you like that. Now come, we don't have much time. We have to change."

Hao, these people aren't okay. Pulane pulled out a huge luggage bag with traditional attire for all of us. I'm so stunned. These girls are not okay shame. My wedding dress is so beautiful, custom made with Zulu cloth. It's a mermaid dress with its own special design. All of them even Mama had their own unique designs on and we had the signature Zulu hats on. I'm so excited. I just can't wait to be Mrs. Dhlamini.

We walked out and found Nathi and the guys already waiting outside the rooms. I almost cried seeing him in his traditional attire. My man is handsome, bathong (goodness). We had to walk out hand in hand, with Gorilla alongside Julia, He's such a good father figure and I just love his role in our lives.

Nathi smiled at me with so much pride in his eyes. I couldn't even be happier. We're having the ceremony here instead of Patrick's home and I'm very glad. Apparently my aunts from Mom's side and Patrick's side were very angry. They wanted the lobola to themselves.

Koko also wanted the lobola so to keep the peace Mama gave them all something. Apparently Nathi paid R50 000 for me. I feel it's a bit much, but he's more than happy to have paid that amount. Our traditional wedding was so great. I couldn't be happier to have had my surprise wedding. I love my Nathi so much, I can't wait for this brand new adventure.

## Chapter 111

### Chichi

Our wedding was so great. Even better than I've imagined. I'm now traditionally married to Nkosinathi Dhlamini, and he and Glen have found their family and everything is just perfect. They had a ceremony done for all of us, including Nathi and Glen.

It's Sunday now and we have to head back home. It's been fun, but I have to go back home. Life is waiting for us and we still have to attack the Pontsho issue. Gupta might possibly try to attack us again, so the guards have us surrounded.

We said our goodbyes and headed back home. The guys were drinking as usual and Gorilla and Julia went back in their own car and Glen was squeezed in the car with us. We had our usual banter and fun on the way back. After about two hours, we made our way home.

I'm so glad Thomas is such a good driver because had it been someone else, we would have taken longer than that. Thomas dropped us off first, but they asked to use the toilet before leaving. I noticed something strange before entering. The gate wasn't

locked and I remember Nathi locking it before we left. As we walked in we were met with a sight of horror.

Both our cars were damaged, the cars were spray painted on the sides with the words “Your time is running out, G.” I assume G is for Gupta. I think they all became sober immediately.

Nathi: “Wait outside for a while, we need to check the area first.”

He drew out his gun and so did the rest of the guys. The women didn’t do anything this time, we stayed in the car until they gave us the all clear. I don’t like what’s happening to our gang now. Gupta has to be found and in order for us to do that, we need to find Pontsho. Nathi came out after a short while.

Nathi: “You can come in.”

We walked in and the house was trashed. From the tv to the microwave, even the food from the fridge was taken. I’m so hurt that even some of our clothes were taken, and my special diamond necklace Nathi bought for me back in Cape Town. This Gupta idiot is getting on my nerves shame.

Eve: “How the fuck did these people get in here? Where was the security guard?!”

Biggie: “We’ll go check it out now. You guys stay here.”

Biggie, Thomas and Zoro went out to check on the security guard while the rest of us stayed here. My car isn’t that expensive, but I’m so hurt. It’s my first car and has some real sentimental value.

Pulane: “You guys can’t stay here tonight. There’s glass everywhere.”

Eve: “You guys can stay with us for a few days. It’s not safe for you here in any case.” She’s probably right, but I’m so angry and hurt. This is our house, our home, man. The nerve. We need to teach him a serious lesson. Biggie, Thomas and Zoro came back with feedback.

Zoro: “The security guard was drugged. But we found some footage. We’ll check it out at Big’s house. We’re not sure how safe we all are right now so it’s best we all crash at his house until we figure out a plan.”

Nathi: “I second that. We need to protect our women.”

Biggie: “The sooner wena Thomas le (and) Zoro get these two to learn how to shoot the better.”

He said that pointing at Cindy and Lerato. We really could use everyone being able to protect themselves, especially now. I’m not ready to shoot someone but I’m ready to protect my cubs at any given time. We left the house as is and headed straight to Biggie’s house. I took a few items of clothing like my uniform and all. I’m so bummed about thr cars and my necklace. Sentimental value is pretty serious to me. Nathi said he’d contact a cleaning company to clean all this up by tomorrow.

We finally arrived at Eve’s house and even though I’m distraught, they are all tending to me, to my annoyance. I just want to get this bitch found. We all sat around the lounge and Eve and Pulane organized us some drinks. I’m so mad, but they all just seem too calm.

Cindy: "I think we should all head to bed."

Me: "Not so fast. What are you guys doing to ensure that we catch Pontsho? We're running out of our savings and have to start saving from scratch. This bitch is on the loose and stole half a million rand from us. Doesn't that bother you?"

Menzi: "Chichi, of course it does bother me. It bothers all of us, but we don't have control of the situation."

These men are fucking with us, badly.

Me: (chuckling) "Hehe

you have no control? When last did she use her card? Did you even bother checking with Ndumiso on her card transactions and location using her phone? Nathi, she's been posting somewhere so surely you can use that to locate her. People like Pontsho get sloppy at some point."

They all kept quiet for a while.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini, angithi we just wanted to get all the weddings out the way and sort everything out."

Me: (chuckling) "Hehe, you men are seriously fucking with our livelihood, you know."

They all grew shocked but I didn't give a shit.

Me: "You put us all at risk, now we missed and dodged Gupta's bullets yesterday, but I doubt we'd miss them again. I'm supposed to be going back to school and now I can't because our lives are in serious danger. If you don't fix this by tonight, I'm going to be very angry – at all of you."

They all looked at me hesitantly and probably agreed on what I was saying mentally, because they all nodded.

Me: "Good, now we can order some food since we're all exhausted and get to work.

Nkosinathi, Call Ndumiso, I want to hear how far he is with Pontsho's search."

As he was about to call Ndumiso, Lerato made a loud noise.

Lerato: "Yoh! Guys, you won't believe this!"

Cindy: "Keng (what is it)?"

Lerato: "Yoh, let me rather show you."

Lerato put her phone in the centre of the table and played the video. My goodness! It's Pontsho's live Instagram feed. She looks so weird. It's only been a week yet she looks like complete shit, dark grey circles under her eyes, and looks way thinner and so unhealthy and frail in the video.

Pontsho: (crying and scratching herself) "My name is Pontsho Manamela, and I'm originally from Seshego. I've made some really bad choices in my life. I decided to turn against my loving parents and fall for the Nigerian kingpin Oda "Gupta"

Adeyemi. He promised the world at the tender age of 15.

I became his 'wife' and first grade whore and I also had to recruit girls for his trafficking ring. He uses the girls in Johannesburg, at some of the Ukhamba Flats in

Hillbrow. Please, Chichi, if you're watching this, you'll know what to do as I'm about to delete this account within three minutes. Please find me before he does."

With that said she hung up. Ntate Phiri was right. She has indeed found her own way back to us. Now all we have to do is trace her stupid call.

Me:"Hao, guys! Le sa eme (You're still waiting)?! Call Ndumiso as in now!"

Ndumiso called Ndumiso and he traced her within 30 seconds. Apparently the stupid bitch is at The Capital Hotel opposite Times Square in Menlyn.

Me:"Le sa emetse eng, mara Nathi (What are you guys still waiting for, though Nathi?"

Thomas took the car keys and they all left us ladies. The girls looked at me inquisitively.

Me:"What?"

Lerato:"Ja ne, you're acting like a fearless girl. I just hope you don't get hurt, babe."

Mxm, nna I need Pontsho dead as in yesterday.

Chapter 112

Chichi

The guys left and proceeded to the hotel. I can't wait to look that bitch in the eye. I want to be the last person she sees before we skin her alive. This time, Cindy and Lerato hae better not catch feelings. I don't need this shit right now.

I want to be a loving mother to my children and they need to grow up in a happy home. After about two hours, The guys finally came back with Pontsho. She wasn't even cuffed or tied and seemed like she didn't resist. It's almost like she is in surrender mode.

Nathi shoved her to the study and I didn't even want to waste time.

Me:"Girls, a re yeng (Let's go). Tonight we're all going to watch the show."

We all proceeded to the Torture Chamber even though Lerato and Cindy are scared as always. We got there and Pontsho eas tied to the chair. Nathi was breathing fire and I totally get it. We've been through so much just because of a stupid bitch like her.

Nathi:"Let's stop wasting time and cut her fucking head off."

Me:"Not so fast, Baby. She needs to suffer while her man listens. Even better, video call that fucker."

They all looked at me so shocked, while Eve wasn't bothered.

Eve:"I second that. Since when do you guys have hearts when it comes to whores like this one?"

Pontsho:"Please, I didn't mean to do any of that. I just wanted freedom and peace from Gupta. I can give you his location and all of his banking details. You can get his money in exchange for everything I've taken from you."

That's not a bad idea, but she's not going Scott free shame. I'm running the show today, this is way too personal for me.

Me:"Okay, write it all down."

She wrote down all his banking details and gave us the account numbers and passwords. It's weird how she remembers all that stuff. She's never been stupid, but she has made some pretty stupid decisions to last a life time. After she wrote everything down, we got Njabulo to get working.

He had to hack all Gupta's accounts and take every single cent. I didn't want him to leave him with anything. I knew that would get his attention. We took about 1.5 million rand from all of the accounts. Talk about doing shit in a foreign country and getting away with it. Within minutes he called us. That's exactly where we wanted him.

Me: "Nathi, answer him and put him on speaker."

Gupta: "You fucking Ike (asshole)! I'll get you for this oo! You'll pay me back every single cent including your life and that bitch's life! You'll never see your kids being born, Ike, I'll make sure!"

Nathi: "You wouldn't be telling me that shit knowing what I have here with me!"

Gupta: "What do you mean Ike?!"

Nathi: "Video call me if you ever want to see you Black Diamond again, bitch!"

Nathi hung up in frustration as he breathed fire.

Me: "Nkosinathi, calm down. We have him right where we want him. Zoro, send the money to Njabulo. Tell him to make the purchase of the garage within immediate effect."

Zoro nodded and was on it. I was the lady in charge and loving it. I even forgot I'm pregnant and vulnerable. Within a minute, Gupta video called us back.

Nathi: "Ja?"

Gupta: "Where is she?!"

Nathi: "You're in no position to make demands. But well, I'll at least give you a chance to say goodbye."

Nathi turned the phone and let Pontsho face it. She was crying at this point. I could see how horrified Gupta was. I guess he really does love her even though he turned her into a whore.

Gupta: "Ifunanya (My love). Are you okay?"

Pontsho: "G, I'm so sorry."

Gupta: "It's okay, Ifunanya. Just as long as you stay alive we can work this out. Tell me, why did you run away from me oo? I gave you the world."

Pontsho: "You turned me into a whore, G. I've had five abortions because of you. I'll never be able to have children of my own while you have seven."

This is very painful

but it won't erase everything she put us through. Gupta looked more remorseful than sad and even more fearful of her situation.

Gupta: "I'm sorry, Ifunanya. I'll fix this, please just say the word. Do you still love me?"

Pontsho: "Of course I do, G."

Gupta: "Then let me fix this."

Pontsho slowly nodded. I kind of feel like she's only agreeing because she doesn't want to die, but well, I'll let her be.

Nathi turned the camera to himself.

Nathi: "Well, sorry to burst your bubble, Gupta, but you have said your goodbyes."

Gupta: (teary) "Please, don't do this, Oga (Boss)."

Nathi: "Hehe, so now I'm Oga? I Wasn't Oga when you tried killing all ten of us in the kombi, right?! I wasn't Oga when you threatened my wife and unborn children. I wasn't Oga when you trashed my house and cars!"

This is too personal, so Nathi and I have to teach both of them a lesson. All this while Njabulo got busy tracking Gupta's location. He let us in via sms on what's what.

Nathi: "You're very lucky, G. You're a VIP today. You get front row seat and special services. You get to see your woman die today."

Pontsho wailed while Gupta begged with tears in his eyes.

Gupta: "Nathi, I'll do anything, please."

Nathi asked Biggie to hold the phone so that the whole show could be recorded while Gupta was watching. Gupta kept begging, but Nathi was oblivious to his cries. Nathi took a blowing torch and wore his plastic mask to protect his eyes. He started burning Pontsho's thighs through her jeans as she cried out in pain.

Gupta was crying at this point, but we didn't give a fuck. The room was silent as if we were in an exam watching our instructor demonstrate a lesson for us. Pontsho's loud cries and Gupta's heartbreaking tears filled the room.

Gupta: "Please, please stop! I'll do anything!"

None of us felt any remorse. We could have been dead by now. Nathi burnt her stomach and blood was oozing out of her as her organs burnt in an instant. Cindy ran out to vomit as usual, but the rest of us stayed to watch the show. I'm pregnant and sensitive to smell, but I can still stomach the smell of blood. Nathi proceeded to burn her vagina and the smell was so awful. If only people's pussies could be sown back closed so that they'd stop whoring like her.

Nathi burnt her chest open and ripped out her heart. Gupta was screaming and cursing but who gives a shit? He's probably done so much shit to many innocent girls, so why should we feel sorry for him?

Pontsho breathed her last breath as we watched. I'm not even sorry or remorseful. Sometimes you need to get rid of all the dirt in the world as they'll pollute it further, which includes people like Pontsho.

Gupta: "I'll get you, Nathi! I'll kill you all!"

As he said that we heard bullets flying in his room and the connection went dead. We can only hope that he's killed, finally.

Nathi kept talking to me I assume to make conversation and to make the drive less awkward. The next thing I knew we had our first sign of danger.

Eve: "Eh, Nathi, where are you guys? I see a Big, Black Mercedes following us. Looks exactly the same as the one that followed us back in Kzn."

I looked back and started panicking. I might be bolder now, but whenever I think of my unborn babies, I feel scared and panic immediately.

Nathi: "We're about ten minutes away from you guys. Eh, Tman, gata lefura (step on it)."

Thomas: (in the background) "Sho sho."

Eve: "He's getting closer. Too close."

Nathi: "Cindy, you're in the passenger seat. Give us the number plate."

Cindy: "There isn't any."

I could hear the guys in the background.

Zoro: "Shit. Lerato, are you okay?"

Lerato: "Yes, I'm okay."

Zoro: "Don't panic, we're coming. Chichi, make sure you don't panic, for the babies' sake."

Okay, that was awkward. Perhaps he's just concerned since I'm the only pregnant one in here.

The next thing I knew, the SUV rammed into us and We all screamed. All of us except Pulane and Eve.

Pulane: "Girls, calm the fuck down."

Nathi: (frantic) "What's happening?!"

Eve: "He rammed into us. I'm trying my best to regain control."

Nathi: "I see you. You're a bit far. This is what you're going to do; check how many guys are in there if you can and then pull over to the side."

Eve: "There's only one from what I can tell. Shit. It looks like... It looks like Gupta!"

I started panicking as soon as she said that.

Nathi: "Pull over. We're coming."

Eve was about to pull over, but Gupta increased his pace and rammed into us so hard, the car spun out of control. Luckily, we were on the left lane and as the car was spinning, we were thrown to the yellow lane. The spinning caused some delay as some cars stopped while others piled up on top of each other, making it impossible for Nathi and the guys to get to us. They were completely blocked. We were screaming except Pulane and Eve as usual as they prepared their guns. I wish I had a gun at this moment to protect my babies.

Nathi: (frantic) "What's happening?! Eve?!"

Eve: "We're fine, no one is injured. He's coming out of his car with a gun. We're getting ready to shoot."

Nathi grew scared.

Nathi: "Shit! I'm coming!"

I could hear all of them coming out and running on foot. I felt a surge of panic and fear rush all over me. I couldn't move, which is so unlike me, really. Lerato is still the



same wimp she's always been, while Cindy also got the courage to take out her gun. I heard gunshots as Lerato and I got down, while Cindy, Pulane and Eve were shooting. Seems like Gupta was shooting at us with an AK47, because the bullets were flying non stop. Lerato was screaming non stop, which was so annoying, man. Nathi was so frantic, running while talking on the phone. I heard Eve scream out in pain.

Eve:"Aah! Fuck! He shot my leg!"

This is very scary. Lerato tried to get out and crawl out of the car in an attempt to run away leaving me alone in the car. I heard Cindy and Pulane drop down and I felt my heart beating out of my chest. I saw a big guy with big black shades open the door.

Gupta:"Let's go, bitch before I shoot you."

Pulane:"No! Don't do it, Chichi!"

He shot her arm and she screamed. Nathi and the guys were shouting and cursing in frustration. Gupta took the phone.

Gupta:"I told you, I'll take your precious belongings from you, Nathi."

He hung up. He dragged me out pointing a gun at me, while Lerato was behind the car. He found her on the ground too and pulled her up.

Lerato:"Please! Please don't take me! Take her! It's not me you want, you want to hurt Nathu, not Zoro. Take her, please!"

Wow, Lerato just did that to me. Just like that?!

I saw Nathi and the guys running with guns from a distance. They drew their guns out and were about to shoot, until Gupta pushed Lerato the ground and used me as his shield. I saw the guys run much faster, but they were still far from us. I dropped a tear as Gupta threw me into his car and sped off. I looked out the window as I saw Nathi wail helplessly, while Lerato was "crying." This bitch practically sold me out and I'll make sure she regrets it.

Chapter 114

Chichi

Gupta drove off with me and I thought to myself that perhaps I can try and escape, but the door was locked. I looked around for signs I could recognize but I don't even know this place. I can see a garage and I hoped that he'd stop, but he didn't.

Gupta:"If you try anything funny, I'll hit you in the stomach with this gun. I know you don't want to lose your precious babies."

Tears streamed down my face as I thought I can't even defend myself. Will I ever even see My Nathi again? I don't know what to do. Perhaps I can try and look for attention outside from passerbyers. We've been on the highway for a while now and I don't even have my phone anymore. I've been kidnapped and I'll most probably be sold to one of his brothel brothers.

I thought long and hard, but I could see I stood no chance. I sunk in my seat as I said a prayer. Out of nowhere a traffic police car flashed its lights behind us. Maybe this is God's way of saving me from this misery. Gupta didn't pull over until the policemen played the siren. Gupta hid the gun underneath his seat.

Gupta: "If you try anything funny, your babies will die and I'll kill these cops. Got it, akwuna (whore)?!"

I nodded in fear and wiped off my tears as the policemen approached the car.

Gupta: (smiling) "Policeman, how can I help you, oga (boss)?"

Policeman1: "Ja, license please, bafo (brother)."

Seems like Gupta didn't want to take out his license.

Gupta: "Let me check, my dashboard, Oga (boss)."

Policeman2: "Ah bafo, le kwerekwere le le busy ka di Oga Oga (this foreign ass is busy calling us Oga this, Oga that)."

I could tell he hated being called that because his face changed immediately.

Policeman1: "Ai wena le wena, Norman. O tlo re baezisa man (You'll get us into trouble). Stop calling people that and do your job."

Policeman2: "Ah, these are my streets, man. Eh, baba, license. Entlek (actually), get out of the car."

Gupta was hesitant.

Policeman1: "Sesi (sis), o llela eng (Why are you crying)?"

I kept quiet.

Policeman1: "Did this guy kidnap you or something?"

Gupta: "Ah, man. Just because I'm from Naija now you want to assume the worst about me?"

Policeman1: "Speaking of which, why is your car scratched and dented like this? Looks like you were recently involved in an accident."

Policeman2: "Bafo (Bro), Big boss said we need to be on the lookout for a Black SUV, dented with some broken windows and no number plate. It was involved in a shootout."

I grew scared as I saw Gupta reach under his seat. The first Policeman tried taking out his gun, but Gupta shot him first. The second one shot at the car while I got down and screamed. Gupta got out of the car and shot the second cop. I wailed in fear as I thought my life is over. I can't even try to escape. If this guy can kill two cops then I'm as good as dead. He got back into the car and sped off.

Nathi

Everything is a real, shitty mess. The day let our guard down is when this motherfucker decides to strike. Tonight is supposed to be our launch party for our new garage. Things were falling into place and now this shit happens. Pulane was shot in the leg while Eve was shot twice in the arm and leg. Cindy was shot in the shoulder. Lerato was unharmed and I'm surprised Gupta didn't shoot her nor take her either.

She's the weakest of them all and still can't even shoot to save anyone nje. She's pretty useless and now my wife is gone. How the fuck will I cope without her?

Without knowing where she is?! We're waiting in the hospital area and hired Njabulo and a PI to sort this out. I need to find Gupta as in yesterday.

EP: (angry) “Yey wena Lerato! Why was Chichi the one taken when you could’ve saved her?!”

Lerato: (crying) “I... I don’t know, Zoro. How was I supposed to fight against a man with an AK47?”

Zoro: “Don’t fuck with me, Lerato. Don’t you dare fuck with anyone! You could have stalled him or taken a bullet just like all the other ladies. Even Chichi would have taken one for the team!”

Zoro was livid.

Biggie: “Calm doen, Zoro, please. Basadi ba ga ba tshwane, mfo (These women aren’t the same, bro).”

Menzi: “Let’s just thank God that they’re all okay, all of them.”

Zoro clicked his tongue while Lerato was sobbing. At this point I just couldn’t give a shit about her. Something is off about her and she’s very vague about what happened during the whole shooting. The ladies came out of their wards while their husbands went to them. Eve was in crutches, while Pulane and Cindy had arm slings on.

Menzi: “P, are you okay, baby?”

Pulane: “Yes. I’ll be fine, love.”

She gave Lerato a look. I know that look. She knows something but I’ll wait until we’re alone to find out what’s up.

Thomas: “A re vayeng (Let’s go).”

Biggie: “Nathi, don’t worry, mfo. We’ll find Chichi soon. Gorilla is also helping us. A re vaye (let’s go).”

I slowly got up even though I’m deeply pained about all this. I’m the only one going back home to an empty bed, while my wife is somewhere out there being kept against her will. I’ll never forgive someone who does such to my loved ones. We juat got married, man. I’ll never lose my faith in God and I hope He brings her back to me in one piece.

We arrived at Biggie’s house hoping to hear from Ndumiso and Gorilla. We offered the ladies to go lie down for a bit, but they refused. You’d swear Eve wasn’t shot because she just insisted on making lunch for all of us. Pulane and Cindy decided to help

even though their only able to use one arm each. Lerato joined the ladies as we men worked on a plan to get my Chichi back.

Pulane

I’m so upset with everything that’s been going on. We should have never let our guard down and now Chichi is missing and we’re injured. All of us except Lerato. We all made a pact before getting into this family, we’re a team and we help each other no matter what. Lerato could have done more in that situation, instead she decided to offer Chichi in exchange for her own freedom. Why the fuck would we trust a person like her after all this?! I’m so pissed, I just want to strangle her. She should be glad

my arm isn't working. As we were washing the vegetables, preparing some lunch, I couldn't help but confront her. I just had to.

Pulane:"Ja, Lerato. Wa di busa chomi, waitse (You rock, friend, you know)?"

Lerato: (edgy) "Keng (What is it) Pulane?"

Pulane:"Ai, nna I'm asking myself why you're even still here when you specifically told Gupta to take Chichi instead of you!"

Cindy and Eve widened their eyes and got so angry.

Lerato:"Pulane, lower your voice, please!"

Pulane:"Why should I? You don't want your precious hubby to know what you did akere (right)?"

Lerato: (teary-eyed) "Please, Pulane. Don't you dare judge me. I couldn't let him have both of us. What if he killed me?"

Eve:"Wow! That's the most selfish thing you've ever done, Lee! You saw the guys were close and had you tried to stall him, we could have done something!"

Pulane:"Please, take her instead. You want revenge against Nathi and not Zoro, right? Those were your words, weren't they, Lerato?"

She looked so helpless. I get it. She's still young and very much immature, but that doesn't mean she should just laze around while we all do the work. I'm bloody pissed and I just can't hide it anymore. Or maybe she's still pissed at Zoro wantint Chichi. But wow that was just low.

Lerato: (crying) "Please, forgive me. I didn't mean to do that. I, I panicked. I mean you all go around acting like Chichi is the most important person in the group. While the rest of us are in the shadows."

Eh, banna. Ra nyelwa mo (We're being told shit right now)."

Cindy:"What the fuck, Lerato?! Wa te kutlwa gore o reng, mara (Are you actually listening to yourself though)?! You sound like a serious jealous bitch right now! Ever since your wedding you're just never interested in anything. Wena you just want to reap the benefits of our hard work.

Who's in the shadows here? Because if I'm not mistaken you're the one who married Zoro knowing very well he's got feelings for Chichi! Ska re nyela wena (Don't fuck with us)! We have serious shit to deal with and you're whining like a little bitch! Fix your mistake, man Lerato and stop being a fucking whimp all the time!"

Cindy was pissed. I hardly see her angry because she's a real life Cinderella. I expected her to be just like Lerato, but she's proven to be a tough cookie, man.

Lerato: (Sad) "I'm sorry. I really am. I didn't mean to. Please don't tell Zoro. Don't tell any of them, please."

Cindy:"Just get your shit in order. We all make mistakes, but if you pull such a stunt again, I'll personally skin you alive! I wouldn't want you sacrificing me and my unborn child the way you did Chichi. If anything happens to her just know it's on you."

Heh banna, Cindy.

Pulane: "Are you saying you're pregnant?"

Cindy: "Yes. I wanted to surprise you guys after the launch tonight."

We all rejoiced except for the sad Lerato.

Eve: "Hehe congratulations, babe!"

Cindy: "Thank you."

Pulane: "So you went ahead and shot at Gupta knowing you're pregnant?"

Cindy: "It was do or die, babe. I love children and I'm very happy to be pregnant.

Thomas has been begging me for a baby, but I believe that we should fight to protect existing life first above life that is not yet born. If that makes sense."

Pulane: "I get you, babe."

Cindy: "One can always try again if things don't work out."

Lerato was just sad nje, if I didn't know better I'd say the pregnancy news dampened her mood even further.

Lerato: "Please excuse me."

With that said she just walked out.

Lerato

I'm so Hurt that no one is in my corner, not even my own husband. He's been so loving and caring and I thought things would get along just fine. I'm just hurt because he only consoled me for a mere two minutes and worried about Chichi ever since. Am I not beautiful enough? Am I not worthy of his full love and attention?

What depresses me most is the fact that all these women are having children, even Chichi who's the youngest amongst us while I'm struggling to conceive. Apparently I was born without a uterus, so basically I just can't conceive. A part of me begged Gupta to take Chichi because of my jealousy.

She fell pregnant even though she's been on the IUD, while people like me are just so misfortuned. Even Cindy is now pregnant and she's barely been married for three months. Why do I have all the bad luck in the world? Sure, I made a mistake, but it can be fixed. A big part of me regrets what I did, but I just want to be loved and adored like all these ladies.

Will God ever bless me with a child? We can even try Invitro or a surrogate. I'm willing to do anything to give Zoro a child. Maybe then he'll love me the way I need him to. Perhaps if Chichi finally dies life will move on and we'd all be at peace without having favourites in the family.

Chapter 115

Chichi

Matthew 5 v 38 says: "You have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

Numbers 23 v 23 says "Know this, your sins will indeed catch up with you."

Indeed we've really fucked up. We killed Pontsho, Gupta's black diamond and now here I am. I'm the victim of circumstances. I should've listened to God in Romans 12 v 19 when he said: "Revenge not yourselves, my dearly beloved; but give place unto

wrath, for it is written: Revenge is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” Maybe if I had just given all unto the Lord we wouldn’t be in this situation.

Gupta pointed his gun at me yet again.

Gupta:”Out. One wrong move and I’ll kill you. Capish (Got it)?”

I nodded and slowly got out. I tried to recognize the surroundings but I don’t recognize this place at all. We’re in the middle of nowhere near an abandoned building. He pointed the gun at my back and instructed me to walk forward. The further I walked, the more nauseated I got. The stench is so unbearable that I vomited.

Gupta:”Get up, stupid Anuohia (bitch).”

He kept calling me weird names in his language. I don’t even know what they mean, but I can tell they’re very derogatory.

Gupta:”Move!”

I composed myself even though my gut was hit by the disgusting smell in front of me. I walked in and it looks like there are a few people who live here. This flat is so dirty and uncared for, it looks as if it could collapse any moment. We walked up the long flight of stairs until we reached the sixth floor. He opened one of the rooms and it looks pretty decent. There’s a bed with neat bedding and a stylish couch and bathroom in here. Everything looks clean at least and I assume it’s one of his flats or probably one of the rooms he uses for his sexcapades.

Gupta:”Sit. No funny business.”

I just sat down and looked around. I tried searching for a phone with my eyes, but I saw nothing. I miss my Nathi, I miss my family and I miss my life.

Me:”How long do you intend on keeping me here for?”

Gupta:”Not long. I just need my money back and then you’ll go back to your little life.”

I sighed in relief.

Gupta:”Oh, but I’ll have to give you back to Nathi in a body bag. You killed my Black Diamond, so I might as well return the favour.”

My eyes grew tearful as I heard him say that. I’m actually going to die. I probably deserve it.

Gupta:”Or maybe I should just force you to do abortion. Who wants to have your bastard children in this world? Stay there. I’m coming now now. One wrong move, Chichi, I’ll blow your fucking head off.”

He closed the door and walks out. I sat there crying in defeat. Dear God, where are you when I need you most?

Two months later

Nathi

I haven’t slept a wink and I couldn’t even sleep at my own house. What’s the point of being there when the one person who gives it life isn’t there anymore? My heart is bleeding, I literally feel like I’ve been stabbed by a knife deep in my gut. I miss my wife.

We even contacted Ntate Phiri, but all he said was she's safe. Gupta won't kill her, but all we have to do is pray and phahla. He says my late mother is watching over her. That is supposed to give me hope, but I'm just depressed for days. No amount of food can calm me down. We all have been here at Biggie's ever since the shooting and the launch has been postponed, although we had to get it up and running.

I've lost so much weight and I just can't imagine what Chichi has been through. The PI is fucking useless and Njabulo says we just have to wait for Gupta to call us. We are supposed to be enjoying our pregnancy and I just hope she's okay. Ntate Phiri says she's still alive and can sense her spirit, but it's very faint and low. She is losing her will to live and I just can't have that.

I've been meditating and reading the Bible. Ma Dhlamini wami taught me to always trust in the Lord no matter what. I know He's looking out for her and our children. I just need her to be strong for us. She just needs to hang in there a little longer for I know that we will have a breakthrough.

Exodus 14 v 14 says: "The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

Psalms 37 v 28 says: "For the LORD loves justice And does not forsake His godly ones; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked will be cut off."

I can't afford to lose hope, I just can't. When Chichi comes back she'll be hopeless and drained and I have to be strong for her. I have to be strong for my wife.

Chichi

It's been two months since Gupta locked me up in here like a damn caged animal.

Two whole fucking months of not seeing my Nathi and being terrified of when he'll finally decide to kill me. He told me that my face and posters are all over ever since the gang reported me missing.

I'm sure my family is a whole mess. He leaves me with some old woman sometimes who just sits and reads her magazine. I've tried to grab an object of some sort to hide, but he makes sure he never leaves anything behind after feeding me.

I've been dreaming of a beautiful woman who looks just like Nathi, who keeps telling me to hang in there for my children and that I'll see Nathi soon. I'm tired. I only get fed once a day and I have no idea how these babies are holding on.

They've even started kicking which is an amazing feeling, but I wish I could be sharing it with my husband. I miss my life, my school and my friends, but right now I wish I could die. Gupta walked in and found me sitting helplessly on the couch.

Gupta: "Here's your food."

I've been eating nothing but bread and butter with water for the past two months.

Me: "How long do you plan on keeping me here?"

Gupta: "For as long as I can. I want to see you break and your man has to break. I want to kill his soul and then kill you."

I had no more tears left in me so I just stared at him. He sat on the couch next to me and tried to touch my face, but I looked away.

Gupta: "You look so beautiful, you know. Maybe I should make you my wife. My caramel diamond. You've been behaving so I Guess I can probably give you some cold drink this time. Sit, I'll be right back."

I faked a smile as I saw his phone fall out of his pocket. I've been praying for a sign and now this is finally it. My gateway to get out of here. Gupta left and locked me in as usual. I grabbed his phone and saw it was password protected.

I then thought of the only password that would make sense – Black Diamond. I typed it and it unlocked. Yoh, God must be on my side today. I video called Nathi's number as I know it off by heart. He answered within the first ring. I felt myself being burnt with fresh tears, tears I've been storing deep inside of me.

Me: "Nathi..."

Nathi: (astonished) "Chichi! Oh

Ma Dhlamini, are you okay?! Where are you?! Zoro, get Ndumiso to trace this!"

Zoro: "On it."

Me: "I'm fine, listen he might come back soon. He forgot his phone and it fell out of his pocket. I'm okay, I just don't know where I am. Some abandoned building in the middle of nowhere with a few people who live here in the building. Please find me Nkosinathi, please..."

Nathi: (crying) "Hang in there, Sthandwa sami (My love). Please do it for our kids."

Me: (nodding) "Okay."

Zoro: "Eh, Nathi! You won't believe this! She's in Kameeldrift!"

Biggie: "What are we still waiting for? Let's go."

I saw commotion as they moved out with Nathi still on the line. I heard the door unlock and I felt fear overcome me.

Nathi: "Listen to me, Chichi! When he walks through that door I need you to run as fast as you can."

Me: "I can't, Nkosinathi."

Nathi: "You can, baby. You're a warrior. Indhlovukazi yami (My queen). Find the strength in you and fight."

I nodded and Gupta opened the door and found me with his phone in my hands.

Gupta: (angry) "What the fuck?! What are you doing with my phone, akwuna (whore)?"

He grabbed the phone from my hands and was livid.

Nathi: "You sick fuck! I'm coming for you and you'd better run because this time I won't miss!"

Gupta: "I'd love to see you try! You stupid akwuna (whore)!"

He slapped me so hard I nearly fell and thought of my babies.

Nathi: (worried) "Chichi!"

I don't know what happened, but I gathered the strength inside of me and I ran out of there. I just ran even with this tummy. All I had in mind was Nathi's words "You can do this, Ndhlovukazi (My queen)". Before I knew it I was on the ground floor and I



just ran out of the flat. The sun felt scorching hot and blinded me temporarily. I haven't been out in the sun for two months, so my body is quite shocked.

I might be severely malnourished and dehydrated but I just had to keep going. I was so scared and I expected Gupta to have caught up with me by now. As I ran I saw some cars speeding by and I tried to make them stop, but most of them just passed me. I cried as I stopped to catch my breath. After so much effort, and no one is willing to help a pregnant woman running in the middle of nowhere?!

As I stopped to breathe a bit, I saw Gupta's car approaching on the other side of the road. I cried as I thought this is it. He's taking me back to that hell hole and I'm never seeing my Nathi or my family ever again. I thought I've come too far for me to just give up now. I gathered the little bit of strength I had in me and I started running again.

As I ran I heard a gunshot and felt something burn me on the left side of my lower back. I stumbled a bit as I couldn't stomach the pain. I touched the affected area and felt wetness. I removed my hand to check and I saw blood. As I looked across the road I saw Gupta holding a gun and aiming right at me. Oh, my God! He shot me! Gupta finally got what he wanted and shot me.

I felt a bit weak as the pain paralyzed my legs. Everything felt so hot and excruciating. I kept thinking of my unborn children. I don't even know whether I'm carrying boys or girls or even a girl and a boy. Will I even live long enough to see them being born?

All I heard as I fell down to the scorching hot and bumpy sand was "Sukuma, Mntwanami, sukuma mfazi ka Nkosinathi. Uyeza manje, kuzolunga kodwa kumele usukume (Get up, my child, get up Nkosinathi's wife. He's on his way, all shall be well, but you have to get up). Lwela abantwana (Fight for the children), Chichi. Get up!"

I fought with the little bit I had in me. I struggled getting up with the pain paralyzing my whole body. I fought through it and I got up. I couldn't run anymore, although I walked a bit briskly. Gupta shot at me but he missed, then he shot again and again, and still missed.

For some reason I could see the woman I've been seeing in my dreams right next to me. As I looked at Gupta, he was frustrated and cursing, while this beautiful image of this gorgeous woman was walking right beside me. She was clothed in white clothes and her spirit was pure and harmless.

I've never experienced anything supernatural before, but this feels so amazing. She kept smiling and the more she smiled, the more I felt energized. I even forgot about all the pain in my body and my bleeding back. Gupta kept shooting, but he just kept missing. The woman next to me looks so much like Nathi. She is so warm and loving and she held my hand.

Woman:"Keep going. He's almost here. You're almost safe. You and your babies."

I walked alongside this beautiful, angelic figure. The cars on the other side of the road were speeding so much and Gupta walked towards me in anger and out of nowhere a bus hit him so hard that pieces of his limbs went flying up in the air.

As I walked alongside this woman, I saw a grey Viano appear and stop in front of me. I saw my Nathi approach. Tears streamed down my face as he ran towards me and hugged me. I broke down in Nathi's arms and basked in his amazing scent that I've longed for all these months.

Nathi: "You're safe, Ma Dhlamini, you're safe."

I felt the woman letting go of my arm and that's the last thing I saw.

Chapter 116

Nathi

Exodus 14 v 14 says: "The Lord shall fight for you, you only need to be still." It's funny how I've been coming across this verse everyday for the past two months, ever since Chichi was kidnapped. It's almost as if God was talking to me. He says You just need to be still. I've been still for two months and he's been fighting for me all this time. My wife made it, my unborn children made it, and all I had to do was trust in God.

Zoro and all the guys thought I was insane, but I just went to church every single day and I've been praying for my wife and children. Even Gorilla would call me every single day with Julia by his side and We'd pray together. The gang was so impressed with my willpower and my faith in God, that we've been praying together ever since. We'd go to church everyday and pray for Chichi's safe return. These past two months have just had their own ups and downs.

We managed to finally register our own corporate company in Pretoria. We finally built our building and now we're official owners of The Lions Corporate Company. All thanks to my Chichi. The women have been a blessing, even when Lerato has been acting funny, but I'm glad my wife came back to me. We can now finally move on and be our own legitimate business partners.

When I saw Chichi thin and malnourished like that, I just felt so much pain and guilt. A part of me feels like this is all my fault. I should have never let Gupta get into our lives like that. Now we're going to make enough money to keep our wives safe forever. Cindy is also pregnant, two months now and things are just fantastic. Eve is also pregnant, which came as a huge shock. They weren't planning, but this is most definitely a beautiful surprise.

It's painful that we had to go about our normal lives while my Chichi was suffering like that. I've been having beautiful and encouraging dreams of my mother telling me that I need to be strong and that Chichi will be back in my arms, safely.

I need to thank her properly with some imphepho (incense). She's been a beautiful guide to me throughout this tough time. We rushed my wife to the nearest private hospital, which is Netcare Hospital in Montana. My Chichi was immediately rushed

into theatre. The gents were with me throughout and we prayed immediately when we got to the hospital.

As soon as we arrived, we let the wives, Lebo, Tshiamo, Gorilla and Julia know and the wives arrived here in a heartbeat. Gorilla and Julia also arrived a while later. Once again we prayed together and I've never in my life had so much faith. Chichi has taught me so much about myself that I am so imperfect and incomplete without her. Her presence in my life has made me whole again, my soul is now complete and I can't imagine another day without her.

If I had it my way, I'd make sure that she stays by my side forever. I even took down her notes and homework everyday, with the hope that she'll come back soon. It's September now and she's missed out on all her Term 3 tasks, but I know my Chichi will make it. The school has been so supportive as well as the community. Since we've rocked up here at the hospital, the media has been hounding us and everyone walking through that door. It's all over the news that Chichi has been found after two months of being missing and that she was shot. I just hope and pray Gupta didn't hurt her or touch her in any way. I'm glad God sent a bus to eliminate his useless self from this earth. After being in surgery for over six hours, Dr. Manyane finally walked out. We all stood up simultaneously.

Dr. Manyane:"Mr. Dhlamini."

Nathi:"How is she, doctor? How are my children? Will she be okay?"

Dr. Manyane:"She's out of surgery on being transported to her room as we speak." We all breathed a sigh of relief.

Julia:"Oh, Jehova! Kea leboga (Thank you)!"

Dr. Manyane:"There's only one problem."

I hate it when people say that. We all stared at her in suspense.

Dr. Manyane:"She's severely dehydrated, and she hasn't been eating well. She's lost a lot of weight, and the babies are underweight as well. We had to deliver them and even at 23 weeks, they're very small, but they seem like they're going to make it. They were taken to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. We had to deliver them otherwise they weren't going to make it. All three of them were going to die."

Eve:"Yoh! God is good, guys. Always."

Dr. Manyane:"That's not all."

Yoh, I don't know if I can take this.

Dr. Manyane:"Chichi was shot in the kidney and as a result, it ruptured. This means she's on dialysis until we find a suitable kidney donor for her."

Oh, my goodness. My wife just came out of a traumatic event and at just 17 years of age, she has lost a kidney and gave birth to severely premature babies.

Cindy:"What's her blood type?"

Dr. Manyane:"She's O negative. Having O blood type means she can only receive a donor from Blood type O only."

Pulane: "I'm blood type AB negative, so I won't be suitable, but I think all of us should get tested just in case. I'm sure one of us here can save Chichi's life."

Lerato: (agitated) "I'm not compatible. There's no reason to test my blood type." Everyone looked at her confused.

Zoro: (annoyed) "How do you know that? Do you even know your blood type?"

Lerato: "uhh, no, but..."

Zoro: "O thomile ka masepao (You've started with your shit, Lerato.)"

Zoro gave her a stern look and she just looked down. Could Lerato really be this selfish? Could she refuse to donate her kidney?

Dr. Manyane: "I can only test all of you with your consent. No one is forced to do anything

but we need to think about the person concerned here. She has suffered a lot of damage from the kidnapping. I'll give you some time to think about it."

Zoro: "No need, doctor. We all would like to get tested."

He looked at Lerato.

Zoro: "ALL of us."

Dr. Manyane: "Very well then. Follow me."

We all followed her to an empty ward where they would prick us all and test our blood types. After a while we all came out with our results.

Cindy: "Well?"

Everyone opened their papers with great regret and revealed them to me. None of them were matches. It was Lerato's turn to show us her results and she was hesitant.

Zoro: "Lerato, bula pampiri eo (open that paper)."

Lerato: "Show us yours first, Nathi."

Pulane: "Eh, banna (Goodness). Ke mehlolo e (This is ridiculous)!"

I opened my results and I'm a match!

Nathi: "I'm O positive! I'm a match, guys!"

Gorilla: "That's great news, Nkosinathi. Weh, Ntombazana (Hey, girl), why ungasimbonisi wakho amaresults (why don't you show us your results)?"

Lerato was trembling and very hesitant. As she tried to rip her results apart, Zoro grabbed the paper from her and opened it.

Zoro: "Bathong (My goodness)! Lerato! You're a match yet you refuse to give Chichi a kidney?! Would you have loved it if it was you in her shoes?! O bjang mara heh (What kind of a person are you)?"

Zoro was spitting fire and everyone stared daggers at her.

Lerato: "I'm sorry, but you heard the doctor. No one is obligated to donate an organ to her. Besides, you Nathi can do it. She's your wife after all."

Julia: "Yoh!"

Pulane: "That explains it all, Lee. I thought you would change, but obviously being barren and the fact that you're the one who told Gupta to take Chichi instead of you both never changed you one bit."

Everyone including myself was shocked as fuck. What's happening here?! Zoro was fuming, while I was more disappointed than anything else. So Lerato basically offered Gupta on a silver platter?

Lerato: (teary) "I'm sorry. I was just saving myself. I didn't mean it like that."

Zoro: (fuming) "So wena all along you hid the fact that you can't conceive from me, Lerato?! You told Gupta to take her?! What the fuck is wrong with you?! I would've loved you even if you couldn't conceive on your own. Yoh, o moloi shem (You're a witch)."

I could see Lerato was pained by Zoro's reaction. I'm saddened she'd do such, but she never really wanted to be filly part of the Lions anyway.

Lerato: (angry) "You're probably happy that everything is turning out like this. You still love Chichi. Admit it! You want her for yourself!"

Zoro:"Heh! Are you listening to yourself, mara?! Everyone knows I had a crush on Chichi, but after I married you I knew that I was just longing to have the same love that Nathi and Chichi share. I could never want his woman to be with me like that. Wena I grew to love you and you decide to turn on us like this?! Who are you even Lerato?!"

Everyone was just staring at them in silence and great shock.

Lerato:"I'm an angry woman! I'm angry because you never care for me the way all these men obsess over their wives! I'm angry because I'll never be able to feel what it's like to be pregnant, while everyone else gets their shot at that happiness!"

Zoro:"Are you stupid or what?! Had you come to me and been honest with me, I would have asked us to get a surrogate or something, man Lerato. You sound like a jealous bitch and jealous bitches bangibangela isicefe (annoy me)."

This is so intense and not the right time.

Gorilla:"Zoro, this is not the time nor the place. You two need to discuss this in privacy."

Zoro:"There's no need for that, Baba. I'm done. I want a divorce entlek (actually)."

Wow, okay. That transpired very fast.

Gorilla:"Think before you act, my boy."

Zoro:"I'm done. Lerato has never even tried to be supportive to us all during this whole period. Lerato, you're selfish and envious. I can't be with you anymore. I've tried to give you the world, but you just keep disappointing me. Yes, I'm not perfect, but fuck man. I try my level best. I even bought you that house you've been nagging me for. I wanted to surprise you after this whole madness. But now I finally see you for who you are. We're done."

Lerato was in tears and she had regret written all over her face.

Lerato:"Zoro, please, baby. Let's fix this."

Zoro:"Mfe space man, fok (fuck)!"

He yanked her hand away from his arm and walked out of the hospital. Just like that, Zoro ended his marriage. Malachi 2 v 16 says: "For the man who does not love his

wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”

## Chapter 117

Nathi

I can't wait to see my children. I'm officially a father to one boy and one girl. I put on my protective gear since babies are very fragile and more susceptible to infections.

Babies in the NICU are much smaller than babies born at 9 months of pregnancy. Mam' Julia asked to come with as they only allow the parents of the babies and grandparents. Gorilla can come later.

The nurses showed us to my babies – Baby Dhlamini 1 and Baby Dhlamini 2. They are so incredibly tiny, Baby Dhlamini 1, which is the boy and was born first, weighs just 290 grams and Baby Dhlamini 2, the girl weighs just 300 grams.

When a person sees such beauty, that's when you know that God truly exists. How can such tiny babies still have beating hearts and breathe? They are still in their incubators with wires and tubes all over them, but they are such a beauty to watch.

Nathi: "Oh, bantwana bami (my babies), my products, my cubs. Your mother is a true beast, a legend, a warrior Queen. Lusibalukhulu, Malandela ngokulandela izinkomo zamadoda. Sibalukhulu,

Mdlovu, Magaduzela,

Magaga kaNsele,

Wena owashisa umuntu ngesikhuni esibunjini kwaze kwasa eyobayoba,

Mgoqo ovimb'esangweni nansi impi,

Izwe lafa ngathini na?

Wena owabonela empunzini ukuthi kuyabalekwa ngoba yona yabaleka yaziphonsa ocingweni,

Mdzineka, Magaduzela, Sihlangu sinye, wena waka Fodzo KaNombewu kaMakata, Miskofin, Sobhuza, Buhlal'obudze (clan names).”

We were so proud and caught up in the moment, we didn't even worry about being in the hospital.

Mam' Julia: (ululating) “Ah riye riye riye (ululation)! Kerena ba marulela a hwiti a rulela segola sa ntlo ke bjang. Ke rena baba boago kua ga mmatšatsi le fišhago Mosenya thoto oetla ore thoto a ebe yešho Re batho ba tšhanka thaka malesla sedupe satšhe dikgolo Boroko bja ntshwara morwa Mogashoa Bodutu bja ntšheya kaya bangweng Bjatladi reana dikala, dithito di ana ke beng ba Mamabolo a Seolwana. Ya šhibašhiba kolobe ya hloka dimpšya e aya. Re batho ba baboyago kua letšhitela la se metse le wetša madiba, Dikgomo diruiwa ke bao ba tšwago kgole nokeng ya lepelle la mogodi a mabutšwa a koma. Ge kere alo kera ntsho ya le ntsho yela Agee kolobe agee mahlatšhi IIIIIUUUUUUUU ditau wee! (Clan praises).”

One of the nurses tried to keep us quiet, but we just didn't care. This is my special moment and I'm reeling in it.

Mam' Julia: "Wena Moshimane, lebitso la gao ke Khabane (You my boy, I name you Warrior), wena Mosetsana, lebitso la gao ke Khosigadi (You, my girl, I name you Queen). Letsatsi le re hlabetse ba ga Mogashoa le ba ga Dhlamini (The sun is shining bright on us the Mogashoa's and the Dhlamini's). Modimo a re tshegofatse ka lethabo le bophelo (May God bless us with happiness and life)."

She ululated once more after naming our children. Julia has come a long way and she is indeed proof that God does give second chances, especially when you repent. This is a bitter sweet moment because I wish my own mother was here with us.

It's quite funny because I've been feeling her spirit around me lately. She's always been a spiritual person when she was alive. It's sad that Glen never got to experience our parents' presence in his life, but I've tried to close the gap.

We went out as I made my way to Chichi's ward. Mama said she'd come later, she wants to give me a moment with my wife. I walked in and saw her lying in that hospital bed. She looks so frail, with dark circles under her eyes and not much meat on her face and neck. I can see her cheek bones and neck bones poking out.

Her complexion has darkened a bit

and her hands look pale. I shed a tear as I feel so guilty for not being able to protect her. Thank goodness she wasn't violated or drugged. I don't know what kept her going throughout all these months, but all I know is that God's mercy is real and pure and never lets us down.

I held her hand and said a prayer "Dear Lord, the Father of Jesus Christ. I humble myself before you and I thank you first and foremost for being there for Chichi, our family and friends and I and our babies throughout this tough ordeal.

Please bless her with a full recovery. Please let the transplant operation go very well. Bless us with nothing, but Joy, Peace and happiness, please. Help me love her even though than I already do. Help me be the best father I can be.

Father God, you have given me a great chance at life, a chance to be my real self. You've blessed me with the greatest gem anyone could ever possess. The world is so jealous of my Chichi, dear Lord, because you carved her specifically for me.

You've carved her so perfect that no flower or rose could ever be equivalent to her beauty. Her beautiful smile is so pure that she creates rivals everywhere she goes just by her smile radiating the room. The sun is so envious of her beautiful skin, and the moon complements her night glow. Nothing and no one can be compared to my Chichi.

Dlamini, Mtungwa lokothwayo iNdlovu zidlekhaya ngo kweswel'abelusi incincilele yomsingezane, Nina eningasweli izitsha zokbolekwa, ungayshaya ungaydabula (clan names). Ni ngikeze umfazi wempela, umfazi oqotho (You've given me a true woman, a woman of stature). I ask you to protect her and guide us dear Lord. I pray in Jesus mighty name. Amen." I kissed her hand gently and she woke up.

Chichi: "Nathi..."

Her voice is a bit brittle, but she's even more beautiful for giving me such a Beautiful gift.

Nathi: (smiling) "Hey, Ma Dhlamini."

Chichi: "Water."

I got up briskly and put a straw in her glass of water and made her drink some.

Chichi: "How are you?"

Nathi: (chuckling) “Ao, mfazi wami (my wife), Sthandwa se nhliziyo yami (love of my life), my caramel fudge, my beautiful rose, lepyatla la ka (my gorgeous babe), Baby wa ka (My baby). You’re such a warrior, Ndhlovukazi (Queen).

You’ve gone through the most at your tender age and your beautiful body preserved our precious babies under severe circumstances and now you’ve given them life. You’re a true definition of a woman of steel. I can’t imagine my life without you, baby. Ngiyakuthanda yezwa (I love you, okay)?”

She shed a tear as I gently wiped it off her face. She has cried enough. Her beautiful face will be damaged by all the tears. I want to see her smile and produce joyful tears.

Chichi: “Your mother has been with me the entire time, Nkosinathi. When I got shot, she held my hand while I was walking with you. She told me to never give up on you and that you’d find me.”

I felt tears warming my eyes. My mother has always been a true gem. She’s our guardian angel, alongside my father.

Chichi: “Have you named them yet?”

Nathi: (shaking head) “No, your mother gave them names. The boy is Khabane and the girl is Kgosigadi.”

She smiled through the tears.

Chichi: “I love them. Can I see them?”

Nathi: “Not yet, but I took pictures for you.”

I took out my phone and showed her pictures of our beautiful children. She smiled as she admired them.

Chichi: “This is Khwezi (Morning Star) Kgosigadi Dhlamini and this one is Mcebisi (One who brings wealth and gives sound advice).”

My heart was filled with even more joy as she said that. Those are my parents’ names.

Nathi: “You named them after my parents, Ma Dhlamini.”

Chichi: “Yes, baby. They deserve the honour, especially your mother for being there for me throughout it all. I owe her that much.”

Nathi: “I love you, Ma Dhlamini.”

Chichi: “I love you too.”

Nathi: “Get well soon. In a week’s time, I’m giving you a new kidney.”

She broke down in tears.

Chichi: “Nathi, no. You can’t do that.”

Nathi: “It’s not up for discussion. Get well soon, and rest now. Our babies need you.”

## Chapter 118

Three months later

Chichi

Life has been so busy, but it has most definitely treated me very well. It took me a while to recover since I was in a bad state all because of Gupta’s doings. Nathi recovered within two weeks after the transplant. I’ve been in hospital for two months, and I got an opportunity to write my final exams. I didn’t want to repeat the year, I really don’t see the reason for that. I didn’t do as well as I would have hoped to, but at least I passed.

I didn’t want special favours as everyone makes their own choices. Khwezi and Mcebisi are just too adorable for words. It took us a very long time to finally hold



them, but they picked up weight so quickly. It's tough being at home while my babies are in hospital. I had to express milk every few hours for them and believe me, no one ever tells you how painful your breasts get when they're full.

Nathi has been so happy, even Glen is such a happy uncle. He comes by everyday to see them. Life has been a rollercoaster ride, but it's about to get better. I just hope and pray we are over the enemies and all that. I've been through hell and back and I do deserve some happiness.

Baby Bokang, my gorgeous Nephew is six months old now, while Eve and Cindy are both almost four months pregnant. How they got pregnant at the same time I have no idea. Both Biggie and Thomas are over the moon and Biggie is hoping for a boy this time, while Zoro has been in a depressed state. He left Lerato and gave her all of his savings – about R1 million to just start over in peace.

It breaks my heart to see him being the one who always gets his heart broken, but he'll find the right girl. He's been staying with Biggie and Eve for a while, he said that he can't move into such a big house on his own. I think he loved Lerato, but he just couldn't love her the way she wanted him to. Life is sad and unfair like that at times.

Today is Friday, 16th of December. As much as we usually celebrate our December holidays in style, this time we are celebrating them at home and as a family. We're taking our babies home and I just can't wait. I'm just too excited for words as they have finally reached their goal weight to be able to leave the hospital. 1.8 kg is still a bit small, but their lungs have developed and their immune systems are good to go. I'm so grateful for the hospital staff and Dr. Manyane, but really, I just want to be at peace with my family. Nathi is so excited, too excited and reminds me of that day we were on our way to Kzn. I just hope nothing bad is about to happen, really.

Nathi is so hands on, while I was bedridden and in pain, He's been taking such good care of the twins. He even went baby shopping with the help of Pulane I'm sure. He bought car seats and everything we could possibly need. I feel so jealous, He's acting like the mommy here. The NICU was sad to see the Dhlamini twins leave.

They've grown so fond of them. They had a little party for their departure and sang for them. One of the nurses said they've never seen such a diligent father. She just kept giving My Nathi eyes and luckily he didn't even notice her. I'd kill a bitch right now. Nathi took Khwezi and put her in her car seat, while I put Mcebisi in his.

He's very fond of Khwezi, even more than Mcebisi. I think she reminds him a lot of his mother. My daughter betrayed me shame, she looks like Nathi while she just took my colour. She even has his personality, I can tell she's going to give me a hard time. Mcebisi looks like me, all of him, but took Nathi's darker complexion. Now this one is very calm and sleeps a lot more than Khwezi. He hardly cries and only does so when he's sleepy or when his nappy is full.

I've gained so much weight, but I'm not fat at all. I'm almost the same size as Lerato. My hips are a bit wider and my bums are bigger and so are my boobs. Thank

goodness I no longer look like a skeleton. Mama says it's because of all the breast feeding. I eat way more than I normally do. She says it's because my body needs all the extra nutrients to feed two more humans.

We walked out of the hospital into a brand new car. Heh, banna. Nathi bought us an car, A Mercedes B200!

Me: "Nathi."

Nathi: (smiling) "Do you remember when I told you I want to work so hard so that you and our children wouldn't need to suffer?"

I nodded with tears in my eyes.

Nathi: "That time has finally come, Ma Dhlamini. This is your new car, Mama matwins (Mother of the twins)."

Yoh Nkosinathi is so romantic bathong (goodness). I'm just too excited.

Me: "How much money have you been making while I wasn't around?"

Nathi: (laughing) "Enough, baby. More than enough."

We strapped the babies in their seats as he put their bags in the boot and we headed off. I thought we were going to our house in Glenway Estate, but nope Nkosinathi was headed in Montana direction. I figured he wanted to buy a few things before we headed home, but he drove into some really nice upstate houses. These houses look expensive.

Me: "Yoh, Nkosinathi. Di ntlo tse diya tura (These houses look expensive). Nka thabela go dula mo tsatsi le lengwe (I'd love to stay here one day)."

Nathi smiled at me and didn't say a word, as I admired the beautiful neighbourhood. It's so peaceful here. I would love to live here shame. He stopped at one of the houses. A beautiful big yard, with a nice lawn. The gate had a "Sold" sign outside and I saw a few cars in the driveway.

I saw a Mercedes SUV with the Numberplate Biggie's wife GP. Come to think of it, the yard was filled with Mercedes only. Did Eve buy a new car? Heh banna maybe it's her and Biggie's new house. I looked at Nathi but he just smiled at me.

Nathi: "Let's go, Ma Dhlamini."

Ao, I walked out in my Versace tracksuit and sneakers and took Mcebisi, while he took the bags and gave me Khwezi. They were both sleeping in their carseats so we let them be. Nathi just looked so excited and I know that look. He really likes surprises nje, so maybe they have a really big surprise party planned for me, I don't know.

Nathi opened the gate with a remote in his hand, attached to the car keys. I didn't take much note of it since we all have each other's house keys. As we walked in I saw mercedes cars lined up. This yard is so huge, I'm jealous. This is way too simple for Eve's style, but I guess she needed change. Nathi opened the door and we walked in. The kitchen is so beautiful and big. He put the bags on the counter and carried Khwezi's car seat. As we walked towards the lounge, I saw everyone and they all screamed.

Everyone: "Surprise!"

I nearly had a heart attack as Khwezi woke up crying. Nathi carried her and patted her back. Everyone was standing before me, I mean everyone. Gorilla, Julia, Pulane holding baby Bokang, Menzi, Eve, Biggie, Cindy, Thomas, Zoro and someone I don't know next to him, she looks coloured

Lebo was here with her husband and even Tshiamo and Glen! My word Tshiamo looks so beautiful and much much better and happier. She's even gained a bit. Cape Town must be treating her really well.

Me: "Hao, guys. What's all this?"

Glen: "Chichilicious, you've always been slow, man. This is your new house, duh. Welcome home!"

My new house? I looked at Nathi inquisitively.

Nathi: (smiling) "Surprise, Ma Dhlamini."

Tshiamo: "Tjo, nna ga ke tlo emela Sesi a lle hle (I won't wait for my sister to cry), I want to see my niece and nephew."

They all laughed as she took Khwezi from Nathi and Glen took Mcebisi from his car seat. Lebo's twins have grown so much, they were crawling all over the floor.

Everyone got busy like it's their house, ai what can I say? We're weird like that.

Julia: "Baby, go change please. We want to eat and start celebrating."

I smiled and nodded at her as I saw a big rock on her ring finger. Hehe mamazala. I went to one of the bedrooms and Nathi followed me.

Nathi: "Not this one, Ma Dhlamini. Here is ours."

He opened the door and I was in awe. Where he got the time to do all this? I don't know. Our bed is so big with a "floating" base that lights up at night. We both have walk in closets and an en suite bath room with a shower and bath tub. We have our own tv, and a beautiful painted portrait of Nathi and I at our traditional wedding back in Kzn hanging on the wall next to the tv. There is even a small study table with a laptop and chair. I smiled in awe with tears rolling down my cheeks. I can never stop crying. He hugged me from behind as I inhaled his lovely scent.

Nathi: "Do you like it? Please tell me you like the house. It took me ages to find the perfect house for you."

I smiled.

Me: "Nkosinathi, I love it. I love it so much, baby. Thank you. How on earth are we able to afford all this?"

Nathi turned around and pulled me to the bed as we sat next to each other.

Nathi: "Our business kicked off within a week, baby wa ka (my baby). We employ over 250 people now and the construction side of the business has attracted so many clients. We even have the Mayor as one of our clients. They've brought in huge chunks of money. We'll never have to do any heists ever again.

We managed to build our block of flats in Mamelodi, when you went missing. I wanted to surprise you. Once that kicked off, we reached full occupancy within a

month. We managed to build our own complex in Nellmapius, baby. We're doing so many things, feeding the needy and we have a few initiatives to assist the community and school children.

All this we achieved because of your brilliant brains. The garage is doing so well, we opened three more. You're now officially a millionaire at just 17 years of age. Tshegofatso Dhlamini, you've made our dreams come true and for that I'll always love you."

I had tears in my eyes. No wonder they all wear suits more regularly now. I wonder why I never saw anything on the news.

Nathi:"I know what you're thinking. You've never seen it on the news, because we wanted to wait for you be fully healed first. We can't make an appearance without the brains behind it all."

I laughed. Yoh this gang mara. They can be so dramatic and thoughtful at the same time. I smiled as I kissed his lips. I could see Mkhonto was rising and since we haven't had sex in three months, both of us must be aching for one another.

Nathi:"Come change, baby. We have a lot to show you today."

Me:"Hao, but what am I going to wear?"

Nathi:"Open the closet and see for yourself."

I got up and did as I was told. Yoh, never in my life have I ever seen so many clothes. Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Versace (my favourite) is the one occupying most space in here. There's Dior, Louboutin, you name it. Mara Nkosinathi is one of his own kind. A rare breed.

Me:"Bathong, baby. Where did you find the time to do to all this?"

Nathi:"I'm a millionaire, baby. It wasn't that hard to pull off."

Yoh this is the life shame.

Me:"Are you going to sit there and watch me get dressed?"

Nathi:"You're my wife, aren't you?"

Me:"But, Nathi, my body has changed.. I'm not the Chichi I was before."

Nathi:"You like talking nonsense, Chichi, you know. You're still the beautiful Chichi. I love you so much, even more now. Look how beautiful you are. That's the body of a warrior queen. Now don't ever go around saying you're not beautiful."

Eish, Nathi can warm up my heart, hey. I smiled and got dressed while he looked at me as he always did. I changed into a maxi Verace dress and Gucci sandals. My boobs are so full now that it's impossible to hide my cleavage. We went out to join the rest of the people.

Eve:"Yoh, finally, man. I thought le betha one (you're having a quickie) in there."

They all laughed.

Gorilla:"Eve, man."

Eve:"Sorry, grandpa."

They laughed again.

Cindy:"Hey, Eve, it's time for you to meet the new member of the family."

I looked at her and she nudged in Zoro's direction.

Zoro: "Eish, mara wena Cindy wa phapha man."

Cindy burst out laughing again with Thomas clinging onto her like a little baby.

Zoro walked towards Nathi and I with this beautiful, short girl. She's a lot like Lerato, Curvy and busty, very, very light and has beautiful long hair.

Zoro: "Warrior Queen, I'd like you to meet my girlfriend Palesa."

I frowned in confusion. I thought she's coloured.

Palesa: (smiling) "I get that a lot. My father is white and my mom is Tswana. It's a long story."

I can already see her and Pulane get along just fine like a house on fire. Zoro always finds women within months of leaving the previous one. It's probably loneliness, I get it. I just hope she won't be another Lerato or Ntombi.

Me: "Nice to meet you, Palesa."

Palesa: "Oh, please. The pleasure is all mine. Everyone has been raving about you and I now see why. You're really beautiful."

She's very charming and nice. I guess as time goes we'll see what is what with her.

But from what I've gathered, seems like they've all known her for a while now.

Me: "Come, let's get the food ready."

I pulled her to the kitchen to the rest of the ladies, leaving Nathi and Zoro standing there. They say happiness is a choice, of which is true. You can't expect anyone to make you happy whereas you're not happy from within. Psalm 28 v 7 says: "The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving."

I've been through a lot this year and I'm grateful to the Lord for giving me a second chance. It's like Nathi and I were reborn, we are so happy and filled with happiness, joy and are eternally thankful for God's grace. I cannot wait for the next adventure that lies ahead of us.

Chapter 119

Five years later

Chichi

It's been an amazing five years. My twins are beautiful and are turning five soon. It's been such an amazing yet hectic journey. I passed my matric with six distinctions. My Nathi has been amazing, truly. At night he'd get up and feed and change the kids while I studied. I went back on the IUD, I don't plan on having kids again any time soon.

My mother and Gorilla finally tied the knot soon after I went back home with my kids. They've been having the time of their lives ever since. Lebo visits every now and then, and Pabi has apparently joined the church along with Koko and Mamogolo (Aunt) Aidah. Even though Koko has tried to get some shine from the media, telling them that she raised me and all of that. Such lies for a quick buck.

Cindy ended up giving birth to a healthy and big baby girl named Fiona, yes right after Princess Fiona, Shrek's wife. Eve gave birth to a boy, named Versace. Don't ask me why she loves these odd names. Bently and Ferrari are big sisters and are in varsity now. Zoro got married to the crazy Palesa, a year after they started dating. At least he waited longer this time even though they've been living in the house he initially bought for Lerato.

Speaking of Lerato, she tried ruining the wedding by pitching up announced and uninvited, but Palesa being the crazy gangster girl, she threw a plate at her and Lerato it hit her right in the face. That was during the reception by the way. She's such a calm person by nature, but has a bit of a temper. Unlike Eve, she's a ticking time bomb. We even thought that after she gave birth to Keabetswe, their daughter, we all thought that she would calm down, but instead she got worse.

Eve is no longer the violent one, Palesa does all the hitting and threatening. If Zoro even tries to stare at another woman, Palesa goes rogue. He loves her to death, a lot more than he's ever loved Lerato. Lerato's parents even went to the media and accused Zoro of not giving Lerato what was due to her, so to keep the peace and following Njabulo's legal advice, Zoro had to pay Lerato a settlement of 4 million rand.

It didn't dent his pocket one bit. I feel like Lerato hasn't made peace with the fact that Zoro chose to move on and now we have a lot more money. She can't accept that she'll never be a part of our lives ever again. The Lions are bigger than ever before. We've become a brand ever since my teenage days. I love Montana, so I decided to extend our house and turn it into a mansion, just for the love of a big house. The kids have had Mme Grace, our Nanny and house help who's been with us ever since they came back home. She's been so good to us, she's practically family and she stays with us.

Menzi and Pulane live in Savannah as well, just opposite Eve and Biggie, while Zoro and Palesa live just down the street. Thomas and Cindy live in Equestria, not very far from Eve and Pulane. They love the expensive Town houses and area. I love how they keep to the fact that we buy all our houses and cars in cash. That way, should anything happen, we can keep them no matter what.

I love my Nathi since he's never pressurised me into doing anything. He allowed me to have fun during my teen years and even went on my matric dance with me. My varsity years have been nothing but amazing. Bree and I are qualified Chartered Accountants SA, while Glen is still studying to become a medical doctor.

He has two more years to qualify, although he's doing his practicals now. He's specializing in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Mandi surprised us all and decided to go the Law route. He graduated last year and is now working for Micah's law firm. You won't even guess it. He and Micah are officially a couple. I thought Micah would settle for a woman, but he surprised us all.

Ntate Moruti is so proud of his son and doesn't hide the fact that he's gay. We haven't seen the mighty Mma Moruti in forever, so the church is really good. Imza went for Mechanical Engineering, just like Bongz. As we speak now, they are both qualified today.

The four of us are graduating today and Imza's mother is the proudest of them all. Imza has truly come a long way and it's a very special day for him. Nathi and I had our white wedding right after matric as he promised and our honey moon in Paris. I never thought money could buy me happiness like this, shame.

I'm in my bedroom with Cindy, Pulane, Palesa and Eve getting my make up done for my graduation ceremony. Mama took the kids today and she'll be watching them until the end of the week. Mme Grace took the rest of the week off, so it's time for us to have some fun. Nathi and the guys are waiting in the lounge. Cindy is doing my make up as she just finished curling my hair.

Cindy:"Yoh, girl. I wish I had your hair, man."

Palesa:"Wa bona wena (you see)

Chi, you're one of a kind. O cracke ngwaneso, bona nou o graduater, o nyetswe, o nale bana e bile dilo di nametse stofo (You're so smart, sis, look now you're graduating, you're married, you have children, everything is looking up for you). I wish le nna nkabe ke rata skolo bjana (I loved school the way you do)."

Palesa isn't stupid, at all. She's very good at cooming and baking and also very very good at using guns. She's mostly good at making Zoro happy and she says she feeds him good pussy too. She's a bit ghetto, but has classy manners. She knows how to behave and when.

Eve:"Hao, Palesa. It's never too late, you can always go back to school."

Palesa:"Aowa, and leave whom to run the business? Never, sesi. Le gona ke ye skolong e be ba njele monna (Either way, I can't go back to school and let someone else take my man)."

We all burst in laughter. She's so insecure for such a beaut.

Pulane:"O ngwana mang mara Palesa, heh (Who are your parents, though)?"

Palesa:"Ke ngwana Mary le John Steenkamp. (I'm Mary and John Steenkamp's daughter)."

We laughed once again. Her parents weren't too keen about her marrying Zoro, but they accepted it. Even Keabetswe looks white, since Palesa's genes are so dominant.

Cindy:"Hai, Palesa, wena wa gafa straight (you're seriously crazy)."

Palesa:"Speaking of crazy, maobane nna le Zoro ne re sa betha one Kea a robotse, wa bo (Last night Zoro and I were busy having sex while Kea was sleeping, you see). Next thing ke re ka jika a e bethe ko morago (I turned around to let him hit it from the back). Hao, motho wa e hlomela e tsena ka mo leraong lena (He put it in and next thing it went into my ass guys)."

We burst out laughing and I nearly spilled my champagne.

Cindy: "He eh, man, Palesa. O bua masepa e bile re tlabo ra senya make up (You're talking shit and you'll make us ruin our make up)."

Palesa: "Ah, sorry nna gape ne ke le botsa taba e serious phela (I'm just telling you about something serious)."

Eve: "So, what happened afterwards?"

Palesa: "Aah, ke sa jumpa mola mara ka gcina ke re fok, e re re no tswela pele, wa bo (I jumped a bit but then again I was like fuck it, let's just continue)."

We laughed so hard, ai Palesa is insane.

Palesa: "Ke no rile a ska nkgeila motete mara after that gwa ba monate (I just asked him not to rip my asshole). Mara monate wa teng lena tjo (But my goondess guys, it was so nice)."

We laughed.

Eve: "Ai, welcome to the anal gang, sis."

Pulane: "I'm still never doing that, guys."

We laughed again as Nathi came and told us we're running out of time. We have to be at University of Pretoria in an hour. I can't wait to finally walk onto that stage and be declared an official CA.

2 Corinthians 9 v 8 says: "And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

Chapter 120

Chichi

We made our way to our venue. My family was there watching me and recording every moment. I was seated next to Bree and as soon as I heard my name being called, I could hear my family screaming and shouting. Mama was ululating and saying clan praises.

Nathi: "Ma Dhlamini! Mfazi wami (My wife)!"

Palesa: "Yes! Lepyatla la rena (Our gorgeous babe)!"

I smiled as I walked up to the stage. I graduated with Cum Laude by the way. It's a great achievement, who wouldn't want that? As soon as Bree got up the stage, her parents and Bongz were proud. Imza's mom was crying as soon as he walked up that stage. What's even better is that he got a job offer, so he'll be starting on Monday.

We made our way out and threw our hats in the sky as per graduation ceremony. We went out and took lots of pictures. Graduation day is for family, so everyone went home to their families. We can always see each other and celebrate afterwards. As



Mama was hugging me, she told me that she'll look after the twins, along with Cindy, Eve, Pulane and Palesa's kids.

I don't know how she and Gorilla do it, but they manage. They live in Mooikloof now, so they like their space and are forever together. Now I see why Mama just fell for Gorilla all over again. He's one of a kind and a very soft teddy bear towards women and children. As us ten proceeded to the Viano, we were stopped by Lerato holding a baby. The baby looked about 9 months old or so. Strangely enough we could see the resemblance between the baby girl and Zoro. Yoh, this had better not be what I'm thinking.

Lerato:"Zoro, can we talk?"

I don't even know how she knew we were here, but then again the news of my graduation was all over the news. Palesa isn't very happy to see her.

Zoro: (frowning) "Lerato, are you stalking me now?!"

Lerato:"No, I just want to talk, please. There's something I have to tell you."

Palesa: (enraged) "Lerato, it's not enough that you almost ruined our wedding, and that Zoro gave you millions. Now you rock up here with a baby?! Don't fuck with me, mosadi (woman)! You and Zoro have been divorced for over five years now and believe me when I say this; Ke tla o sega malebe wa nyela (I'll cut your labias until you shit yourself)!"

Yoh, we all know she would. I decided this is not the place nor the time.

Me:"Lerato, listen. Can you do this some other time, please? This is inappropriate and people are staring?"

I thought she'd understand since she humbled herself a few minutes ago, but no. She became rude out of nowhere.

Lerato:"Mxm, waitse keng (You know what), Chichi?! You just think that everyone should worship you just because Nathi and the rest of the Lions are your puppets! Bona mo (Look here), you don't own me and I don't even know why Nathi saved you! You should have died along with your babies! I came here to talk to Zoro but you and this bitch (referring to Palesa) act like you own him!"

Yoh, I got so mad and I even wanted to slap her, but she's not even worth it. Palesa was about to take out a knife, but Zoro stopped her. This won't be good PR for us.

Nathi:"Bona (Look) Lerato. We really don't have time for this. You're embarrassing yourself on my wife's special day. Leave now before you regret it."

Lerato:"Fine, I'll leave. But I'm giving you two days to respond, Zoro. If you don't, I'll go to the press and tell the whole world about our daughter."

With that said she left, leaving a sour taste in Palesa and Zoro's mouths. We got into the car in silence. Nahi tried to brighten the mood by revealing the surprise. My Nathi and his surprises.

Nathi:"Ma Dhlamini, I wanted to surprise you, but well I might as well tell you now. We're all going to the Maldives to celebrate your big achievement."

Oh, this man of mine. I bet this was all his idea. We're going to the Maldives and we didn't even pack yet. We don't even have to wait in queues since bought ourselves a private Jet. Oh, this is going to be awesome.

Me: (smiling) "Baby! The Maldives! Whose idea was this?"

Nathi: (laughing) "Mine, silly. Awungithembi wena yazi (You don't trust me, hey)."

I smiled and kissed him. Palesa and Zoro were in a world of their own. Palesa has never been able to control her rage and one day that will be our downfall. She needs to get that in check as soon as possible. We got to the Jet and flew off. I didn't even get time to change, but I'm not complaining. We had a good time, talking and having the usual banter in the jet. After a few drinks, Palesa and Zoro were back to their usual selves. I love how crazy they are. They just compliment each other. After almost 8 hours on flight, we arrived in the Maldives at about 6am this side. I'm jet lagged as shit

but these bitches don't even want to sleep. We walked around the Beautiful house on the island and we found five bedrooms here. I guess they made sure we get a nice house with enough bedrooms to accommodate all ten of us. All the bedrooms were the same in size, same in design, all had a walk in closet, but were all different in terms of the furniture, bedding and all that. Nathi took me to our bedroom.

Nathi:"Open the closet, baby."

I did that and he reminded me of the first day we went to our house in Montana. I'm in awe! The closet is filled with clothes yet again! Mara (But) Nathi.

Me:”Hao, Nkosinathi. How will we take these clothes back home when we leave? They’re so many, though.”

Nathi: (smiling) “You won’t be taking them home, baby. This is our home in the Maldives.”

I looked at him shocked.

Nathi:”We bought this house for you ladies.”

Yoh, these men just like wasting money.

Me:”But Nkosinathi, you shouldn’t have done this. You like wasting money.”

He got up and held my hands.

Nathi:”Ma Dhlamini, I made a promise to you that I’d make sure you never have to work a single day in your life. I want you to enjoy and reap our benefits, baby wa ka (my baby). You’re my woman. I don’t want to feel bad about buying you gifts you deserve.”

I smiled and kissed him. My Nathi just loves making me happy. I don’t regret saying yes to him all those years ago. I love him so much.

Nathi:”Hao, one nyana (a little quickie maybe)?”

How can I say no to sex? We got on the bed and had a nice quickie before joining the rest of the gang. We had such a good time in the Maldives. We all have Instagram accounts and we make sure we post good pictures, nothing damaging. Some people have bad comments, as always but most people want to be us. We’re a brand now, we’re everywhere even on Billboards.

We have a fund that was created specifically for students who need funding in University and orphans who are still in school. We have so many sponsors and I made sure we invest our money into good stock and private policies. You just never know what could go wrong. Our Salon, properties, Complex and Garage is doing so well, apart from our Corporate Company. We do catering for a few people, even Parliament.

I really wish we could stay here for a bit longer, but time waits for no man. Money has to be made and although I love Accounting, I didn’t accept any job offers as yet. I work for the company just like the rest of us ladies. We all have a role to fulfil and we all get up in the morning to do what is expected of us.

We got back to South Africa after two days of being in the Maldives, but we’ll most definitely go back soon. We all just took pictures back in the Maldives and made sure not to connect with anyone online until we got back, so we have no idea what’s been happening.

As we got to Zoro's house to drop them off first, we found reporters with cameras flashing outside the gate. Yoh, I honestly don't know why we even have Njabulo on our payroll if he can never get the media off our backs. He is what he is because of us and now he acts like we didn't make him. Zoro and Palesa got back into the car before Palesa stabs one of them.

Biggie:"Let me call Njabulo and see what's happening."

We all decided to check on our phones and yep, there it is. We're all over the news and for bad reasons. Lerato went to the papers and accused Zoro of not paying maintenance for Baby Kiara. We didn't even know about this child. As soon as I saw the picture I saw Zoro right in that child.

Zoro:"I'm going to kill this bitch."

Thomas:"Let's go to my house and we'll figure things out from there."

Eve:"I agree."

Thomas started the car and we were off. We don't need this shit right now. Something is not right, I can feel that this is just the tip of the iceberg. We got to Thomas's house and I figured out a plan.

Me:"Zoro, I have a plan; call Lerato. I don't want nasty surprises and you know she still loves you. Call her and persuade her to meet up with you. Everyone needs to be calm and quiet. She needs to think you're all alone and that you want to fix things."

Palesa:"Eng (What)?! No fucking way!"

Yoh, Palesa. One would swear she wasn't raised prim and proper in the burbs.

Pulane:"I agree with you, wena (you) Palesa. Relax, it's not like he means it. It's just a trap."

I could see Palesa was pissed about the idea, but the only way to trap a person is to lure her yourself. Heresay is just that. Zoro called her and put her on speaker. As soon as Lerato answered, Palesa got up to pour herself a stiff drink. She's a Whiskey, Gin and Vodka kind of girl.

Lerato:"Oh, so now you decide to call me after you've seen the news."

Zoro: (sigh) "Hello, Lerato. O kae (How are you)?"

Lerato:"I'm well, how are you, baby?"

Still obsessed as ever I see.

Zoro:"I'm good. Can we talk?"

Lerato: "Over the phone? No. I'm not doing this over the phone."

Zoro: "Fine then we can meet at my house."

Lerato: "You mean our house. You bought that house for me before she stole you from me."

I saw Palesa frown and turn pink. Disadvantages of being too light, your emotions show, literally.

Zoro: "Yes, our house. Just tell me one thing, how come Kiara looks like me?"

Lerato: (chuckling) "I'll tell you when I see you. But she's yours if that's what you really want to know."

Zoro: "Fine then. I'll get rid of the media outside my house and you can come at 8pm. And bring her along."

Lerato: (excited) "Okay, baby. I love you."

Zoro hung up in frustration before he could even respond to her.

Palesa: "I don't like this one bit."

Me: "Listen to me, we all know how her mind operates. She's a whimp. Zoro can get to her and perhaps try and threaten to declare her mentally unfit and take the child from her if she doesn't leave us alone. Zoro, you'll get there and we'll hide at the next street. You just need to soften her up. Remember she knows all our secrets and can be our downfall. "

He agreed as we headed out. I have a bad feeling about this.

Chapter 121

Chichi

We drove to Zoro's house even though we really didn't want to, but we just had to. We dropped Zoro off a few houses away and had to drive down and park at a nearby stop sign. Palesa took a bottle of whiskey with and kept sipping on it in frustration.

After a few minutes we saw Lerato's Mercedes parking on the driveway outside the house. She then walked out with Kiara in her arms. Palesa just kept cursing, but we parked a bit closer to monitor the situation. I can only hope and pray everything goes well in there.

Lerato

I'm very surprised but happy that Zoro called me. He'd better not fuck with me or else he's going straight to jail. It's time for me to secure my future. He can't just dump me and live happily ever after with that thing he calls a wife. I walked out of my car and so no sign of everyone else in sight.

Perhaps he finally realized that we belong together. I knocked on the door and found him already waiting for me. This house is exactly what I had in mind. He purchased it for me then next thing he divorces me.

Zoro: "Lee. Come in."

I walked in and was in total awe.

Lerato: "The house is beautiful, Zoro."

Zoro: "Can I hold her?"

Lerato: "Sure."

I handed the sleeping Kiara to him and watched him as he rocked her. He's such a natural, I know he'll be a good daddy.

Zoro: "Why does she look like me, Lerato? You and I got divorced years ago."

Lerato: "Ai, Zoro. There was a time when we had sex and you dozed off, so I took a syringe and sucked your semen out of me. I took it to a doctor and had your sperms frozen ever since. I had hope that you'd want to fix things with me, so I asked her to freeze my eggs as well. Time went by and after all my efforts you just didn't seem interested in me at all, so I got her to perform IVF on a surrogate. Well here we are. Kiara is 9 months old now."

I tried to read his emotion, but he just kept staring at Kiara. For some odd reason he remained calm, which is unlike Zoro. I guess with time people really do change.

Zoro: "Why didn't you come to me earlier? Send a text or something."

Lerato: "I was waiting for the right time. I'm sorry."

Zoro: "It's okay, I understand. She's really beautiful."

Lerato: "She looks just like her daddy."

Zoro: "Why did you go to the media about all this? I mean do you have any idea what this is going to do to my image? Our image?"

Lerato: "So you care more about your image than your own daughter?!"

Zoro: "No, that's not what I meant. I mean you could have just resorted to a better way, you know."

Lerato: (sigh) "I'm sorry. It was all my Father's idea. He figured you'd give me more money if I had gone to the media."

I couldn't read him once again as he just stared at our beautiful child.

Zoro: "Okay, then. Are you going to fix your mess?"

Lerato: "What mess?"

Zoro: (sigh) "Lerato, go to the media and apologize. Tell them the truth and I promise I'll fix things between us. I'll leave Palesa and you and I will be a family again."

I was overjoyed and I smiled widely.

Lerato: (teary) "Do you mean it, Zoro? Like really mean it?"

Zoro: "Yes, I do."

I hugged and kissed him.

Lerato: "Okay, then. Let me go back home, but tomorrow I'm moving in here."

Zoro: "Of course. Anything you wish."

He handed Kiara back to me as I got into my car and drove off. But then, what if Zoro is lying to me? How come he just accepted everything so easily? What if he's planning to get rid of me?

Chichi

We saw her drive off and Thomas starts the car and we drove into Palesa and Zoro's yard. Palesa was the first one to get out. She stormed in and we found Zoro sitting on the couch, looking defeated.

Palesa: "Ja, Zoro! What did she say?! Why did she take so long, na?! You two were bonding akere (right)?"

That's the one thing that pisses Zoro and the rest of us off about Palesa. She tends to raise her voice when she's angry and she has no idea when to be calm, especially when it comes to Zoro. Zoro had his face buried in his hands as soon as she started shouting.

Cindy: "Palesa ema nyana toe (wait a minute, please)."

Palesa: "Don't tell me what to do in my own house with MY man! Ke bua le wena Zoro (I'm talking to you)!"

Zoro: (irritated) "Palesa, Voetsek (piss off), man! Wa bona ke nale (You can see I have) stress and now you want to add more on top of it! Just shut the fuck up!"

Palesa looked at him so shocked and decided to keep quiet.

Me: "What did she say, Zoro?"

Zoro explained everything about the IVF and surrogate. Yoh

this feels like a movie shame. Lerato is something else. I honestly don't know where she found the time to think about all of that.

Eve: "We can fix this. You did say that she'd come back tomorrow, right? So I say we corner her. We get her admitted to Denmar or something and let them work their magic on her. Palesa and Zoro can look after Kiara and blackmail Palesa's father. Better yet, we need to pay him a visit, him and this stupid doctor. We can't have people play God with our lives and let them get away with it. Our livelihood is at stake here, guys."

Eve has a point, but it could still backfire. It seems like a nice plan, so we don't really have much of a choice. As we were contemplating a plan, Lerato walked back in. Yesses I thought we closed the bloody gate.

Lerato: "Ja, neh! I knew it! I just knew it! Zoro you played me like that?! You lied to my face?! Me, the mother of your baby!"

Palesa: "Yey wena! You don't get to barge into my house like that!"

Zoro: "Lerato, ngwana o kae?"

Lerato: "She's in the car not that you care."

Zoro: (fuming) "Are you kidding me?! You left a baby alone in your car?!"

Lerato: "What was I supposed to do?! I had to come back and see if you weren't lying to me. Turns out you were too good to be true! I'm broken, Zoro. How the fuck could you?!"

As Zoro tried to calm her down, she took out a gun from her handbag. Yoh, I didn't see this coming. She pointed it directly at Zoro. Palesa was furious.

Zoro: "Lerato, think about this for a second. You don't know what you're doing. You're not thinking straight."

Lerato: "No, Zoro. If I can't have you then no one can."

Yoh, this is not going to end well.

Me: "Lerato, please."

Lerato: "Wena Miss Perfect, you shut the fuck up! If you hadn't been found then none of this shit would have happened. I wouldn't have had to choose between giving you a kidney and losing my man. You are the cause of all of this! I was a member of the Lions, just like Palesa is now. You accepted me and welcomed me only to throw me away like a piece of shit. So, I'd rather lose Zoro than to let Palesa have him."

Biggie: "Lerato, no."

Lerato just got pissed by all of us trying to mediate peace and she shot Zoro in the chest. Everything happened so fast, that Palesa took her gun out so fast and shot Palesa in the head. Zoro fell down and so did Palesa.

Puleng: "Shit! Shit! Shit!"

Menzi: "Quickly, check her pulse, while you put some pressure on Zoro's wound, Palesa."

Puleng ran to Lerato and checked her pulse.

Puleng: "She's still alive. Her pulse is there, but it's getting a bit weaker."

Nathi: "Fuck this is bad. Someone must have probably alerted the police by now."

Thomas: "Shit these neighborhoods."

Me: "I'll call an ambulance quickly."

Cindy: "Oh, no! The baby! I'll go get her."

Zoro was wincing in pain as Palesa was crying.

Palesa: "Hang in there, my love. Help is coming."

Blood was oozing from Lerato's head and everything was just a real mess. It's true what they say, hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. And the events of this evening caused us so many problems. Just like that, our nightmare began.

Chapter 122

Chichi

As expected the police arrived just minutes before the ambulance. The paramedics came and took Lerato first. Another one came and took Zoro, while Palesa went with him. The Police expected her to stay for the statements, but she didn't have time for that. It was either they let her leave with her husband, or she cuts them.

We all told the truth and the policemen left after they took some pictures and samples for evidence. Kiara was still sleeping peacefully. This is a shitty mess, I honestly don't know how we're going to explain it to Lerato's idiot father. He already wants revenge against Zoro.



Nathi: "I think we should take Kiara with us since you all have younger children. Besides, I'm sure Palesa will come fetch her since we live closer to them." They all agreed, and we all left the house like that with blood stains almost everywhere. I hope and pray Palesa makes it otherwise we'd never hear the end of it. As Thomas dropped Nathi and I with Kiara at our house, they drove off. Kiara is such a sweet baby.

Luckily I had taken her baby bag from Lerato's car while Thomas parked it in the yard before we left. Kiara is on formula, so it won't be hard to take care of her. The bag had a few nappies and some baby clothes in it, so I carefully put her in one of the twin's play cots.

We had packed everything away, since they've outgrown them, but Nathi quickly went to fetch it from the store room and laid it out for her. We left the night light on and went to bed. We even had to take out the monitor so we can hear her when she's crying. I took off my clothes and got in bed next to Nathi.

We sleep naked, always. I can only hope that Zoro gets better and Lerato lives, otherwise this might just turn out as a disaster. I switched on the tv and yep, we're too late. "Millionaire shoots ex wife in the head". Ja, we're in deep shit as we speak. This is going to end badly, I can feel it. I'm so jey lagged from the flight and all this is stressing me out. I just need peace and quiet and lots of sleep. Our phones kept beeping, but we switched them off. We can deal with this shit tomorrow.

We didn't get much sleep because Kiara woke up in the middle of the night crying hysterically. I really didn't miss this waking up and feeding babies in the middle of the night. My kids haven't worn diapers ever since they were two years old. She probably missed her mom and wasn't used to sleeping alone. I could tell Lerato co sleeps with her because she wouldn't sleep once we put her down in the cot. We decided to sleep with her and we got woken up by loud banging on our bedroom door. That can only be one of the Lions as we all have keys to each other's houses.

Nathi: "Yoh! Nkosi yami (My goodness)! Ngiyeza (I'm coming)."

Nathi opened the door and a frantic Palesa walked in. She looks like shit.

Me: "Palesa, keng (What is it)?"

Palesa: "Lerato was declared dead this morning. I... I killed her, Zee. I fucking killed her!"

This isn't good.

Me: "Relax, okay. Njabulo will take care of this. Don't you worry about a thing, but you need to pull yourself together

Palesa. You've never been weak. Come on."

She nodded in understanding as we saw Lerato's father on tv, just outside the hospital.

Lerato's father: "I'm very pained to have heard the news of my daughter's murder."

Eh, banna. Murder?

Lerato's father:"I'll make sure that Kabelo Zoro Moloji pays for what he's done to my family. We've been robbed of our only child. And now, they've kidnapped our granddaughter. I won't rest until I see him and his wife in prison."

Wow, this man just won't stop. It was self defence though, I mean really. We really need to come up with a serious plan.

Two weeks later

The Lerato Saga put us in the limelight and it has been a tough road. Lerato's dad didn't want us at the funeral. Zoro blatantly refused to give him Kiara back, and he demanded two million rand in exchange for custody of Kiara. Ja ne, money talks. Speaking of Zoro, He's made a full recovery, thank goodness the bullet didn't hit his vital organs. We have had to put out fires caused by this scandal and luckily we didn't lose any of our clients.

Most of the people understood that Lerato was obsessed with Zoro and once they heard the surrogacy story, they were extremely convinced that she was a nutcase. It's Sunday and as we all know it's church day. We're on our way to church and we usually take the Viano now with out kids. We squash ourselves in there and enjoy the ride together.

Today's sermon is held by Ntate Moruti and he spoke of repentance. He said that sometimes we need to look deep down within ourselves and repent fully in order to understand how God really works and if we really want to accept Jesus wholeheartedly. He also spoke of our sins haunting us if we don't repent. I loved it and it kind of spoke to me. After the service, we went to dish out food for the community as usual. It's a pretty hot day today and my feet are killing me. I just can't wait to get home today. Mama and gorilla kept the babies and kids entertained as always. I still don't know how they do it so perfectly. As we were busy, we saw two police vans pull up at the gate. Four Policemen walked out of their cars and one holding a piece of paper. For some reason my heart started beating way too fast. I don't even know why I'm scared because I have nothing to fear. One of the policemen looks just like the one who was shot by Gupta the time he had kidnapped me.

Policeman1:"We have a warrant of arrest for The members of the Lion gang."

We all looked at him in silence as the whole congregation stopped to look at what was happening.

Biggie:"I'm sorry, officer, but which gang are you talking about? As far as we're concerned there is no gang here."

Policeman2:"Ai, Norman. Ke go boditse gore ba tlo re shapa ka nako batho ba (I told you they'd waste our time these people). Let's just cuff them."

The first policeman read our rights to us and gave us the whole you have the right to remain silent speech.

Eve:"You haven't told us what you're arresting us for."

Policeman 1: "You're the cheeky one. Anyway, you're being arrested for the murder of Lerato Moloi, bank robberies, fraud, the murder of Patrick Mashabela and conspiracy with the famous drug lord Gupta."

What the fuck is happening?! I looked around and everyone stared at us while some took videos and pictures.

Policeman 1: "You can all willingly walk to the van, or else we'll have to cuff you."

Thomas: "No need, we'll walk to the van."

Policeman 1: "Very well then."

We walked out in pure embarrassment as people were looking at us. We were publicly humiliated and I just knew that Lerato planned our downfall in case she died.

Chapter 123

Chichi

Proverbs 24 v 16 says: "for though a righteous man falls seven times, he will rise again, but the wicked stumble into calamity."

Psalms 37 v 23-24 says: "The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand."

I kept thinking as we were thrown into the van. All the women were together and all the men were in the other van together. Palesa was stressed as fuck, busy shaking and chewing her nails. Surprisingly the rest of us were calm, she's the only one who was panicking. I know we'll get out of this, we just have to.

Me: "Eve, try calling Njabulo. He should meet us at the police station."

Eve dialed and said it went straight to voicemail. Njabulo never leaves his phone off.

What is happening? I tried calling Nathi since we all had our phones with us.

Nathi: "MaDhlamini."

Me: "Nkosinathi, have you tried calling Njabulo?"

Nathi: (sigh) "It's no use, Sthandwa sami (My love). We'll have to find a new lawyer."

I became so confused instantly.

Me: "What do you mean?"

Nathi: "Njabulo has turned state witness against us – all of us. Gorilla just informed me now."

This can't be happening. Njabulo knows all our secrets and he's Thomas's brother. Like how could he?! He is what he is because of us, man. He wouldn't be the most sought after lawyer in the country if it weren't for us. You put all your faith in a person and they thank you with a plate full of a big pile of shit.

Nathi: "Listen, we'll talk soon. Just remember do not say anything without the presence of a lawyer."

Me: "Okay."

Nathi: "Ngiyakuthanda yezwa (I love you, okay)?"

Me: "I love you too."

He hung up while I sighed.

Pulane: "And? What's he saying?"

Me: "Njabulo turned state witness against us and we shouldn't say anything without the presence of a lawyer."

Cindy: "We all know that, remember our pact? All or nothing."

Palesa was seriously panicking and barely said a word. This bitch had better not sell us out. She's the one who shot Lerato in the first place. She could have aimed for the leg or arm or something, but she chose to shoot her right in the head. The policemen opened the door.

Policeman 1: "Azishe (let's go), pretty girls! Your Versace and Gucci doesn't work here. A re yeng (Let's get going)."

These people are so rude. It's always nice when they are under your payroll until they want recognition for arresting the most powerful family in the country. We walked out and there were cameras flashing everywhere and journalists trying to shove microphones in our faces. These policemen were enjoying this so much.

They'd better enjoy it while it lasts because I'm about to sue the shit out of them once we get out of here. As we entered the police station, we saw many people taking out their phones and filming us, even some of the cops. Some were even saying "Ja, ne ba nagana gore ba tla fella kae (Where did they think they'd end up)?"

Mind you these are some of the people we feed at our church and hand out food and clothes parcels to. People are never satisfied until they see your downfall. Gorilla was sitting at one of the benches.

I was confident seeing him there. I knew he would come up with a solution. We weren't taken to the holding cells straight away, they took us to the questioning rooms immediately. I found myself walking into one of the rooms with the first Policeman, the one I saw Gupta shoot that day.

Policeman 1: "Yes, Ma Dhlamini. I knew I'd see you again after that little stunt Gupta pulled."

I gave him a questioning look.

Policeman 1: "You don't remember me? It's me, Norman. Akere your kidnapper shot me that day, luckily I had my bulletproof vest on."

I just stared at him in silence.

Policeman 1: (chuckling) "I see you're one of those loyal women. So, bona (look). I can get you out of this mess if you become my woman. I can make your dreams come true. I can give you the world, babes."

I chuckled. This dude honestly thinka he can do better than my Nathi. He probably survives on daily bribes and he has the balls to tell me this kak.

Me: "I admire your courage, Norman. O fereya mosadi wa (You're making a move on the wife of) Nkosinathi Dhlamini and you think you'll make it til the end of the week? Shame. Anyway, give me my charges and take me back to my cell because I'm not talking."

I could see he was a bit offended by my words but I really don't give a fuck.  
Policeman 1: "Ja ne. Ba re magenza a nyoba shem (They say gangsters can fuck, shame). No wonder difebe di nna di ba sela morago bjana (No wonder bitches are always running after them like this). You're willing to go to prison for your man, I admire that. Anyway, we know that you killed your father, Patrick Mashabela and that you attempted murder on Aidah Mogashoa, your aunt.

You also attempted murder on Pabi Mogashoa, your cousin also attempted murder on Samantha Ndhlovu, Thomas's ex wife. You out of all these women actually stand to spend more years in prison than the rest of them. You're looking at more than three life sentences, if not more."

I just stared at him and called out his bluff.

Me: "Are you done?"

Policeman 1: "Oh, I see you don't believe me, hey. I've got proof. You see all these people are witnesses and are willing to testify against you – all of you. Lerato's father is also willing to testify and we have recordings she made before your friend murdered her. I'm talking dates, times, events, financial records and statements. Not to mention your awesome ex lawyer who's gone rogue on all of you. You stand no chance."

I gave him a blank stare even though I was panicking a little bit. Lerato, though. Those recordings don't stand a chance in court. They can't prosecute us based on heresay, never. I folded my arms and stared at him.

Policeman 1: "Very well, then. I shall take you back to your cell, where you'll have a taste of what's to come."

He roughly pulled me from my chair with my hands cuffed behind me. This guy is seriously going to regret this. He took me to a holding cell where I found the rest of the ladies, except Palesa, and some others I don't know. They looked like prostitutes and low life criminals. Pulane came to hug me.

Pulane: "Are you okay?"

Me: "I'm fine. Where's Palesa?"

Eve: "She's probably still being questioned."

Cindy: "You didn't say anything, did you?"

Me: "Of course not, Cindy."

Eve: "I have a bad feeling about Pulane. I saw her parents walk through to one of the rooms. I'm telling you that bitch is going to talk."

That was my fear exactly.

Pulane: "Eish, she'd better not because I'll kill her with my bare hands. Apparently they have CCTV footage of the heist The guys pulled years ago when Ntombi and Negra died. The guy who was questioning me claims that we're all charged with Pontsho's murder and Pabi, Aidah and Sam's attempted murder. Guys, he showed me the charge sheet. Apparently we're drug smugglers. I mean I don't get it. We stopped dealing years ago."

Me: "Njabulo continued smuggling behind our backs, so to cover his own ass, he pinned everything on us."

Cindy: "Surely we can get the Mayor and Police Chief to help get these people off our backs."

Eve: "That's if the NPA doesn't take over this case. Apparently Van Onselen has been dying to nail us."

We all looked at her shocked.

Cindy: "The Van Onselen? The Bulldozer?!"

Eve: "Yep."

That guy is one of the best prosecutors in the country. I bet he'll fight tooth and nail to make sure we die in prison. After a few minutes Palesa walked in with tears in her eyes and a swollen, red face. We all looked at her, awaiting to hear what she said. As usual, Eve didn't beat around the bush.

Eve: "Mxm, you confessed, didn't you?"

Palesa: (crying) "I'm sorry. I was scared. I had to say something. The guy told me I'd go to prison for over 25 years, guys! Kea still needs me. My dad swore he'd disown me if I didn't tell the truth."

Yoh this bitch is dumber than I thought. For someone who acts all gangster all the time, I genuinely thought she had tougher skin. Even Cindy is tougher than that.

Pulane: "Mara Palesa o setlaela se se bjang (What kind of idiot are you)?"

Palesa sat there looking down in tears.

Cindy: "You actually threw us all under the bus. They just say shit like that so that you'd give them what they want to hear. Not only did you sell us out, you sold our husbands out – including yours. Le gona (Besides) why would you give a shit about your father disowning you when you're married?!"

Eve: "What exactly did you say?"

Palesa: "I.. I..."

Pulane: "Yoh, Modimo (Oh, God)! Bolela before ke go kgama (Talk before I strangle you)!"

Palesa: "I just told them that you used to be gangsters in the old days and that you used to do heists back in the day. I told them about the chamber room and that Chichi killed her father. Also that you killed Pontsho because of what she did to you."

She basically sold us all out. All that happened before she joined our family. We were all so enraged words couldn't even explain it. The next thing I saw Cindy punch Palesa so hard she fell on the floor. The other ladies were staring and cheering. I didn't feel sorry for Palesa at this point. I mean who knows what else she said to that cop? All the luxury Zoro gave her and she does this because she felt "scared"?! I don't even know why Zoro goes for such bitches.

Cindy: "Yesses! O bosepa Palesa man fok (You're a piece of shit, man)! We all have children and you decided to save yourself!"

Palesa: "I'm sorry. I... I can fix it."

Me: "Save it, man. Just save it. I have an idea. Eve, they allow us all one phone call, right?"

Eve: "Yes."

Me: "I'll need to get us a lawyer as soon as possible. Nathi isn't going to like this, but Micah is our best bet right now."

## Chapter 124

### Chichi

Things are so bad now that Palesa's father organized her a lawyer of her own. They came to bail her out even. Ja ne, Zoro sure knows how to pick them. He's going to be so heartbroken. All the bitches he marries disappoint him to the core.

I just don't know what is so wrong about him. He's such a gentle soul and honestly doesn't deserve this. And then there were four. I called Mandisa since I didn't have Micah's number. I explained the situation briefly and he said he'd let Micah know as soon as possible. Micah would have known, but he wasn't at church today. As we impatiently waited for Micah, Gorilla came to see us.

Me: "Baba, thank God."

Eve: "Are you getting us out of here?"

Gorilla: (sigh) "Not yet, bantwana bami (my kids). I'm afraid, I have some bad news." Yoh, I don't think I can take any more bad news.

Me: "What is it?"

Gorilla: "Well, Palesa's testimony was enough to discredit you and since she told them about your torturing and about the chamber, Van Onselen managed to get a search warrant for all your houses."

Shit. This is not good at all. Palesa has a death wish, because I know for sure Zoro is going to kill her.

Eve: "Fuck. They can't do that. We're in serious shit. We have some money in our houses and they're going to take it all!"

Gorilla: "That's not all. I got Ndumiso to check what Njabulo has been up to and it's bad. Njabulo stole money from you guys every single month for the past five years and created a dummy account offshore. He was planning this all along, I guess he was just waiting for you to slip up.

He has turned state witness against you, probably out of fear that you'd all kill him, but don't worry about him. I'll get Micah to discredit him due to his drug dealings and he'll be stripped off his lawyer title and disbarred with immediate effect. He'll go to jail as well."

That gives me some hope.

Cindy: "What about us? Are we getting out anytime soon?"

Gorilla: "Micah is out of Pretoria, but he asked Mandisa to take over the case. Don't worry, he might be a new lawyer, but he's really good."

This doesn't sound too good at all. I can't believe Njabulo stole money from us. Yoh, all this bad luck couldn't have come at a worse time than this. Our lives were perfect 24 hours ago. This is too much to handle. Mandisa appeared after a short while.

Me: "Mandisa, thank Goodness you're here. What's happening?"

Mandisa: "It's not so good. Van Onselen made sure he got some sort of evidence while searching your houses. They're going to try and use the Chamber room and all the weapons found in there to discredit all of you. It's a difficult one, but can be won as there is no evidence, except for Lerato's tapes and Palesa's statement.

Me: "Are you going to get us bail?"

Mandisa: "I can only do that for you tomorrow morning. For now, I'm afraid you have to stay in here overnight."

Ja neh. This is hectic.

Gorilla: "Don't you worry. We'll take care of the children."

Cindy: "Where is Kea?"

Gorilla: "Palesa arrived with her parents and took her without saying a word."

Cindy: "I'm going to kill her."

Pulane: "Leave her. She'll get what's coming to her real soon."

Gorilla and Mandisa said their goodbyes and left us there. We were so drained as this all felt like a shitty movie. They even gave us this horrible food. I tried eating and so did Eve and Pulane but no man. The food was just horrible. Cindy even vomited. I get that the food wasn't amazing

but I doubt it was enough to make one vomit.

Policeman 1: "Ja, le tla tlwaela go dija dijo tse (You'll get used to eating such food). Nako ya mahenya henya e fedile (Time for fancy food is over)."

Pulane: "Cindy, o hlatsisa ke sopo ka borotho (Soup and bread made you vomit like that)?"

Cindy: "Eish, I was going to tell you guys. I'm pregnant."

This is just such a terrible time to fall pregnant. We didn't even know if we should congratulate or what.

Pulane: "Congra, my baby. It's good news akere (right)?"

Yep, the waterworks began. Cindy burst into tears.

Cindy: "How is this good, Pulane? We're about to lose everything and now I'm pregnant!"

Eve: "Relax, it's always darker before the sunshine. Believe me, we'll all get through this."

We held our hands and said a prayer. I really wish I was next to my husband in our bed with our children right now. Indeed, Eve is right. We shall get through this, how? I don't know but where there's a will there's always a way.

The following morning came and my goodness we barely slept. These benches are so uncomfortable and these unknown women kept making noise all night. Some of them



were banging the cells demanding to be released until Eve and Cindy threatened to beat them up.

Others came in after being arrested in the early hours of the morning. One of them named Beauty. She was caught drinking publicly so they arrested her just to teach her a lesson. After she came and recognized us, we hardly slept a wink.

She even offered us some bubblegum and kept telling us hilarious stories about her life. She's been following us ever since we made the news headlines and admires us. It was quite nice to meet a fan of ours. Before we knew it, we were being called out. Policeman 1: "Eve Legae, Pulane Dladla, Cindy Mogase and Tshegofatso Dhlamini are yeng (let's go)."

Beauty: "Ah, Badimo ba ka (My ancestors), la nshiya (You're leaving me)? Le ska wara ne ke tlo le etela (I'll come visit) very soon. O a le lahletseng ka mo o tlo nyela (The one who got you arrested will shit themselves). Sho sho."

We laughed a bit as we left the cells. We met Mandisa outside without our husbands. Me: "Mandisa, where are our men?"

Mandisa: (sigh) "I'm sorry. I could only get bail for you four and not them. The judge decided not to charge you guys due to lack of evidence."

Pulane: "What about them? What are they being charged for?"

Mandisa: "There's no evidence for the murder charges so they have been dropped, but the Attempted murder charges still stand since the victims are also witnesses. The drug charges we managed to pin on Njabulo since he's the one who decided to go through with selling drugs. As for the rest, I'm sorry, but Van Onselen won't let them go out anytime soon. He made the judge believe that they are not fit for bail as they are a threat to society. All the business accounts have been frozen until all this is resolved."

We looked down in defeat and shed a few tears. There comes a time in life when all your sins will come haunting you in some way, shape or form. This is our chance to redeem ourselves and it won't be an easy road. Our husbands are in jail, all because of two men who once loved the same man. Now we have to learn how to fend for ourselves until we get our husbands back.

Chapter 125

Chichi

Gorilla was kind enough to drive us all home. We started with Cindy as she went to her house to take her clothes, while Eve and Pulane did the same. Our houses were trashed to say the least. A few items were missing and all the money we had stashed in the houses was taken. Some people are just too greedy.

We all decided to camp at my house. There's more than enough room since we've extended the house. I miss my Nathi, but now we need a game plan. Mandisa said Micah would like to represent us for free, but we can't have that.

We still need to feed ourselves and our children. Ferrari and Bentley are in Varsity now, so luckily their fees were covered for the whole year. They stay at res so we don't have to worry about them for now.

Versace is still young, so are Pulane's two children. My kids are supposed to start school next year, while Cindy's baby girl Fiona is also still a toddler and now she has one on the way.

Kea was taken by Palesa, which now leaves us with Kiara. That's a total of six children we have to look after and we can't depend on other people, we've never done that. We all got to my house and I took out a bottle of wine for us to think. Cindy can drink juice.

Me:"Okay, have any of you saved any money we can use so far?"

Pulane:"All my money is wrapped up in investments, but I do have about R500 000 saved in my account."

That's a start.

Me:"I have about R800 000 which will last us a while. What about you two?"

Eve:"Big and I have joint accounts so they're all frozen."

Cindy:"Same here."

They looked down in shame.

Me:"Guys, it's all going to be okay, really. We need to be strong but Zoro needs our support more than anyone here. We can sort it all out. Let's freshen up and get ready to go see our husbands."

They all nodded as we proceeded to our bedrooms. All the bedrooms in my house have en suite bathrooms. We wore our best outfits and packed some food for our husbands. We need to put up a united front despite what people are saying. We drove back to the police station and the police wanted to give us grief, but we refused. They let us see them luckily and give them the food we've brought. I thought they'd look worse than what they actually do. All of them look okay, except Zoro.

Nathi:"MaDhlamini."

Me:"Hi, baby. How are you?"

Nathi:"I'm living, how are you?"

Me:"I've had better days. Are you holding up okay in here?"

Nathi:"Yes, but I don't think siyophuma anytime soon, baby wami (my baby). I'm so sorry I got you involved in such a life. Now I can't be out there to give you the life you deserve."

Me:"Nkosinathi, stop it. All of you have to be there for Zoro. We'll be okay, we're Lionesses, man. Just make sure you take care of Zoro while we fix this nonsense."

He nodded with sadness. There's nothing more painful to see like a broken man. We gave them their food and had to leave earlier because well, we don't deserve luxury just because we're gangsters as the police say. This is going to be a long tough road. We went back home and had to work on the case tirelessly with Mandisa. Micah would join us every now and then.

Three months later

It's been a really tough three months. We've had to downgrade a lot ever since our husbands went to jail. Legal fees were piling up even though Micah offered to represent them for free, life has to go on. I figured we could save our money for a while since we didn't have to pay Micah until we were all sorted.

We've had to close our businesses for a while since investors pulled out of Lions corporate. I didn't expect any better from people who didn't dine with us while we were hungry. Palesa showed us flames by selling her share of the restaurant Zoro bought for her. We just told her to keep it. We don't want to be associated with someone like her anyway.

Van Onselen has seriously tried discrediting us for real. He's managed to liquidate all our businesses, the complex we fought so hard to build and our flats in Mamelodi. We're basically left with our houses since we bought them in cash and our cars. The rest of our money, apart from our own bank accounts and investments are frozen. We're basically broke. We won't be waking up to Mimosas anytime soon. I've had to sell our house we had in Glenway and our island house in The Maldives. It's going to be tough, but the Lord always makes a way. We have over 4 million rand left and we have skills, so we will be okay.

A downgraded life isn't bad at all. Today is our final court date since Van Onselen refused to grant them bail. We made our way to court with mama and Gorilla supporting us. We were draped in Versace and Guccio as always and expensive sunglasses and heels.

Cindy is already showing since she's four months pregnant. Zoro has had a mental breakdown and has had to be attended to by the prison medical staff. Mandisa has been doing really well as our lawyer and I'm glad Micah gave him the chance. We've been attending church as usual, I mean we're not criminals. People still talk and whisper here and there but aren't ashamed enough not to eat our food. We've thought of killing Palesa, but what good would that do? It's time to face our demons. It's closing arguments time today so we are hoping for the best.

I looked over and saw Nathi look at me. He looks like he's aged nje. He looks a lot thinner than his normal size. They even wanted us to bribe the judge, but Gorilla said it's time for them to face the music like he did. It's been so painful having them gone, but we've had to adjust quickly.

Judge:"Well, I've heard both your cases and I find the accused not guilty of drug and money laundering and there is no sufficient evidence that they are the ones who were indeed part of the heist in question five years ago."

We all sighed in relief.

Judge:"However, I do find the accused guilty of the following: "Attempted murder of Samantha Ndhlovu

the ex wife of Thomas Mogase. They mutilated her and left her in such a state. Based on all evidence and what the accused have achieved, there is no apparent evidence

that they indeed attempted murder on Aidah and Pabi Mogashoa. Therefore there will be no need for further mitigation, I sentence all the accused to 5 years in prison, with the possibility of parole after serving half of their sentence. Court adjourned.”

My heart broke into a million pieces. I couldn't help but let the tears fall down. I've tried to be so strong, but all I managed to do was cry. I saw Nathi give me one last glance as he went down the podium. Mandisa and Micah tried their utmost best, they really did. They did warn us that they wouldn't go scott free. As I was about to walk out with my girls, one of the prison wardens stopped me.

Warden:”Pardon me, Mrs. Dhlamini. I just wanted to tell you that I admire you – all of you. The Lions foundation really helped my brother. Thanks to you guys he was able to complete his studies at University. Please, if you need anything please just shout. I'll be working closely with your husband and his friends. They're being transferred to Baviaanspoort Prison.”

At least we managed to turn someone's life around.

Me:”Thank you, Mr?”

Warden:”Hade (sorry), Miss. Please, call me Tbose.”

Me:”Thanks Tbose. Please just make sure they are okay. Can you organize them cellphones so we can keep in touch with them?”

Warden:”Sho sho. No problem. Anything for you.”

I smiled as we left. We went to my house and honestly, I have no words. Gorilla and Julia accompanied us. Bree sent me a message of comfort, so did Lebo and Tshiamo. Apart from them pretty much everyone else in the world are saying bad shit about us. Some are saying they bet we still have some blood money left since we're forever dressed in Gucci and Versace. Such comments don't even hurt me anymore. I'm numb, my kids keep asking for their father. How do I begin to explain to them that their father will be in prison for years?

Julia:”My children, you could always come stay with us.”

Me:”No, mama. That won't be necessary. Please, I appreciate your help, but we'll be fine.”

Gorilla:”Okay, then. Shout if you need anything.”

They left as we were all left with our children. Palesa disgusts me. She couldn't even wait for things to die down, she testified acting like a victim even claiming that Zoro was abusive towards her and Kea. She filed for divorce and that must have taken Zoro over the edge. At least they'll be nearby so we can visit regularly. It's going to be tough, but we'll make it. As we were about to have a sip of our wine, Kiara started having fits. Foam was coming out of her mouth and she was shaking. Pulane tried to stabilize her, but we needed the hospital. We headed for the hospital and had to pay cash since our medical aids were canceled. We waited for about an hour before receiving any feedback from the doctor. Eventually the doctor came out to address us.

Pulane:”Oh, Doctor. Thank goodness. Is she okay?”

Doctor: "I'm afraid I have bad news for you. Kiara has Leukemia, which is cancer of the blood. You're lucky because it's in the early stages. We have to start with chemo immediately, but I'll need consent of a parent."

Shit this can't be happening. Zoro won't survive this. He's already lost Kea and now we can't lose Kiara too. He just found her.

Me: "Do it, doctor. Whatever it takes."

Doctor: "The treatment will cost about 1 million rand in total, and that's only a minimum estimate."

Me: "Like I said, doctor. Do whatever it takes."

He nodded and I proceeded to make payment.

Cindy: "No, Chichi. What are you doing?"

Me: "I'm saving a child's life, Cindy. Wouldn't you want us to do that for your child?"

Eve: "I'm with Chichi, Cindy. Now is not the time to be selfish. We'll do whatever it takes for her."

Cindy: "You're right. I'm sorry."

Pulane: "We'll get through this, girls. We always do. Have faith in the Lord."

Deuteronomy 31 v 8 says: "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

even though she had to take a pay cut. She has been such a God sent and no matter how rough I have it, I always manage to pay her by the Grace of God.

It's a bit unconventional for women to be working while their husbands are in jail, but we're doing it. Zoro has been receiving counseling and it seems as if there is hope after all. Kiara is in remission and cancer free. She's turning two today and we're having a small party for her at home. I got out of my bedroom and found the ladies setting up the lounge with snacks on the table and some champagne. Kiara is still beautiful even with a bald head. This little warrior is amazing. Zoro should really try fighting, for her sake.

Pulane: "Hey, watermuis (mermaid). We've been waiting for you, hey."

Me: (chuckling) "Sorry, babe. I just needed the bubble bath. Erica is a slave driver man."

Eve: "Is she still giving you a tough time at work?"

Me: (sigh) "Yes, but only when her husband isn't around. She is forever on my case, but I keep putting her in my prayers. Can you believe the other day she shouted in front of the whole staff that my accounts should be triple checked just in case I stole some money?"

Cindy: "Heh?! That bitch needs to be told. I don't know how you do it, Chichi, because I'd have been in jail right now."

Eve: (laughing) "Ai, Cinderella. We can't afford jail right now. That's the only thing that keeps us going."

Pulane: "Ah, nna one of the new bitches at work tried to embarrass me, so I dipped some Zanex in her coffee and she slept throughout her entire shift."

We burst out laughing.

Me: "Pulane mara keng heh (But why man)?"

Pulane: "I got tired of people talking shit about me as if I'm not qualified to do my job. I just wanted to teach her a lesson, even though no one knows I did it."

We burst out in laughter, as Cindy poured us some wine while the kids were playing. My twins have grown so much that they even got used to the idea of their father in prison. We take them

with during family day once a month. It's not ideal, but it makes them happy. As we were about to sing for Kiara, someone knocked on my door. We hardly lock the gate since our neighbourhood is secure.

Cindy opened the door and we were horrified.

Palesa: "Hi, guys."

She looked disastrous. Dirty, very thin and her complexion was hardly even visible. She had a few missing teeth and Kea looked so dirty and messy. What the fuck does she want now?

Chapter 127

Chichi

Palesa looked so worn out as she stood there carrying Kea, who's about 3 years old by now. I don't get why she even thinks she'd be welcomed in my house after what she did.

Cindy: "Palesa, re ka go thusa ka eng (How can we help you)?"

Palesa: "Hi, I uhm.."

Cindy: "Bolela (Talk), Clever!"

Palesa: "I've come to ask for a place to stay, guys."

Cindy: (clapping hands) "Heh! Mehlolo (Goodness)! Wa re nyela Palesa, waitse (You're telling us shit, you know)."

Palesa: "I'm sorry for everything I did."

Pulane: "Where's daddy? Akere you were so sure of yourself while you were on the stand with him by your side?"

Palesa: "I regret what I did. Please give me another chance. You're all God fearing women, and even God forgives."

I feel very sorry for her right now, but I don't think involving her into our lives would be a good idea right now.

Eve: "No. Look, Zoro is in shit now because of you. Do you know he's been suicidal because you just chose to betray us and divorce him?!"

Palesa kept quiet and looked down.

Me: "Look Palesa, we can take Kea because she seems like she needs to be well cared for now. But you on the other hand, you're on your own. I'm sorry."

Palesa looked really sad and defeated. I understand though. But we can't help her.

Palesa: "Okay. I totally understand."

She handed Kea over to Pulane. The state that poor child was in just made me cry.

She had all the signs of malnutrition and I'm amazed she's still alive and breathing.

Palesa left even though you could see she really didn't want to leave.

Cindy: "Mxm, batho ba rata go senya matsatsi a batho man (People like ruining your day, man)."

Pulane gave Kea a bath and had to even remove some lice on her. She looked really frail, and lost a lot of weight. We got her some medication from the chemist and enjoyed Kiara's birthday. It would be so nice for Zoro to see both his kids at the next family day.

Nathi

It's been a whole year since I've been in prison. As much as it isn't that bad, I do miss my wife and children. I really miss our lives and we had just tasted success and then it was taken away from us in an instant. Van Onselen wasn't too happy about our sentence, but we serve a living God.

My wife has been so supportive, working to make ends meet for our family. It pains me to see our wives hustling while we're in here, but one thing I'm so glad they're trying, and now I've made peace with my fate. I know I only have one more year and a half left then I'll be with my wife and kids.

We're sitting in our cell, having a chat as usual. Zoro is really trying, honestly.

Biggie:"Eh, Nathi mfo (bro), I miss sex man."

Thomas, Zoro, Menzi and I laughed.

Nathi:"Hai, man Biggie. It's okay

now. We're going to be out real soo. Take it as a detox nje."

Biggie:"Yoh, hai, I can't take it anymore. Eve even sent me a nude the other day, man. I can't survive anymore."

Menzi:"Ah, man. Berekisa letsogo (Use your hand)."

We all laughed as Tbose brought a new inmate. We're good friends now. He makes sure we're sorted with cigarettes and stuff. At times we buy some alcohol for these guys. That's when we're not praying and worshipping.

Tbose:"Di Bosso, ke le tletse new speke (Bosses, I've brought you new meat)."

Skapa, one of the inmates likes bothering the new inmates.

Skapa:"Eh, eh, my baas (my boss). Bona slender se se pila nyana bjang (Look at how cute this skinny guy is). Eh, Tman, die man o kare o tshwara lwena so (This guy looks like you)."

When we paid attention we couldn't believe our eyes.

Tman:"Njabulo?"

Eh, Njabulo is here? Last time I checked he was still on trial. He looks so frail I almost didn't recognize him. I'm so shocked. It's true what they say, life can really humble you. I wonder what he did with all the money he stole from us. Tbose locked the cell and left.

Slender:"Eh, banna. Fats, ke lawyara ya gao mos e (This is your lawyer, isn't it)?

Mpya e e go jele di taozen, mos (This dog chowed your thousands, right)?"

Fats:"Eh, banna. Ke yona mpya e (It's him)!"

Borotho:"Eh, Lenna o ntahletse ka hier sfana se (He also threw me in jail this guy)!"

I was shocked. Most of them knew Njabulo from being his clients. Apparently he ruined their lives and made sure they land in jail after making them spend thousands on legal fees. Talk about greed.

Njabulo: (scared) "Eh, Tman. Nthuso toe (Help me, please)! Hade ka taba e la mfo (I'm sorry about what I did)."

Thomas acted like he didn't even know him.

Slender:"Eh, My Baas (My boss) Tman. Wa e itse gashu e (Do you know this idiot)?"

Thomas: "Niks. Ga ke mo cave nna (I don't know him)."

Njabulo was in tears begging and screaming while they beat him up. I feel a bit bad, but it is what it is. He ruined our lives after we made him who he is today. He chose to steal from us even after we paid him millions a month and got him big shot clients.

Jeremiah 9 v 23 says: "Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches."

Proverbs 27 v 1 says: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring."

Chapter 128

Chichi

It's been a great week so far and yesterday we went to see our husbands along with our children. I love Family day at the prison. We get to hug and touch them, and even though we thought Zoro would be his depressed self, he was so happy to see Kea. Amazingly she recognizes him. His face lit up as he saw her and Kiara and he played with them all day. We even took a few pictures.

It's weird how life makes sense to you when you're down and out, but God has always been graceful. I'm at work today and I've just finished working on one of my accounts.

I even had to ask Bree to check it out before Erica starts embarrassing me for no reason. Her husband Tim Johnson, is the founder and owner of Johnson Accountants and he used to be one of our biggest clients.

I've had to down grade and work for him, but he was more than happy to offer me a job. Erica has been nothing, but mean towards me ever since I arrived here. Bree checked it and gave me back my report. I took a deep breath and went to Erica's office. I knocked subtly.

Erica: "Come in."

Me: "Here is the report for today's account."

She gave me a sneer and looked at me from head to toe.

Erica: "Oh, it's you. Bring it here so I can check it."

This woman is so condescending towards me. I've always been Queen Chichi, but now I have to bow down to someone else. I'll just have to stick it out. I handed her the document while she didn't even look at me. She browsed through the report while I stood there.

Erica: "You can leave now."

I left the room with a sore heart. I've accepted that there aren't people who bow down before me anymore. I went back to my desk looking depressed.

Bree: "Are you okay, Chichi?"

Me: "Yes, I'm okay."

I faked a smile trying hard not to cry.

Bree: "You don't have to pretend with me, Chichi. Trust in the Lord always, you'll make it through this. It's always darkest before the sun shines."



Bree has always been good at comforting. I hugged her and then Erica called me again.

Erica: "Chichi, could you come here?!"

Not even a please. I got up and went to her.

Me: "Yes, Mrs. Johnson?"

Erica: "Your report is all wrong. You missed a few figures. R2500 to be exact."

This woman is seriously testing my patience. I didn't miss anything, in fact I triple checked it.

Me: "I don't understand, Erica. I made sure that all the figures balance."

Erica: "Are you calling me incompetent?! I've always known that you're a thief!

You're probably trying to steal some money from our accounts to boost your empty pockets!"

She was even shouting at me while everyone was listening. The nerve to embarrass me like this! I've been a bit of a bitch, but I was never rude to anyone unnecessarily. I felt anger creeping up from the pit of my stomach.

Me: "Excuse me?"

Erica: "We all know you and your little gang are broke and that your husband is a jail bird now. Yes, your little fall from grace was all over the news. Don't think I don't know about your little gangster tendencies."

That's it. She just drove me over the edge. I've been trying to stay strong for my children and my family, but this, I can't take this shit. I'm nobody's slave.

Me: "You listen to me, and you listen to me very well, you little bitch. Don't think that just because you're married to a tycoon that you can do as you please. Yes, I have my Demons, but I'm no fucking thief! You think that just because you sit around in your little chair nursing your fat ass all day you can talk to people like their nothing?!"

Erica: "Oh, no you don't..."

I was so angry I didn't even give her a chance to breathe through my speech.

Me: "I'm not done, white bitch! Your company is what it is because of me! If it wasn't for our exposure, you'd be nothing right now and probably think as fuck. You're just a tyrant who doesn't like me and I don't even know why. I pity your children and your loving husband to be stuck with a bitch like you!"

U was spitting fire and I could hear the silence across the office meant that they were listening attentively.

Erica: "Well, then. If you feel so strongly about me, then you're fired."

Me: "Save your breath because I quit!"

Erica: "You can't afford leaving your job and we both know it."

Me: "I serve the Lord and not dumb bitches like you!"

I walked out fuming and took my bag and a few of my things and left. I didn't even have the energy to say goodbye to Bree. I just lost my job and that's less income for us all. That's R25 000 less. We're in even more shit than we were a month ago. I got

into my car and burst into tears with my head on my steering wheel. Have I been such a bad person

God that I have to be punished like this? I thought to myself. I don't even have the strength to pray. As I sat in my car weeping, I got startled by a knock on my window. I looked up not caring about the tears flooding my eyes and I saw Micah. I lowered my window.

Micah: "Hey, Chichi. O shap (Are you okay)?"

That's a dumb question, but that's Micah for you. He's always polite and sincere and he represented us for free. I wiped my tears and found the courage to respond.

Me: "Hey, Micah. I'm fine, thanks how are you?"

Micah: "I'm not okay, because you're lying to me."

Me: (chuckling) "Are you stalking me?"

Micah: (laughing) "I wish I were. I came to meet your boss, she's one of our clients, but I heard you gave her one hell of a show down so I had to come give you a high five. It's high time someone stood up to that tyrant."

Me: (chuckling) "Well, I'm jobless now, but it feels good to be out of her clutches."

Micah: "Let me take you out for lunch. You look like you could use someone to talk to."

I do, He's right. I can never say no to free lunch, and I guess I have nothing to worry about since he's dating Mandisa now and he gave up on chasing after me.

Me: "Okay."

Micah: (surprised) "Wow. The Chichi I know would have given me a show down first before agreeing to lunch with me. I feel honoured."

I laughed through the tears and followed him to the mall. We got out and walked together to Cuppachinos, one of the pasta restaurants. I ordered a Mojito as he ordered a beer. I really need a drink right now. My eyes were still a bit red, but I managed to calm down after taking a few sips of my cocktail.

Micah: "So, wanna tell me what's up?"

Me: (sigh) "Everything is such a mess, Micah. I'm so grateful to you and Mandisa for helping us, but I really didn't think that Life would turn out like this. Everything was fine, and then shit happened."

Micah: "I hear you, I really do. But would you like my honest two cents?"

I nodded.

Micah: "Don't get me wrong, yes you guys built an awesome empire and you were pretty successful, but you got all of that success from doing wrong. At times, you cannot succeed building a good empire if it was built on sin, you know. I personally admire you guys.

You took everything with a pinch of salt and now it's time for you to redeem yourselves. At times God invites disorder into our lives so that we can get closer to him and do things right. You will rise again, Chichi. You're meant to be a real Queen and run an empire. Nathi is really blessed to have you.

From the moment I saw you, I knew you were destined for greatness. Your mother did well by naming you Tshegofatso, because indeed you're meant to bless the world. Hang in there as this too shall pass. Everyone comes through a storm once or twice in their lives. This one is not going to bring you down."

Micah's words really comforted me as he held my hand. I don't know if it's the loneliness or the lack of sex, but I felt a bit of a rush through my body, almost like a spark between us. He stared deep into my eyes and for the first time ever since I've known Micah, I saw just how handsome and beautiful he actually is. I quickly removed my hand from his. Dear Lord, please lead me not into temptation.

Chapter 129

Chichi

Lunch with Micah was a breath of fresh air. For once I got to relax and forget about my troubles for a while. He gave me a shoulder to cry on when I needed it most. I hardly tell Nathi about these things because I don't like stressing him out. And I don't tell Pulane, Eve nor Cindy about it because I really don't want them freaking out. Everyone knows me as the strong one holding it down for everyone else, but deep down I've been drowning.

Micah:"So, I know you've lost your job and your only source of income, but let me help you. I'll give you the money. You have less than two years before Nathi and the rest get released from prison."

I know Micah means well, but I can't accept that. My husband wouldn't like it knowing that I let another man finance our lives including his. He'd honestly kill Micah.

Me:"Micah, I honestly appreciate what you're trying to do, but I can't accept that."

Micah:"Take it as a loan, then."

I'm tempted, really, but even my mother taught me not to ever take handouts. Especially from a man.

Me:"I appreciate your willingness to help, Micah, but I'm afraid I'll have to decline."

Micah:"Okay. I'm just a phone call away."

I smiled as he paid the bill. I was a bit tipsy. I haven't had a proper drink in a long time. He paid for the parking as we approached the parking lot. I was about to get into my car when he gently held my hand.

Micah:"Chichi, it was so good spending time with you."

Yoh, Modimo (Oh, God). The signals I got throughout my body. His touch sent signals everywhere, especially down there. When last did I even have sex? Eish, I can't be thinking of cheating on Nathi. I've never been tempted to do that ever before. I love him too much.

Me:"Micah, I..."

I didn't even finish my sentence as his lips landed on mine. I don't know what it is, but I responded. His lips are so soft and his scent just reminded me of my Nathi. Oh,

shit! My Nathi! I quickly got back to my senses and pulled out of the kiss. I suddenly regret this lunch date.

Micah: "I'm so sorry, Chichi. I didn't mean to. I just got carried away."

Me: "Micah, you're dating my best friend."

Micah: "We broke up a week ago. It didn't work out."

Mxm. Men are so slick with their lies. How can he kiss me knowing very well he's with Mandisa? Does this make me an official cheater? I got into my car and drove off. I arrived at home with guilt consuming my entire body. I felt like everyone, especially Eve would see right through me. I found Eve cooking and I went straight to the bedroom.

Eve: "Hao, ga o sa dumedisa na (Don't you greet anymore)?"

Me: "Askies (I'm sorry), I've just had a long day."

I couldn't even look at her.

Eve: "You do know I can see right through you, akere (right)?"

Me: "Let me go freshen up, we'll talk later."

Eve: "Mmm."

I quickly rushed to my bedroom and locked the door. Am I really that weak to fall for the first man who buys me lunch? I filled the bath tub with water and some bubbles and sunk into the bath tub. I thought of my miserable life. I miss my Nathi so badly. Just over a year ago, we were bathing together in this very bath tub, washing each other's backs and making sweet love.

That was the last time we ever had sex. How cruel can the world be? Now I'm such a horrible person, my husband is in prison. He and his friends went there and took the fall for me and now I kissed Micah?! I don't deserve Nathi at all. I'm such a horrible friend. What will Mandisa think of me after hearing such?!

I took a long, relaxing bath and thought of ways to make money. I'm most probably not going to get paid this month as it's the first of a new month

so I'm jobless and broke. I got out of the water after about two hours of refilling the water every now and then. I dried and lotioned my body and sunk into my bed.

Eve: (knocking on the door) "Chichi, dinner is ready."

I ignored her and tried to doze off.

Eve: "Bathong, Chichi. Can you open the door please?"

I ignored her once again as I heard her unlock my door.

Eve: "Hao, Chichi. Why weren't you answering me when I was knocking on your door?"

I didn't say anything, instead I answered her with tears flowing down my face.

Eve: "Hao, baby. What is it? Is it about you getting fired?"

I cried even louder. Come to think of it I haven't cried ever since the men were arrested.

Eve: "Look, Bree was here. She came to check on you and that's when she told me what happened. It's going to be okay, Chichi. You're one of the strongest women I know. We need you to be strong, all of us need you. This too shall pass."

I cried and nodded.

Eve: "Do you know what happened to me today? I received a call from a group of women claiming they wanted to get their hair and nails done for one of them, for their bridal party. I was so excited, Chichi. They were about ten, which meant I was going to make about 10k. But, as soon as I got there, they played me. They made a video of me calling me a broke bitch. They said they couldn't believe I'm so desperate and broke that I do house calls now. Can you imagine? They even posted the video online with the hashtag #TheMightyEveHasFallen."

I thought she would cry as she said that, but Eve is not one to cry at all.

Eve: "Bentley and Ferarri were broken to the core. They said the video was making the rounds at school and Bentley is even thinking of quitting varsity, but you know what? So many people called those women bitter. I still rise, Chichi. I knelt down and prayed. I prayed for our husbands and prayed for our children. On my way back home I stopped by the garage with only R50 in my pocket.

An unknown man just came up to me and gave me an envelope with R10 000 in it. How amazing is God? It's not much, but it will get us by – all of us. Just when you think you're down and out, something amazing happens. I received a call from Mandisa, I tried to call you, but your phone wasn't going through. Our husbands are coming back on Monday, Chichi.

Apparently Van Onselen was very biased during the trial and there was no particular evidence that they were guilty of anything. Mandisa is a good friend because if he hadn't appealed, they'd still be in prison for another year. You have so much to be thankful for, Chichi. They're coming back and we will make it work again. I know it." Now I feel like complete and utter shit. My best friend was out there fighting for our husbands' freedom, while I was out on a lunch date with his boyfriend, kissing him. I don't know what to do right now, but Eve has always given sound advice.

Me: (teary) "Eish, Eve. I fucked up. I fucked up big time."

Eve: "Whatever it is it can't be that bad."

I explained everything to her about what happened from the lunch to the kiss. She took a deep breath and let out a loud sigh.

Eve: "Hao, I thought you'd say you fucked someone else or something."

I raised my eyebrow in confusion.

Eve: "Chichi, these things happen. You were in a bad space and that led you to be tempted. Nathi will forgive you, I know it."

Me: "No. I can't tell him."

Eve: "You know very well we don't keep secrets. If you want your marriage to work, you'd better tell him as soon as he comes back. Luke 12 v 2 says: "Nothing is covered

up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Tell him before someone else beats you to it.”

## Chapter 130

### Chichi

It's Saturday today and I'm going to visit my husband today, we all are going to visit our husbands. Mama and Gorilla are back from their vacation, so they offered to look after the kids. We're all so happy that they're coming back in two days' time. The excitement is clouded by the guilt I'm feeling right now. I put on my Versace Jungle Print dress, one of Nkosinathi's favourites.

It shows a bit of my cleavage and since it has a long slit in the front, it used to drive him crazy. I'm only 24 yet I've experienced a lot of shit. Micah sent me a message last night telling me how sorry he is for kissing me. I don't know if he's apologizing so that I don't tell Mandisa or Nathi or if he's being genuine about it. I asked Mandisa to meet up with me today. I really need to come clean.

I've made the decision to come clean with Nathi today as well. Rather I do it than someone else, right? I met up with the ladies and they look hot. Just because we're borderline broke, doesn't mean we shouldn't dress nicely. We can still wear cute outfits despite what people say about us.

Julia: "Whoo, bona le pila bjang (Look how gorgeous you all look). Those outfits will send those men into wet dreams."

I'm so embarrassed while Pulane, Cindy and Eve burst out in laughter.

Gorilla: "Hai, man, Sthandwa (Love), you're embarrassing Chichi, now."

Julia: "Ah, man. Why a iketsa okare ne a sa bolawe ke letswai na (Why is she acting like she wasn't going through a dry season?)"

Yoh, that's our queue to leave.

Me: "Hai, bye mama. Baba, see you later."

Gorilla chuckled while mama said goodbye. We're traveling in one car today and I just can't wait to see Nathi amongst the fear I have.

Pulane: "Yoh, but Mama is right, guys. I can't wait to see my man. Just one more night and he'll be in my bed."

Eve: "Yoh, you don't say. I'm so tired of using a vibrator every night nje. Big is even gaining weight again. Hai, he must come back."

Cindy and I laughed as we finally entered the prison after a few minutes. I can never get used to the whole procedure we go through before we enter the prison. So much searching and all, I guess it's protocol but it's annoying. We stood in a queue for about 20 minutes. Yoh, even my heels are starting to kill me.

We finally made it to the visiting area and I saw my Nathi. He looks so different today, I'm not sure how though. I smiled as I walked towards him, but he didn't smile back. Nathi is never this cold, now I'm reminded of his whole saga with Pontsho. He

didn't even attempt to hug me, so I sat down opposite him confused. I attempted to hold his hands, but he removed them away from the table.

Me: "Nkosinathi. Bothata keng (What's wrong)?"

Nathi: (teary) "Tshegofatso Dhlamini, am I not good enough for you?"

He never calls me that. I guess he's really displeased about something.

Me: "Of course, you are, Nathi. What's wrong?"

Nathi: "If I'm good enough for you then explain this shit!"

He tossed his phone towards me and I felt like I was about to pass out right there.

There's a picture of Micah and I kissing in the parking lot yesterday at the mall. Fuck, who even sent him this picture? I looked at him and his eyes were bloodshot, with tears glistening in his eyes. I was shaking with fear.

Me: "Nathi, I can explain."

Nathi: (softly) "I'm waiting and you'd better tell me the truth before I do something I might regret."

Yoh he said that so calmly which terrified me even more.

Me: "I... Erica accused me of trying to steal money from one of the accounts I was working on and I quit immediately. She called me names and all and I was in a state.

Micah appeared in the parking lot at work, while I was crying in the car and he offered to take me to lunch. So, I went to have lunch with him and we just talked, Nkosinathi. When I was about to enter my car, he kissed me."

As I recited my little story, I myself realized just how ridiculous it sounds. I looked at him and he didn't even move an inch.

Nathi: "Tshegofatso, did I marry a whore?"

What a low Blow, but I guess I deserve it. I mean he's in prison and I'm out there kissing our lawyer. Nathi has never been disrespectful like that towards me and it stung me to the core to hear him call me that.

Me: "Nathi..."

Nathi: "I'm in prison, and I did it for you

Chichi – for you! You're out there making me think you're waiting for me to get out of this hole yet I receive this picture! So that's why you didn't answer your phone yesterday when I called you? Is this why you recommended him to be our lawyer? Is this why he offered to do it for free?! It's all because you're fucking that gay motherfucker?!"

Nathi raised his voice without caring what everyone thinks. I let the tears fall as I didn't know how to respond. So I tried to hold his hands, but he yanked my hands off his.

Me: "Nathi, I didn't sleep with him or anyone else. I swear."

Nathi didn't respond to me, instead he gave me a disgusted look and it pained me even more.

Nathi: "Guard, please take me back to my cell!"

With that said he stood up and left me sitting there on the chair, watching him leave without even looking at me. What have I done? I got up in embarrassment as people were staring at me, including Menzi, Biggie, Thomas and Zoro. Menzi shook his head as he stared at me and I just walked out with my tears burning my cheeks. I went to sit in the car as I waited for the rest of the ladies to finish talking to their husbands. I'm in so much pain, but Nathi must be in even more pain. He probably regrets giving me his kidney right now. The ladies came back after a while and found me sobbing.

Pulane: "Relax, Chichi. He'll come around. He's just still upset right now."

Cindy: "Yes, babe. It will blow over."

Me: "He called me a whore, a whore guys!"

Eve: "All men do that when they're angry, but doesn't mean he meant it. To be honest, going out with Micah for lunch knowing very well he still might have feelings for you was a pretty dumb move. But what I can tell you is that he will come around, He's just really upset and doubting himself right now."

Wow, I have made Nathi so doubtful of himself that he doesn't even trust me anymore. I'm a horrible person.

Cindy: "Pull yourself and stop crying. Your husband is coming back to feed you on Monday."

I managed to laugh through the tears.

Pulane: "She laughs. Finally."

Eve: "Pull yourself together, you have a lunch date and Mandisa is probably waiting for you as we speak."

I wiped off my tears as Eve drove off. She dropped me off at Kollonade Shopping Mall and I found Mandisa waiting for me at Turn n Tender. I haven't even had a decent meal outside the house for a long time now. I took a deep breath as I saw him wave at me as I approached him. We hugged and I sat down.

Mandisa: "Hey, girl. Long time, man. How are you, though?"

Me: "I've been better."

Mandisa: "Nonsense! You're skin is still glowing and you're still beautiful, man. How are the twins? I'm pretty sure Khwezi keeps you on your toes. She's quite a chatterbox."

I faked a smile.

Me: "Mandisa, I have something to tell you. I'd like to get it out of the way before we eat, please."

Mandisa: "Ah, you probably want to tell me about Micah kissing you. Don't worry about it, he told me."

I widened my eyes in shock.

Mandisa: "What? He told me that he told you we broke up. He did, didn't he?"

Heh, banna. So Micah was telling the truth.



Mandisa: "It's true. Micah is such a confused soul, babe. He doesn't know if he's gay or straight or bi so I really don't think he's the one for me. Besides, he still feels you, he always has."

Yoh I breathed out a sigh of relief. At least I won't lose my best friend.

Me: "I'm so relie, Mandi. You have no idea how scared I was."

Mandisa: "Scared of me? Come on, girl. You should be more worried about the media. That pic is everywhere."

Me: (worried) "What do you mean?"

Mandisa: "Girl, you've been living under a rock, ne? You're trending on Twitter. People are calling you names and mentioning Nathi in their tweets."

I took out my phone and checked Twitter. Oh my goodness. I'm trending for real, over 8000 tweets all about me and Nathi and Micah. No wonder Nathi is livid. I felt my tears creep up on me again and Mandisa held my hand.

Mandisa: "Listen to me, Chichi. I know you and I know you'd never do such a thing. It's just that, pictures say a thousand words. Nathi will forgive you once he calms down. You're no cheater, we all make mistakes and Micah took advantage of your vulnerability. You'll bounce back, man. The Chichi I know isn't weak and is most definitely not a cry baby. Pull yourself together, let's have some wine and you'd better make it to church tomorrow."

I smiled and wiped my tears off. He's right, I'm no cry baby at all. It's high time I grabbed life by the balls again. Chichi is coming back and the Lord has most definitely served me redemption on a silver platter. It's been a hard pill to swallow, but we've learnt our lesson.

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Me: "He called me a whore, a whore guys!"

Eve: "All men do that when they're angry, but doesn't mean he meant it. To be honest, going out with Micah for lunch knowing very well he still might have feelings for you was a pretty dumb move. But what I can tell you is that he will come around, He's just really upset and doubting himself right now."

Wow, I have made Nathi so doubtful of himself that he doesn't even trust me anymore. I'm a horrible person.

Cindy: "Pull yourself and stop crying. Your husband is coming back to feed you on Monday."

I managed to laugh through the tears.

Pulane: "She laughs. Finally."

Eve: "Pull yourself together, you have a lunch date and Mandisa is probably waiting for you as we speak."

I wiped off my tears as Eve drove off. She dropped me off at Kollonade Shopping Mall and I found Mandisa waiting for me at Turn n Tender. I haven't even had a decent meal outside the house for a long time now. I took a deep breath as I saw him wave at me as I approached him. We hugged and I sat down.

Mandisa: "Hey, girl. Long time, man. How are you, though?"

Me: "I've been better."

Mandisa: "Nonsense! You're skin is still glowing and you're still beautiful, man. How are the twins? I'm pretty sure Khwezi keeps you on your toes. She's quite a chatterbox."

I faked a smile.

Me: "Mandisa, I have something to tell you. I'd like to get it out of the way before we eat, please."

Mandisa: "Ah, you probably want to tell me about Micah kissing you. Don't worry about it, he told me."

I widened my eyes in shock.

Mandisa: "What? He told me that he told you we broke up. He did, didn't he?"

Heh, banna. So Micah was telling the truth.

Mandisa: "It's true. Micah is such a confused soul, babe. He doesn't know if he's gay or straight or bi so I really don't think he's the one for me. Besides, he still feels you, he always has."

Yoh I breathed out a sigh of relief. At least I won't lose my best friend.

Me: "I'm so relie, Mandi. You have no idea how scared I was."

Mandisa: "Scared of me? Come on, girl. You should be more worried about the media. That pic is everywhere."

Me: (worried) "What do you mean?"

Mandisa: "Girl, you've been living under a rock, ne? You're trending on Twitter. People are calling you names and mentioning Nathi in their tweets."

I took out my phone and checked Twitter. Oh my goodness. I'm trending for real, over 8000 tweets all about me and Nathi and Micah. No wonder Nathi is livid. I felt my tears creep up on me again and Mandisa held my hand.

Mandisa: "Listen to me, Chichi. I know you and I know you'd never do such a thing. It's just that, pictures say a thousand words. Nathi will forgive you once he calms down. You're no cheater, we all make mistakes and Micah took advantage of your vulnerability. You'll bounce back, man. The Chichi I know isn't weak and is most definitely not a cry baby. Pull yourself together, let's have some wine and you'd better make it to church tomorrow."

I smiled and wiped my tears off. He's right, I'm no cry baby at all. It's high time I grabbed life by the balls again. Chichi is coming back and the Lord has most definitely served me redemption on a silver platter. It's been a hard pill to swallow, but we've learnt our lesson.

Chapter 131

It's Sunday and church day as always. I'm really not looking forward to it, especially after seeing what people are saying about me. Some are calling me a gold digger because Nathi is in prison I'm looking for my next victim. Most of these people are people who go to church with us.

They used to take our food parcels and clothes parcels with open arms and now that we don't have money any more, they feel entitled to talk trash about us. Gorilla and Mama took the kids, so there's absolutely no reason for me to get up today. I'm defeated. Eve walked in after knocking a couple of times.

Eve: "Heh, banna. This is not how Lions behave, Chichi man. We don't sulk when we have to rise up. Keng ka wena kgante (What's with you)?"

Me: "I'm not going to church, Eve. I'm not well."

Eve: "Nonsense. If you're not well then the holy spirit will make you whole again. Come, I'm going to run the water for you and you'd better be up by the time I get back. If not, I'll personally throw you in the tub."

She walked to the bathroom and Lord knows she's not kidding. I dragged my feet and went to take a quick bath.

Eve: "You'd better be dressed in 20 minutes. You'll eat your breakfast in the car."

I nodded reluctantly. I finished taking a bath and as I walked to my bedroom, I found My Black Leather Gucci dress laid out for me on the bed. Eve can be funny shame. I remember this dress, Nathi bought it for me when I was 16. That was our first shopping spree together as an official couple. I tried calling him and sending him messages last night, but he didn't respond.

I went to bed with a broken heart. I really miss him, but I have to get going. I put the dress on and it fits like a glove. I'm surprised it still fits so perfectly. I took a picture of myself in front of the mirror and sent it to Nathi via WhatsApp with the caption "Remember this?" If he doesn't respond, it's all good, but at least I'm trying.

I've never done him wrong so I have no idea what to do. I walked out and found my divas in the kitchen waiting for me. They all are dressed in Gucci, how convenient. We look so beautiful, it reminds me of our first appearance together at church. They used to call us the Divas.

We still are even though our pockets aren't heavy anymore, but with God's grace I believe we'll bounce back. We asked Mme Grace to take a picture of us together and Cindy posted it on her Instagram. I haven't been vety active since Nathi got arrested, but Cindy is such a beautiful soul. She posts anyway despite what people think.

We arrived at church after 30 minutes of being on the road. As we got out of our car, we found a few members of the congregation outside. I could feel their eyes starring at me like daggers piercing through my skin, while some were whispering as we walked past them.

It really hurts brcayse I thought the church changed after Mma Moruti's exit. Pulane held my hand as we walked in. I assume she felt my body tense up a little bit. We sat

at our usual spot and Mandisa let the choir as usual. Micah was sitting next to his father on the podium, staring at me and I put my sunglasses on as I ignored him flatly. Ntate Moruti: "Today, is one special day. I'll be preaching about redemption and repentance and I'm really sure that majority of you don't even know what it means. It's really important to repent even daily for the Lord forgives those who repent for their sins. 2 Chronicles 7 v 14 says: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Who are you to judge someone as if you're glass perfect? We have a few members of our church coming back from prison tomorrow. The good news is that they were found not guilty after our young and bright lawyer, Mandisa Mosehle got them cleared of an unfair trial. You see, my people, the world can be unfair at times. But I say to you, God cannot give you something you cannot bear.

At times we have to endure hardships to get closer to God. We have to face illness and chaos in our lives in order to mend our relationship with God. I see a lot of you gossiping, spreading false news and speaking ill of members of this church. Members who have been feeding the whole church ever since they joined this church.

These members have been taking money out of their own pockets to feed and clothe you, yet you have the audacity to play far from them when they are experiencing such a tough time. I'm ashamed to call some of you my congregation and my family. No family of mine is capable of such ill deeds."

I could hear some whispering and gasping, while some were looking down in shame. Ntate Moruti: "Some of you have been making fun of their children at school and on social media, yet you were the first ones to run to them when they were serving food. Yet, none of you even offered them a plate of food when you heard of their husbands going to prison. A whole household has had to be run by a group of women, young mothers and very dear members of this church.

1 John 1 v 9 says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. So, I say unto you

today is the day that you will confess your sins and ask for the Lord's forgiveness. These people owe you nothing, but you owe them your sincere apologies.

Isaiah 44 v 22 says: "I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you." The Lions have redeemed themselves. They owe you nothing, for we all owe our lives to God. I'm pleased to say that the church will be hosting a special party to celebrate the return of these five gentlemen tomorrow, all sponsored by Mr. Funani Dladla.

It is a choice for you to be here tomorrow and if you do not want to be here it is also one's choice. I am pleased to say that these young gentlemen will also be releasing their book tomorrow entitled Our Road to Redemption. Mandisa, may you please sing us a beautiful song to celebrate this good news."

Mandisa sang the famous song Yawa Lembewu, and although this song is mostly sang at funerals, it spoke to me. For the first time since our husbands were arrested, we shed tears together. We cried as we held each other's hands. Yes, the seed fell back to the ground as the song says. The seed of jealousy, greed, impurity, heartache, pain and suffering.

We were mourning almost two years of pain and sadness and loneliness. It is now time for a new chapter, a new beginning. One that we should have had a long time ago. Through God's grace, we shall rise again and this time we shall built an even better kingdom and teach our children to run a kingdom of their own in the correct manner.

Gorilla invited us to Sunday Lunch at his house in Mooikloof along with our children. Ferarri and Bentley are also coming. We had a great time and I was happy deep down, although my happiness was tainted with sadness because of this Micah thing and Nathi being angry at me.

Gorilla: "Tshegofatso, may I have a word with you?"

I didn't even realize I was deep in thought. I got up and walked alongside him outside.

Gorilla: "I know what's bothering you."

I looked down in embarrassment.

Gorilla: "Relax, mntwana wami (my child). I asked for a special visit to go see Nkosinathi last night. He was a serious mess and even got into a fight with one of the prisoners for calling you a whore. If that's not real love, then I don't know what is."

My heart broke into a million pieces. My Nathi got into a fight because of my actions.

Gorilla: "Be patient with him, Chichi. He's broken, but he'll bounce back. Greater things are coming your way. You just wait and see."

Me: "What do you mean, Baba?"

Gorilla: "You just wait for the surprise tomorrow when your husband gets back."

He smiled and hugged me. Gorilla is such a good man. My mother is incredibly lucky to have him. I guess I'll have to wait and see. We enjoyed the rest of the day with him and we parted ways. They asked us actually practically begged us to leave the children with them. They've grown so close to them and with a house of 10 bedrooms, there's always enough space for all of them. As we got home we all headed to our bedrooms. I think we wanted to enjoy the last night of sleeping alone. Zoro has been doing really great and I'm so glad he hasn't found a new wife while in prison. I got in my bedroom and changed into my sleepwear. I decided to give all my problems to God. I knelt down and had a conversation with my Lord.

"Dear Lord Jesus, I thank you for always being there for me. Thank you for always having my back. Thank you for yet another day of life and good health. Thank you for being my savior, my father and for blessing me with the strength and willpower to carry on each and every day. Thank you for bringing our husbands back to us. I put everything in your hands, Oh, Lord. You know what's best. As you said in 2 Peter 3 v 9, "The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness; but is

patient with us, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. I repent oh, Lord, for I ask for my redemption. I ask that you bear with me Lord and show me the light. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen."

As I got up, I received a message from Erica. "Hey, Chichi, it's Erica. Please come to the office tomorrow so we can discuss your new employment contract. I asked my husband to check your report and I realized that I made a huge mistake. It would be such a great loss to our company if we had to lose you. Please call me as soon as you get this message."

Mxm, not even an apology from her. I'd have to think about her offer. I'm broke, but not desperate.

Chapter 132

Chichi

It's Monday morning and I hardly slept a wink. I guess I was too excited, I just need my Nathi in my arms. I got up, about to take a shower, but Gorilla sent me a message. "Going to fetch the boys. Taking them to Ntate Phiri. We'll see you later." I'm a bit bummed, but I guess it's understandable that they need to be cleansed first before coming back home. I took a shower anyway and I found Eve, Pulane and Cindy already cooking.

Pulane:"Good morning, Sister."

Me:"Morning."

Cindy:"With that sulk, I assume you received Gorilla's message as well?"

I nodded.

Eve:"You're about to sulk even more because They won't be back until tonight."

I became even more depressed as she said that.

Pulane:"Don't sulk so much, man. Come and eat, we're going shopping for some ingredients for dinner and then you'd better shave and steam that pussy babe."

We all laughed.

Me:"Ai, man Pulane. Ga re na tshete (We don't have money)."

Pulane:"I got paid, man. Relax. I got you guys covered."

I smiled as we ate some breakfast and we headed out after washing the dishes. We went shopping for some lingerie, and dinner ingredients. Pulane says these men deserve a very warm welcome. But I guess we have to go to the party at church first since we cannot disappoint Ntate Moruti and Gorilla like that.

We went back home and had to freshen up real quickly. Of course we wore our best outfits. Eve curled my hair while Cindy did our make up. Eve even styled Pulane's big afro. Cindy and Eve wore their best wigs and we were good to go.

We arrived at church and we were all in awe. It was decorated from outside and there's even a huge marquee inside the church yard. Lot's of chairs draped in white and gold.



There's food everywhere and people are flooding in. Gorilla has gone all out and this is just too special of a celebration. This reminds me of our very own wedding day.

There were about ten chairs decorated a bit differently than the rest.

Ntate Moruti: "Our guests of honour. Please take your seats, my girls."

He led us to the seats in the front. I saw Micah, but I walked right past him. We sat in the front and awaited the day's events. We don't even know what to expect so we just waited. Ntate Moruti gathered everyone into the tent, while we sat and waited. Before we knew it we saw different kinds of Mercedes SUV's driving in, all black in colour. From the Mercedes GLC to GLE. I'm amazed, maybe we have guest speakers today. Surprisingly there were five of these driving in. The windows were tinted pretty well and we were a bit far from them, so it was hard for me to see who was in them.

Gorilla drove in with his Viano and he came out With Mama and the kids.

Another Mercedes followed Gorilla and a group of Drum Meorettes came out playing some drums. I'm so confused as I look at the girls but they were also as clueless as I am. We all stood so we could see these important people. Mama walked in and sat in the second row with all our children.

Khwezi and Mcebi waved at me. My Children have good manners shame. The drum majorettes all stood on the sides of the marquee to allow our guests of honour to walk through to the tent on the red carpet laid on the floor. I saw Biggie, Menzi, Thomas, Zoro and my Nathi walk out of these different cars. Oh, my goodness. They look so amazing, freshly shaved with beautiful suits on.

I almost didn't recognize them. People were dancing to the tune of the drums being played, while Ntate Moruti was beaming with pride on the stage in front of us. Micah left earlier on, probably out of disappointment I'm sure. My eyes were fixed on my beautiful husband. The last time I saw him he was angry in an orange prison suit.

24 hours later, he arrives in a gorgeous outfit, with a beautiful, expensive car and a fresh hair cut. We watched them being serenaded by the drums as they slowly walked into the tent. I felt myself shed a few tears as I saw my Nathi smile at me. I really hope he has forgiven me, I really do. They sat in the row next to us, on the decorated chairs.

I sat down slowly as I stared at him smiling back at me. Ntate Moruti signaled to the Drummers to pause as he took the mic. The tent was so full by now that even people from outside rushed into the yard to see what was happening. They didn't have a place to sit, but they didn't mind standing.

I could even see Koko and Pabi peep through. As I scanned the tent, I saw Palesa sitting amongst the crowd. She looked cleaner that last time, at least. She tried waving at me as I turned my face and stared at Ntate Moruti.

Ntate Moruti: "Dumelang Bazalwane (Greetings). As I promised you yesterday, that today is going to be a beautiful day. We welcome our fellow brothers, who have been released from prison today.

We welcome members of this church who have been nothing but kind to us all, and most importantly family men; fathers and husbands. Let us give them a moment to give us a few words before we enjoy the feast prepared for us.”

People were clapping and cheering, even those who wrote kak about me on Twitter. Ai, some people never learn. Biggie took the stage first.

Biggie:”Dumelang (Good day), Bazalwane. As you all know, I was the leader of our gang some time ago. We were all convicted of murder and attempted murder and accused for a few other crimes. I’m not standing here as a victim, but I stand here as a hero.

I’m a father and a husband and also a brother to my fellow brothers who served their time with me. While we were in there, our women went through hell and back and yet still managed to keep smiling through it all.

I stand here before you, Thabiso Legae, proud husband to Eve Legae and father to Ferrari, Bentley and Versace. An author, a mentor, and a shareholder of our new company The Lion Kingdom.”

I saw Eve crying which we don’t see very often. A few people were murmuring and gasping in shock. I’m also shocked and clueless.

Biggie:”Matthew 18 v 21 – 22 says:”Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.’ I’ve wronged this woman of mine more than that, but not once did she turn her back on me. From now onwards, I pledge my life to the Lord Jesus Christ, and with this ring, I vow to give my wife the marriage she’s always wanted and I vow to be the man she’s always deserved.”

Biggie got down on one knee in front of Eve and gave her a beautiful, big rock. He held her hands and kissed her on the lips and hugged her. He went back to sit on his chair.

Menzi took the stage next.

Menzi:”I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ our saviour.”

Crowd:”Amen.”

Menzi:”Biggie has said a lot, but I’d like to say my piece. They say you only get one chance in life to experience true love. And I’m eternally grateful to God for blessing me with a woman like Pulane. She picked me up when I was at my lowest, she re-introduced me to a life with Christ. She gave me two beautiful children and never judged me for my choices. Jesus has been giving people second chances.

Jonah 2 v 1 – 3 says:”Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the Fish saying, I called out to the Lord, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep into the heart of the seas and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and billows passed over me. So with this ring, I pledge to live a life devoted to Christ, and be an

amazing father and husband. I pledge to give my wife the life she deserves and be a loving husband til death do us part.”

Menzi got down the stage and gave Pulane her ring and kissed and hugged her. He wiped off her tears and sat back down on his chair. People were so quiet, taking pictures and videos. This is the most beautiful thing the boys have ever done.

Thomas got up on stage next.

Thomas:”I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ. In life, if you haven’t found the one person who makes your heart skip a beat, who makes you want to do better, be better, who makes you strive to make them happy more than yourself, then you haven’t been in love. Women are on earth for a reason, to tame us men and to help us make the right choices.

I’ve been a terrible man and horrible husband to a woman before, but God gave me a second chance at love with my Cindy. And now, He’s given me a second chance at life. I thank you my wife for bearing with me and giving me two amazing children.

Words can’t explain my gratitude, but I vow to show you with actions this time.

Lamentations 3 v 21-23 says: “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” With this ring, I pledge a devoted life with Christ and I vow to be the husband you’ve been praying for, Cinderella.”

He got off the stage and slid the ring on Cindy’s shaky finger and kissed her. He went back to sit down. It was now time for my Nathi. I suddenly became so nervous, with palpitations causing my palms to sweat. He looks so handsome and I can smell his cologne all the way from here.

Nathi:”I greet you all in the name of Jesus Christ, our Healer, our Provider, our Father. My late mother would always make me pray before eating my meals and would always make me read the Bible. I never understood that until I met my Chichi. I haven’t been the most perfect man towards her, but her presence in my life has changed my life for the better.

It sounds so cliché, but this woman is a woman of steel, she’s been through the worst and yet she came out of every situation a better wife and better mother. She’s my warrior, my heart’s keeper. Without her, I’m nothing at all. She forced me to think like a businessman and has never judged me at all. She forgave me when I was a horrible person towards her and for that I’ll forever be her Nathi.

1 John 1 v 9 says: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I stand here before everyone, confessing my undying love to my beautiful wife. Sthandwa sami (My love), Ma Dhlamini wami (My Mrs. Dhlamini), uMama wengani zami (Mother to my kids), My sunshine, my reason for living, the one who makes me smile and laugh like a little boy, the one who makes my heart jump for joy whenever you enter the room, please forgive me for my ill treatment of you recently.

I should have never doubted you from the start. When the devil tries to enter a beautiful union, it causes immediate confusion, chaos and disruption. With this ring, I pledge a life devoted to Christ, I vow to be an understanding and open husband to you.

I'll never ever doubt you ever again. I vow to forever be a loving and caring husband and father, for you are a rare gem to find, Chichi. You are the reason I am who I am today. You're the reason people know who Nkosinathi Dhlamini is today. I love you so much, my blessing."

He stepped down, and slid the ring on my finger. He wiped my tears gently off my face and kissed my forehead. He went to sit back down. Zoro stood up as he was the last to speak. Surprisingly the chair next to me which was the fifth chair was empty. Perhaps Zoro has a new lady in his life.

Zoro:"I greet you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As I stand here before you, I stand as a changed man. I've been through a lot this past year and a half. I've been close to death and an angel saved me. I've always been so bad at picking women in my life, but God has been so amazing to me that he finally showed me the woman I'm meant to be with in my dreams.

While I tried to commit suicide behind bars due to my ex wife betraying me the way she did, I had a dream. God spoke to me and he said to me not to fear or give up so easily for my chosen one is on her way to me. I didn't believe it when I saw a clear vision of this woman in my own dreams. The following day I saw the exact same woman I saw in my dreams stand before me. I was lying on my hospital bed and Dr. Seboko showed up.

As soon as she did, I knew she was the one God had sent to mend my broken heart. I have finally found a mother to my beautiful children, someone who has accepted me the way I am. I've indeed got my second chance. 2 Peter 3 v 9 says: "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." Shirley, can you please come forward?"

A beautiful woman with an hour glass shape walked up to the stage. I remember seeing this woman before at the prison. I've seen her in a white coat, so wow hey. Zoro has finally found his woman and I do hope this time she stays.

Zoro:"With this ring I pledge a devoted life to Christ. I vow to be a loving and caring husband to you, Shirley. You're the one missing piece to the puzzle in my life. The one piece I've always needed. I'll forever love and thank God for giving me you. Through you, I know That God exists. With this ring I ask the question I've been dreading to ask you ever since I met you "Will you marry me, Shirley?"

Shirley nodded as Zoro slipped his ring onto her finger. He kissed her passionately and hugged her. I guess we have a new member to the family. With that said, Ntate Moruti concluded the day's events and we had a great feast. Nathi couldn't keep his hands off me.

So apparently, Zoro dreamt of some numbers and asked Gorilla to play the lotto for him last week. Amazingly, he hit the jackpot. He won 25 million rand and they wanted to surprise us. They bought our building back and gave it a new name. They bought new buildings and are busy converting them into flats and made sure we are the co shareholders of everything they own. They even managed to buy us our house in the Maldives back.

Ntate Phiri said apparently Zoro has a gift, a prophetic gift. All he had to do was Accept God fully and he'd be able to bring us all blessings. That's how he got to see his chosen one through his dreams. It's funny how life works, hey. We've all been through a lot, but I guess we had to go through it.

Years passed and we've managed to keep our legacy afloat. We've become billionaires now and even managed to get ourselves on the cover of Forbes magazine. Elmarie came back begging us to take her husband's company back as one of our clients. Being the nice person that I am, I accepted the offer even though she sucks up to me big time, I just pray for her every day. Nathi has been a true blessing and I had another daughter named Princess. Yep, our lives are complete and I couldn't be happier. My name is Chichi and this was my road to redemption.

The End.